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Editorial

New Editor, new format. Or rather new Editors since it seems to need four of us to fill John Wright's shoes. We have moved to a two-column layout and 12pt type (where possible) to make the text easier to read, while the typeface adopted is intended to be standard across the full range of BAHS publications and signing. Any comments on the new format are welcome.

We were hoping to have a report from Chris Birks on the recent dig at the 'Chapel' site on Blakeney Eye, but this has been embargoed by the Environment Agency for a couple of months to give them time to assimilate the implications. As it is such a topical issue, we *do* however have an explanatory preview. It will be interesting to compare the NAU's findings with our own, strictly non-invasive, investigations reported in GH2.

Another topical paper is Richard Jefferson's account of the life and work of WJJ Bolding, an almost forgotten pioneer of photography from Weybourne. There is to be a major exhibition of work by early Norfolk photographers, including WJJB, at the Castle Museum, Norwich, later this year.

The visual aspect is also covered by Jonathan Hooton who has investigated the origins of a 'pier-head' painting of the *Ann* of Cley. The genre is important to marine historians – even if it's not great art.

Monica White has been busy collecting memories for the BAHS Oral History collection. This Journal is being put together at Easter so the topic of death is not inappropriate.

Pamela Peake has been investigating the Brigge family of Wiveton, Lords of one of the Manors, and a very influential family, while John Peake has tackled the Cley Church Terriers and tracked down the four, yes *four*, parsonage sites in the village.

In addition to his Blakeney Eye preview, John Wright has contributed a paper on analysis of the 1871 census and makes comparison with figures from 1770 and 1971.

Eric Hotblack, who led field-walking classes in 2002 and 2003, has collated the results and the findings are recorded here.

There is also a new feature we call "Back Pages" which we hope will develop into a useful and interesting collection of miscellaneous snippets, feedback from previous articles and who knows what else!

A wide range of topics, styles and periods – from the Stone Age to the present day: we hope you enjoy reading the latest Glaven Historian. If you have an article to contribute, or feedback on published material, please contact the Editorial team. Some notes on preferred methods of presentation are scheduled for the December Newsletter.

W J J Bolding (1815-1899)

Pioneer North Norfolk Photographer

by Richard Jefferson

Synopsis: an introduction to the work of a pioneer photographer from Weybourne. As well as giving his family background, the author traces connections with members of the Norwich School of painters.

William Johnson Jennis Bolding was the great great grandson of William Jennis (died 1766), whose account book from the 1720s and 1730s of the *William & Thomas* of Blakeney survives.¹ Through marriage in the 18th century, the Bolding family inherited considerable Jennis property in Weybourne, so in 1847 at his father John Bolding's death (aged 67) WJJB, 32 years old, found himself the largest resident landowner and farmer in the village employing eleven labourers, owner of the maltings, the brewery (employing three men) and the watermill. His father had purchased public houses right across North Norfolk, to be supplied by the family brewery. WJJB's last business deal, in 1897, was to sell fourteen to the Norwich brewers Steward & Patteson. In 1846 with his brother-in-law William Monement, a cork merchant from King's Lynn, he became the joint owner of the schooner *Enterprise* of Blakeney, thereby continuing the ship owning tradition of the family.

Evidence on William Johnson Jennis Bolding's early life is sparse, but he showed considerable talent as an artist from a young age. In all probability he would have received

tuition from an artist or artists of the Norwich School, a number of whom acted as drawing masters to supplement their income. For the first forty years or more of the nineteenth century the accepted method of learning to draw was to copy the original work of a professional artist. A pencil drawing of Cley Church survives (Fig. 1), dated 1832 when he was sixteen. It is an almost exact copy of J B Ladbroke's drawing of the church (Ladbroke and his father Robert drew 677 Norfolk churches, all published as lithographs). The Cley Church lithograph is dated 1824. It is a not unreasonable assumption that J B Ladbroke was WJJB's drawing master in 1832. Three remarkable brown monochrome drawings from the following year were almost certainly executed under the direction of his drawing master. Later WJJB painted in oils, mainly scenes in and around Weybourne, but his favourite medium was watercolour: brown monochrome, grey wash and pencil. It is recorded that in 1849 and 1853 his pictures were exhibited at the Norfolk & Norwich Fine Arts Association annual exhibitions.

Before her marriage to William Monement in 1845, WJJB's sister Esther kept a journal in which she recorded that in May WJJB usually went away with his fishing gear and sketching things. At this distance in time it is difficult to reconcile how WJJB managed his business affairs, along with the cultur-

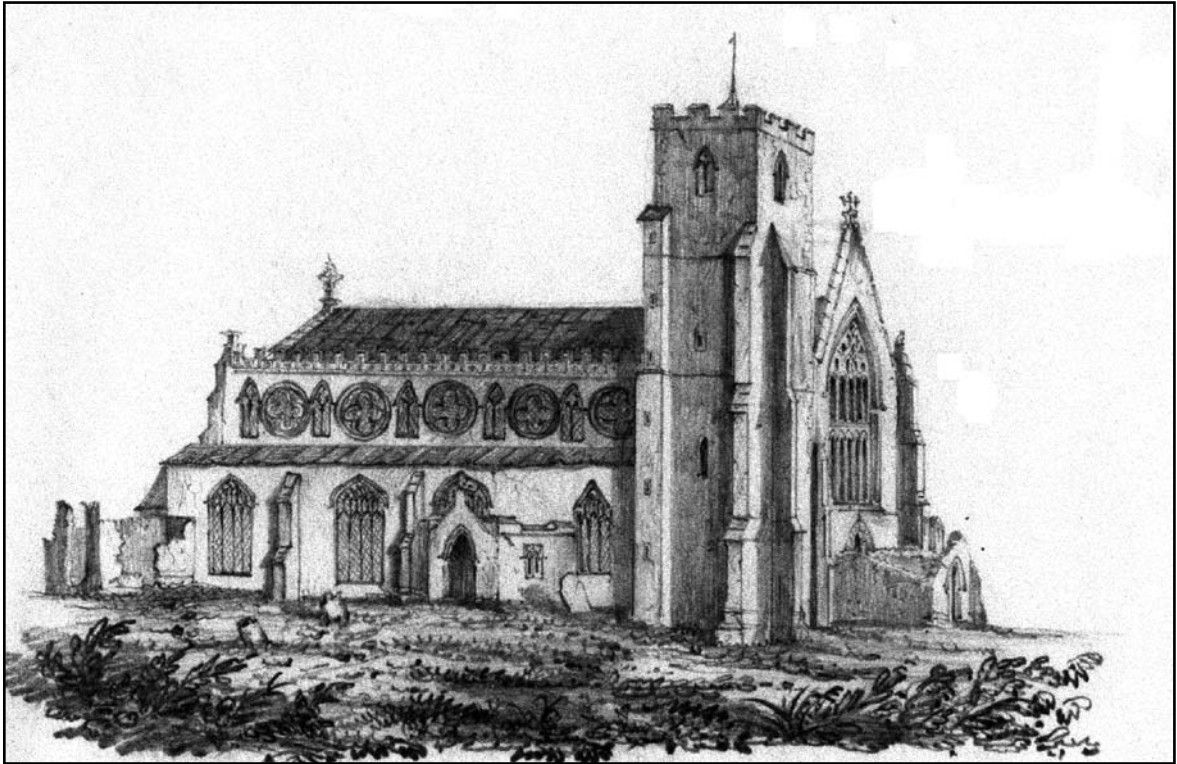


Figure 1. Pencil drawing of Cley Church, after J B Ladbrooke, executed in 1832 when Bolding was just 16 years old.

al, sporting, scientific and artistic activities he indulged in. For the best part of ten years after his father's death he was very active away from Weybourne, particularly during the summer months. In the 1851 census his mother, 'old' Esther, is described as "Land and House Proprietor". From her photograph (fig. 3) she looks a formidable person and it seems likely that she ran the businesses during her son's absences.

In 1848 he was away sketching in Wales, an extensive trip including Tintern, Harlech and Llangollen. In August 1849, with his friend Henry Harrod, the secretary of the newly formed Norfolk & Norwich Archaeological Society, and other members, he took part in a survey of Castle Rising castle, producing two drawings; one of these etched by Norwich School artist Henry Ninham appeared in Volume IV of *Norfolk Archaeology* (1855). In Volume V of *Norfolk*

Archaeology (1857) WJJB published, with sketch and diagram, his excavation of a Romano-British pottery kiln discovered on his Weybourne land. In 1850 he was in Switzerland sketching, and taking in Antwerp and Rouen either on the way out or the way back. Undated drawings survive of Land's End and Ben Nevis, showing that he really did travel the length and breadth of Britain.

As an artist he had a great ability to capture atmospheric effect in his landscapes, and his artistic eye certainly influenced his photographic work.

And so to William Johnson Jennis Bolding the photographer. It was certainly through his connection with the artistic, archaeological, scientific and cultural set in Norwich (sometimes colloquially referred to as the Norwich Brotherhood) that he was introduced to photography.

However it happened, he took to the newly invented art form like a duck to water. In Marjorie Allthorpe-Guyton's book on Norwich School artist Henry Bright² WJJB is described as being one of the most important nineteenth century photographers. That is praise indeed.

It was in 1839 that Louis Jacques Mandé Daguerre in France perfected his photographic process (the *Daguerreotype*), but the image produced could not be multiplied. Later in the same year in England William Henry Fox Talbot went public with his own process (the *Calotype*), where there was a negative and multiple copies could be produced. This process, however, gave a soft image and was liable to fade.

Photography came early to Norwich, and by 1843 there were professional photographic studios in the city. Two prominent local amateurs, Dr Hugh Diamond and Thomas Damant Eaton, were producing images in 1845 and must have been an important influence in the development of WJJB's photographic 'career'. The photograph of his sister Esther is a *Daguerreotype*, almost certainly by a professional photographer, and dates from the 1840s (Fig. 2). He probably experimented with the *Calotype* process, but his work really took off after the invention of the albumen print process by Louis Blanquart-Everard in 1850, and the wet collodion (negative) process by Frederick Scott Archer in 1851: this latter process used a glass negative instead of a paper one, and together these processes produced much sharper prints than the *calotype*. For the next thirty years and more these were the popular photographic processes.

The majority of WJJB's photographs are albumen prints from collodion negatives.

The first photographic processes were extremely complicated. Exposures were often measured in minutes, coating and processing the plates took time (and a portable darkroom) and involved numerous, often dangerous, chemicals such as potassium cyanide, potassium iodide, and gallic and nitric acids; collodion itself is gun-cotton dissolved in ether. Despite wearing protective clothing the photographers' skin would be stained and they would reek of the chemicals. The toner used to give the popular sepia effect was particularly noisome.

There were few amateur photographers in the early days as photography was an expensive exercise – fortunately, WJJB was extremely well off. As we have seen he was a talented artist with an original and enquiring mind; he must also have been a proficient chemist to be able to produce photographs of such a remarkable quality.

He converted a barn (Fig. 4) which lay behind his house, now the Maltings Hotel (Fig. 5), into a studio for his portrait photography. Sitters had to remain 'frozen' for a considerable length of time – with collodion negatives exposure time was typically between 5 and 30 seconds. Many Victorian portraits seem stiff due to this contrived positioning, yet WJJB managed to portray his sitters resting at ease in a natural pose (Fig. 6). He took several photographs of his estate workers holding a tool of their trade, some headgear or their hands in their lap. There is also the wonderful portrait from about 1855 of his mother 'old' Esther (née Johnson, from Cley) aged about

sixty-five (Fig. 3) already alluded to.

The sparseness of evidence on WJJB's links with the Norwich 'set' leave many questions unanswered, none more so than his friendship with the brilliant Norwich School artist John Middleton (1827-1856), whose life was tragically cut short by consumption. The two men were frequent companions on sketching trips, with Middleton often staying at Weybourne. A number of the artist's oils, watercolours and etchings were executed in North Norfolk. A treasured item is a Middleton scraperboard; on the back in pencil are the words "drawn expressly for Miss Bolding by J Middleton". Many of WJJB's photographs are of fallen trees and woodland scenes – typical Middleton material; though there is no evidence to support the idea, one could easily imagine Middleton returning to Norwich with copies of these photographs to help him with the composition of his paintings. Middleton, too, was a photographer; landscape images of his from a trip to North Wales are in the Norwich Castle art collection.

The Norwich Photographic Club was formed in 1854 and their first exhibition was held at the Exhibition Rooms in Broad Street, St Andrews, in November 1856 when fifty photographers showed five hundred prints. WJJB had been enrolled as a member of the society by John Middleton and he exhibited some portraits of his estate workers and village people, as well as some landscapes.

WJJB never married. His sister Hannah kept house for him until her death in 1892 (Fig. 7). His sister Esther, her husband William and growing family (Fig. 8) – there were eventually eleven children – often came to Weybourne from

King's Lynn, staying at The Cottage. His sisters, nephews and nieces were frequent sitters for his camera over many years. His niece Rose became a proficient photographer, coached by her uncle, and a number of her prints survive.

The Norfolk Chronicle & Norwich Gazette for 28 October 1899, under Weybourne news, recorded: "The death occurred on Saturday in his eighty-fourth year, of Mr William Johnson Jennis Bolding, a well-known inhabitant of the parish. The deceased, who had been in failing health for some years, will be much missed, especially by his poorer neighbours, amongst whom his kindly nature and unostentatious charity had won him universal respect and esteem. He added to considerable scientific attainments artistic powers of no mean degree, and besides having travelled a great deal in his early life, he was widely read in the literature of the day, especially as concerned archaeological subjects".

After WJJB's death his photographic output lay hidden in albums and loose in boxes and folders – literally hundreds of prints. It was in the early 1970s that these came to light: he was 'rediscovered' in 1975 when a small number of portraits were exhibited in 'The Real Thing – an Anthology of British Photographs 1840-1950', a travelling exhibition sponsored by the Arts Council.³ The catalogue stated that "Bolding's photographs of his estate workers and the village people of Weybourne are amongst the most powerful portraits in the history of photography".

Since then nothing has been heard of WJJB the photographer, but currently his reputation is in the process of being revived. An



Figure 2. Sister Esther – a Daguerreotype from the 1840s probably the work of a professional photographer

expert on early photography has recently described his portraits as being “seventy years ahead of their time”. Some of his photographs will be on view later this year in an exhibition in Norwich on early Norfolk photographers – see the next paragraph for details. Maybe his reputation as a photographer will now be permanent.

The exhibition at the Castle Museum, which runs for five months from 29th September 2003 to the 29th February 2004, is entitled “A Period Eye” and will feature the work of a number of early Norfolk photographers; there will be at least three works by WJJB included.

These images will be complemented by, and contrasted with, a number of new artworks (not all photographs) inspired by these pioneer photographers.



Figure 3. ‘Old’ Esther – WJJB’s mother c1855

Further Reading

If your curiosity has been piqued by this article you may like to read further.

For an historical overview *Photography, A Concise History* Ian Jeffrey (London: Thames & Hudson 1981) is a reasonable alternative to the Gernsheims’ magisterial two volume *The History of Photography* (London/New York: McGraw Hill, 1970).

For the impact of photography on 19th century art and artists read *Art and Photography* by Aaron Scharf (London: Penguin 1983).

Finally, *Camera Lucida* Roland Barthes (London: Fontana 1984) and *On Photography* Susan Sontag (London: Penguin 1979) give a good insight into the ‘why?’ of photography.

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Figure 4. Farmyard scene c1855 including the barn at Weybourne that WJJB converted into his studio



Figure 5. Monochrome drawing by WJJB of his house at Weybourne in the 1830s.

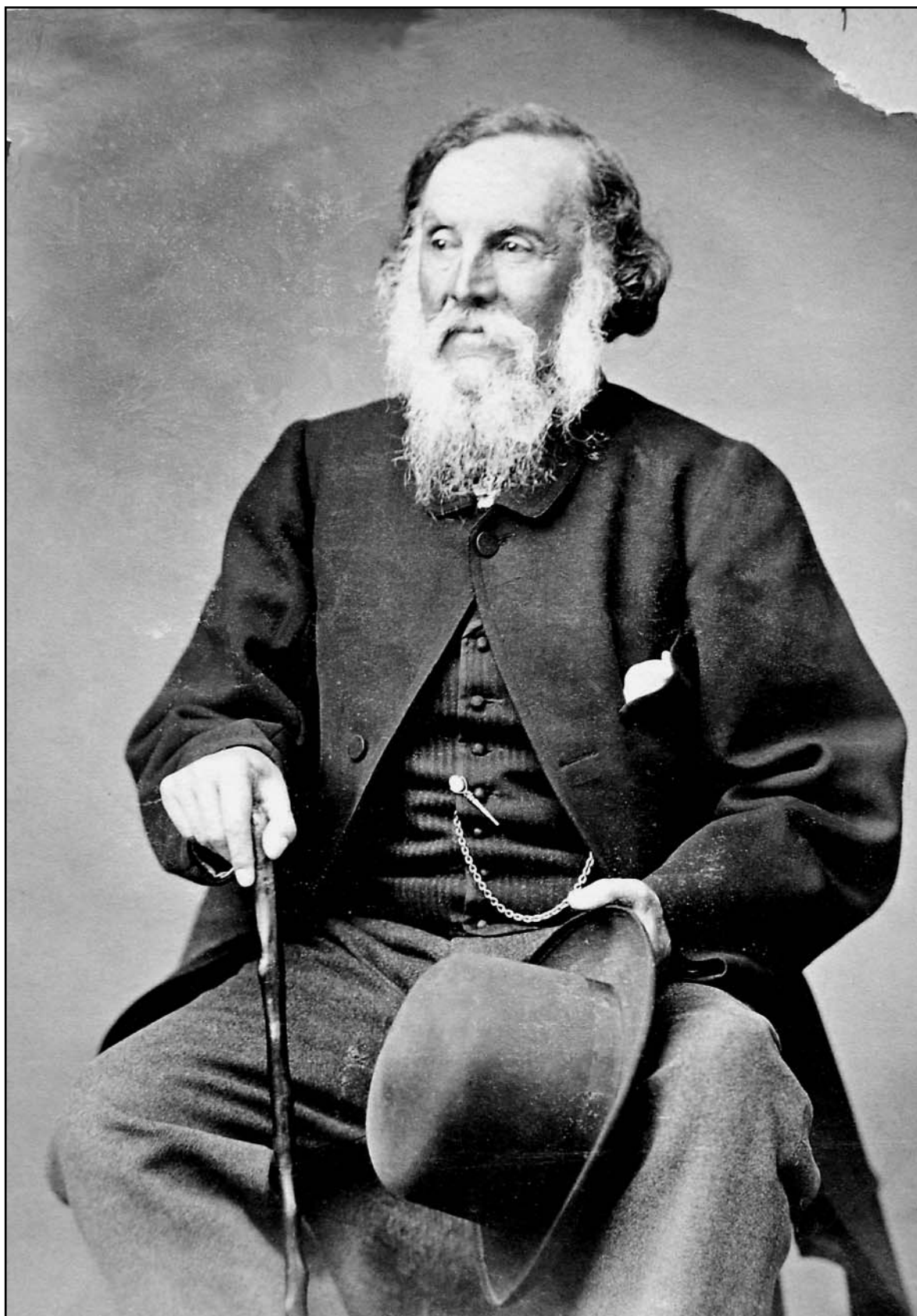


Figure 6. Portrait of an unknown villager c1854

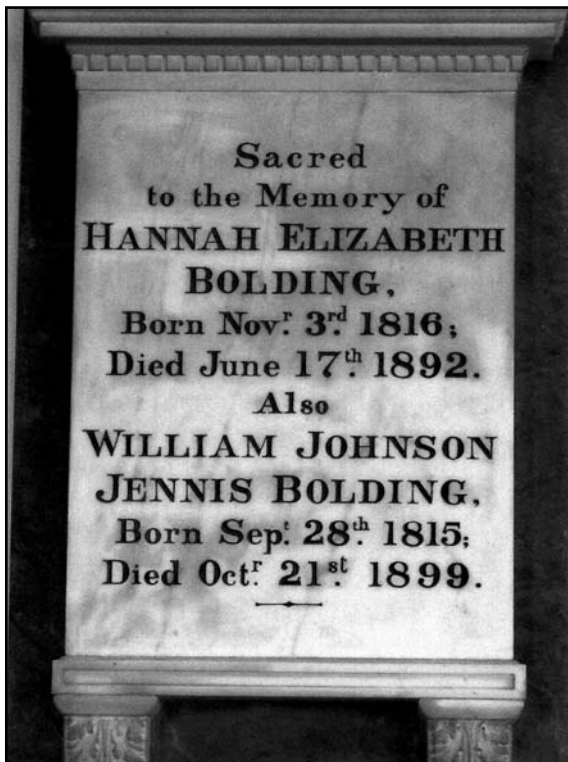


Figure 7. Memorial tablet to Hannah and WJJB in Weybourne church (photo: J Peake).



Figure 8. Esther and William Monement and four of their children. Portrait by WJJB c1855.

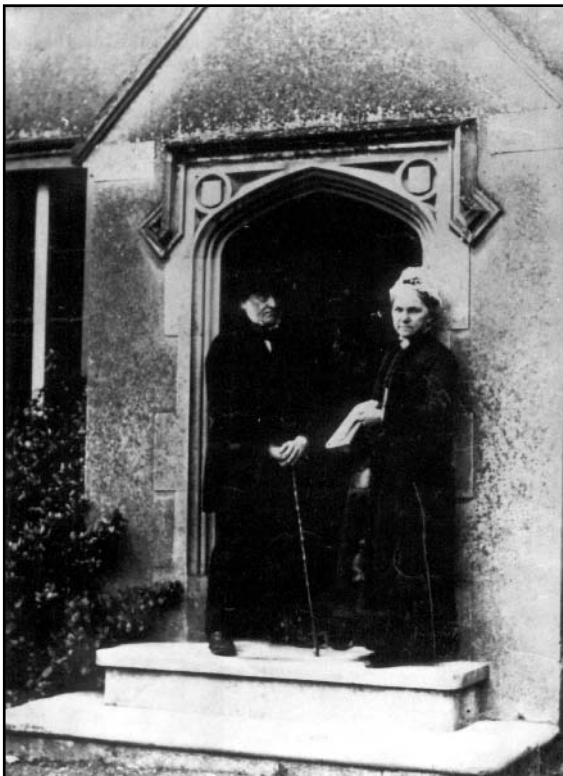


Figure 9. WJJB and his sister Hannah photographed by their niece Rose on the steps of The House (now the Maltings Hotel) c1890.



Figure 10. Portrait in oils of WJJB c1850.



Figure 11. Portrait by WJJB presumed to be of an office clerk c1860.



Figure 12. Portrait of his nephew Frank (born 1858) c1862. Frank later built 'The Green' at Cley.



Figure 13. Nieces of WJJB in the garden at Weybourne. 1860s



Figure 14. Postmill, watermill, and cottages on the beach from the farmyard behind The House. c1854.



Figure 15. The Street, Weybourne, looking east c1854.



Figure 16. Preparing to mow the barley c1860.

The Ann of Clay

Capt. Francis Plumb 1841

by Jonathan Hooton

Synopsis: the author gives some background on the artistic genre known as “pierhead painting” and traces the origin of a particular example which features a locally owned vessel.

The genre of ship portraits is one that is probably of more importance to those interested in maritime and local history rather than to the art historian. For the period before photography it is of vital importance in supplying the details of the hull, rigging and appearance of the many small merchantmen and fishing vessels that plied their trade around the coasts of Britain and Europe throughout the nineteenth century.

The characteristic that distinguished the ship portraits, or pierhead paintings, as they were frequently known, from marine paintings, was that the ship itself was the primary object, overriding all other considerations. Little attention was given to the sea or sky and background details were lacking, not always accurate and, if they were included at all, it was mainly to identify the port, especially if the ship was trading overseas.¹

However, the details of the ship were usually meticulous. Accuracy was very important because the purchasers were usually the owners or master of the vessel, who wished for a memento of a craft that they were often emotionally

involved with. Although it was permissible to accentuate details such as pennants or flags, they would not tolerate inaccuracy in the depiction of the ship. Sometimes the works were commissioned, but frequently the artist would produce sketches speculatively and hope for a sale. This would not be forthcoming if the ship were not reproduced in almost photographic detail, or if the price was too high.

The artists were usually self taught, based at one port and frequently they had been to sea and had gained first hand knowledge of their subject matter.²

The genre is likely to have descended from the 16th and 17th century ‘votive’ paintings. These were devotional paintings destined to hang in churches and intended as a thanksgiving, commissioned by the crew after a miraculous delivery from a near disaster at sea. They showed the vessel in the midst of a storm often with the Virgin Mary or a patron saint appearing in the storm laden clouds. This led in later centuries to the tradition of painting a pair of pictures, portraying the vessel in both foul and fair weather.³

The first true ship portraits appeared in the 18th century and seem to have originated from ports in the Mediterranean. They spread rapidly to the rest of Europe and the majority date from the 19th century. At the beginning of the period it was usual to show the



Figure 1. The “Ann of Clay Capt. Francis Plumb 1841” in (almost) all its glory

vessel in two and sometimes three positions on the same canvas, broadside, stern and bow, although later in the 19th century this usually became broadside only. Usually there would be an inscription stating the name, rig, home-port, name of the master and the port where it had been painted. The medium for most of these paintings was either watercolour or gouache, chosen because they were quick drying and easy to handle. Speed was important, because the vessel was usually in the port for only a few days and the painting could be supplied quickly, often the next day, rolled up for easy storage on board ship.⁴

Ship portraits survive for several of the Glaven's ships. Although some still remain locally many have left the area as descendants of the ship owners

have moved away. One fine example that has come to my notice recently is the ‘Ann of Clay’ owned by William May of East Ruston. It is a watercolour, heightened with gouache, with a hand painted border (fashionable 1780-1830) and close framed (i.e. no mount) in its original mahogany frame (Fig.1).

It is entitled ‘Ann of Clay Capt Francis Plumb 1841’. The signature on the painting is ‘J Hansen Sandberg No 11 Altona.’ Altona is a port on the river Elbe next to Hamburg and in 1938, when the city boundaries were altered, it became part of Hamburg. Sandberg was a street in Altona, and presumably J Hansen was living at number eleven. Roger Finch says of the port that “Altona, where once the Danish East India Company had its headquarters, on the Elbe estuary above the great port of Hamburg was the home of a



Figure 2. Detail of the sloop-rigged vessel, possibly the *Ann* re-rigged.

long and distinguished line of ship painters. Their paintings were brought back to Britain aboard the schooners and brigs to be proudly hung in sailors' homes all through the nineteenth century...Many paintings deriving from Altona were by the Hansens; H.C.Hansen (flourished 1838-47), B.H. Hansen (flourished 1827-56) and T. Hansen, working at approximately the same date, who were no doubt related".⁵ He does not mention a 'J' Hansen (although T and J may have been confused), but a J Hansen is included by E.H.H. Archibald, in his *Dictionary of Sea Painters*, who records the following,

"Hansen, J. Flourished early/mid 19th century. German ship portraitist working in Altona in the second quarter of the 19th century and in the usual stiff and stylised manner".⁶



Figure 3. Detail of the right hand vessel

The book also has an illustration by J Hansen (plate 514) of 'The schooner *Regina* of Muhlerberg/Blankenese 1840' from the Altonaer Museum in Hamburg. This shows two views of the vessel and includes a background similar to the 'Ann'.

In the painting of the 'Ann', she is shown broadside on, rigged as a brig with a female figurehead, a square stern and eight figures portrayed on the deck, one of which appears to be a woman. She also has seven fake gun ports painted on the hull. To the right the vessel is seen stern on, in rougher seas and carrying less sail. More puzzling is the vessel to the left with just one mast. It could just be the 'Ann', rigged as a sloop as she seems to be the right size and has a similar white line with seven gun ports. However, there is no figure-head and the bow is different in

shape. It was not unknown for a brig to be re-rigged as a sloop, as this meant she could be handled by a smaller crew and therefore cheaper to run, but it is very unlikely that she would have been converted from a sloop to a brig. Ship portraits often contained other craft in the distance, such as the vessel in between the broadside view of the 'Ann' and the sloop. However, the sloop is shown flying the red ensign, a triangular blue flag with a white letter 'M' and appears to be painted in too much detail to be considered part of the maritime background. Possibly she was another vessel, commanded by Captain Plumb and included in the painting at his request, but as yet, there is no documentary evidence to support this view.

The painting is dated 1841, which is fortunate in trying to track down details of the 'Ann' because the surviving Cley Register of Ships in the Norfolk Record Office starts in 1839. The 'Ann', was registered on 14th September 1839, of 125 tons and built in 1830 at Peterhead. She had been re-registered from Newcastle. She was described as having 1 deck, 2 masts, length 68 feet, breadth 21 feet and 1/2 inch and depth 12 feet 3 inches, rigged as a snow with a standing bow sprit, square stern, carvel built with no gallery and a female bust. The 64 shares were owned by Thomas Beckwith, clerk, from Cley (32), Marjorie Moore, widow, from Cley (16), John Copeman, butcher, from Cley (8) and Phoebe Digby (wife of John Digby, shoemaker) from Cley (8).⁷

This was obviously the vessel in the painting, the only discrepancy in the description being that the registers record her as being rigged as a snow. However, the two rigs

were very similar, both being square rigged on two masts with the snow having a small trysail mast just behind the main mast. It is difficult to tell from the painting whether the mast is there or not. Lloyds registers for 1842-44 record the 'Ann' as a brig, sailing between London and Hamburg, with Captain F Plum as her master, so there was confusion between brigs and snows at the time.⁸

Francis Plumb was born in Blakeney in 1793, which would have meant he was 46 when he took command of the 'Ann' when she was re-registered from Newcastle in 1839. He was not present in Blakeney or Cley at the time of the 1841 census, presumably because he was based in London where the 'Ann' was trading from. However, there was a James Plumb, mariner, aged 25, living in the High Street in Blakeney, who was presumably a relation and probably Francis's son or brother.⁹

Although vessels of 125 tons could use Blakeney, the profits were obviously greater for the owners with the vessel trading from London. Captain Plumb was obviously profiting from the trade as on 22nd March 1842 he became a part owner of the vessel when he bought the eight shares that had belonged to Phoebe Digby.¹⁰

Two years later, when he was 51, Francis Plumb left the 'Ann' after five years as her master. He sold his shares in the vessel on February 29th 1844, to Robert Mann and a new master was appointed. The 'Ann' continued to be registered at Cley until 1847, although she is unlikely to have traded from that port. The appointment of a new master at

Newcastle in August 1847 was followed in the December of that year with the 'Ann' being re-registered at Workington.¹¹

Plumb apparently wanted a change in direction. He had made enough money to consider buying his own vessel and was weary of a life away from home. He wanted to be based in his home port and so decided to pursue a career as a fisherman. In November 1844, nine months after leaving the 'Ann', he purchased the sloop 'Susannah', built at Blakeney in 1822. In 1833 she was registered at Cley (and recorded as being of 23 tons) belonging to Thomas William Temple. Later that year she was sold to Robert Vince jnr. of Blakeney and Mark Cullingford of London, who held the majority of the shares, until she was bought by Francis Plumb.¹²

The 'Susannah' was re-registered at Cley in April 1845 (this time recorded as 19 tons) with Francis Plumb, fisherman, as master. The ownership at this date seems a little confused. Plumb must have had some financial difficulties as the vessel had been mortgaged to John Ransome, gentleman, of Holt in January of that year. It is not clear when Francis Plumb regained the ownership, but in 1848, a note in the Registers states that Henry Starling Ransome, as executor for the estate, of the now deceased John Ransome, "has transferred all his rights to Francis Plumb of Blakeney". Also, during 1848, Plumb used the vessel as security in borrowing £45 plus interest from William Cooke of Glandford. This was only a temporary measure as another note in the Registers records Cooke as stating "that all

his claims on the vessel 'Susannah' are satisfied and the mortgage cancelled."¹³

Francis Plumb must have continued fishing from Blakeney. He is recorded in the 1847 Poll book as living in Cley but was not mentioned in the 1852 Poll book, although James Plumb was still in Blakeney. By the time of the 1851 Census, (aged 58), his occupation was still given as fisherman and he was still living in Blakeney, though perhaps by now he was in semi-retirement with a younger relative in charge of the fishing. He may have died shortly after this and certainly by 1865 when the 'Susannah' was re-registered at Southampton.^{14, 15}

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Reminiscences of the Glaven Valley: Care of the Dying and the Dead in the First 50 years of the 20th Century

by Monica White

Synopsis: an account of local nursing and funeral practices in the first half of the 20th century with reference to the customs and personalities as recalled by some of the people who lived in the Glaven villages at that time and was collected by the author at the suggestion of the present Rector, the Rev. Philip Norwood.

During the first half of the last century most people died in their own homes. Few died in nursing homes or hospitals, although during the first three decades some, usually the very poorest, died in the institutes (or workhouses) at Walsingham and Gressenhall. Before the discovery of antibiotics and the development of modern surgical techniques, there was little medical help for the chronically sick or dying. Often all that could be done was to alleviate their pain and make them comfortable. This could be done at home and so it was in the home that most dying people were cared for.

There was some professional nursing help available from nursing agencies based in Norwich and Cambridge and, after 1920, from the District Nursing Service. This Service, which was instituted, I believe, soon after the end of the 1914-18 war, was operational in North Norfolk in the early 1920s.

The nurse was based at Cley and was a familiar figure, dressed in a royal-blue uniform with a blue pill-box hat perched on her head, riding round the villages on a heavy, upright, bicycle. One of the first nurses, if not the first, was Nurse Flatt who married three times, becoming in turn Nurse Weston and Nurse Docking. She seems to have been a woman of considerable character who is remembered with respect rather than with affection. Many young women whom she attended when they had their children were said to be terrified of her.

Nursing services, like all other medical services at the time, were not free. Indeed they seem to have been surprisingly expensive. As with doctors' practices, there was a club or fund into which small sums of money could be paid each week, to be used when necessary. The money was collected by a woman in the local community. But, during the first half of the 20th Century, incomes in North Norfolk were low and often seasonal. Many people could not afford to save on a regular basis. Even those who could seem to have preferred to use the District Nursing Service only for childbirth care, or for nursing during short, acute illnesses. Few could afford to pay for nursing help for the chronically sick or for the dying.

The nurse was, however, always willing to advise patients without making a charge. Janet Harcourt, for example, remembers being told that soon after her birth her parents became concerned about her health. So her father saddled a horse and rode from Wiveton to Cley to ask the nurse for her advice. She gave it willingly and freely. A number of other people recalled being told of similar incidents.

Nevertheless, the burden of nursing care for the dying fell on the families, and it must have been a considerable burden for many. Cottages were small and families, until well into the 1930s, were large, often consisting of three generations. Beds were shared as a matter of course, and most, if not all, rooms were used as sleeping quarters. Labour-saving domestic appliances were scarce, and, in any case, few homes had electricity before the mid 1930s and many not until after 1945. No houses were connected to the mains water and sewage systems, until after the 1953 floods. Before that, in many homes, water had to be pumped up by hand from communal wells. All toilet facilities were outside. It must have been difficult to care adequately for both the healthy and for the chronically sick or dying. It is probably for this reason that a significant, though small, number of people, mostly the elderly, spent their last few months at Walsingham or Gressenhall where, incidentally, they were unlikely to have received medical care.

Very often the need to give the dying continuous care and nursing meant that couples with young families had to welcome sick relatives into their own homes. Sometimes, young women had to

leave their jobs, or even their own children, to return home to nurse elderly parents. Most women seem to have done this with good grace, perhaps partly out of respect and love for their parents, but, perhaps, also because they realised there was no alternative. But others resented the necessity to return home and the consequent loss of financial independence.

There was help and support from the local communities. The rector, or vicar, and his wife made regular visits to the dying and sometimes gave material help. The doctor called, often waiving his fee, and gave reassurance. Within each village there were women, often the unmarried women from the more well-to-do families, who took an interest in those most needing help. They provided luxuries for the dying, particularly if they were children. Neighbours helped to care for children; provided hot meals; worked on the allotments; and, perhaps, most importantly, would sit with the dying. It was considered wholly wrong that anyone should die alone and unattended, so this was a most valuable service. When it was clear that death was imminent relatives, friends and neighbours would come to the house to share the vigil over the dying person.

Author's note: It is perhaps easy to overstress the amount of help and support given by local communities fifty or more years ago. People tend to remember particular incidents, not what happened most of the time. But it does seem that there were many people ready to lend a hand and share in the care of the dying and that, in the past, the community did supply much of the care now given by professionals.

Care of the Dead

When a death occurred, preparations for the funeral took place within the home. The body was not taken away to a chapel of rest. It would seem from the recollections of the oldest in our communities, who recall stories told them by their parents and grandparents, that during the 19th Century each family laid out their own dead. It was the family who prepared the body to be coffined, and young children were expected to help. But by 1900, or probably a little before, there were women in each village who were willing to undertake this task for the families. In Wiveton and Cley there seem to have been a number of such women during the first years of the 20th Century, but after 1920 the task was usually done by the District Nurse or by members of the Red Cross. In Blakeney, too, there were several women ready to lay out the dead, including Mrs Daglish from Temple Place who was the local midwife. But there was one woman above all who was willing to turn out at any time of the day or night to prepare the body to be placed in the coffin. This was Mrs Dinah Jackson who, together with her sister (who moved out of the district when she married) learnt the art of caring for the dead from her mother. Dinah was a woman of character who is remembered with affection by all who knew her, even those who only knew her when, as children, they saw her pushing an old pram up and down Blakeney High Street.

Dinah was rarely given money for her services; she was mostly paid in kind. Gladys Jackson, Dinah's daughter, born in 1903, remembers her mother being given

a small bag of coal, or wood, a loaf of bread, or produce from an allotment. But most often she was given clothes or effects of the deceased which she then sold. However she did sometimes receive cash. One summer, for example soon after the 1939-45 war an old gentleman died on Blakeney Point. His body, wrap-ped in a tarpaulin, was rowed to Morston Quay by Ted Eales, the Warden. On the quay the body was transferred to the back of a builder's van, and taken to an outbuilding attached to the gentleman's home in Blakeney High Street. It was there that Dinah laid out the body and she was given the loose change in the old man's pockets. Gladys believes that this was the custom when someone died unexpectedly, not in their bed.

Dinah washed the body, dressed it, combed the hair, weighted down the eye-lids with old pennies, and did all the other tasks necessary to prepare the body to be laid in the coffin so that it could be viewed by neighbours and friends. The deceased was dressed in a shroud or in clothes chosen by their family. The shroud consisted of a long white cotton or linen gown, rather like a nightgown, and white knitted stockings. In the early years of the century it sometimes also included a white cap or bonnet and white slippers.

The shroud, if provided by the undertaker, represented a significant part of the cost of a funeral, so most people made or acquired a shroud during their lifetime, when they could afford it. The shroud was then wrapped in cloth and put away until it was needed.

Funeral expenses were a great worry for many people, particularly for the elderly who did not wish the cost of the funeral to fall upon their

families. So most saved regularly throughout their life. Some took out life insurance for themselves, and often, also, for their children. The insurance man was here, as well as over most of the country, a familiar sight on his weekly or monthly visits to the villages to collect the premiums. Those who could not afford to take out a policy put money aside when they could. The money was given to a reliable neighbour or hidden in the house, surprisingly often under the mattress. The state gave no money towards funeral costs until the early 1920s when Lloyd George introduced a death grant of £50. In many parts of the country the grant was known as "a Lloyd-George" but I do not know if that was the case here.

There were no specialist undertakers in the coastal strip of North and Northwest Norfolk until the late 1950s. Local builders or boat-builders doubled as undertakers, and it was the builder's men who organised the funerals and bore the coffins from the house to the church and from the church to the grave. There were two firms locally – Meadows-Grimes at Wiveton and Starlings in Blakeney. They served a wide area – Blakeney, Cley, Glandford, Hindringham, Langham, Morston, Salthouse, Stiffkey and Wiveton, and even as far as Burnham Market. As soon as possible after a death had occurred, the builder/undertaker's men were called to the house to measure the body so that a coffin could be made. Although pre-formed coffins and coffin-packs were available in big cities in the early 20th Century, none seem to have been used here until the 1960s. Coffins were made to measure, so to speak, in the builders' yards, in

sheds or cottages in the villages. They were made from solid wood and lined with cloth. The quality and type of wood and cloth used depended on how much the family could afford, but all had brass handles and breastplate on which the name and age were engraved. Coffins were usually plain and the lining very simple, but one woman recalls seeing a coffin lined with white velvet and with a pillow of white flowers. She was only about seven years old at the time (in about 1926) and does not recall whose funeral it was. She believes that it was that of a young woman. In the early part of the century coffins were not made for the destitute. Instead their bodies were shrouded and wrapped in material, but this practice became rare after the end of World War I.

After the body was placed in it, the coffin was taken to a downstairs room. The lid of the coffin was not screwed down until the morning of the funeral, unless the nature of the illness which had led to the death made it necessary. Instead, the lid was laid on the coffin and removed when friends and neighbours called to view the body and to pay their last respects. When visitors came the drapes covering the face and body were folded back. Quite young children were taken to see the dead. One woman remembers that when she was six or seven years old she was taken by her mother to see the body of the old lady next door, a great friend of the family. She felt no fear or apprehension, but she remembers clearly that the old lady looked beautiful in a blue dress and with her grey hair neatly curled, and she still recalls the feeling of peace and tranquillity in the room.

The stairs of many cottages at that time were steep, narrow, and often twisty, so it could be very difficult to carry a coffin down these stairs and many subterfuges were resorted to. Sylvia Claxton remembers that one day, on her way to school, she saw a coffin being lowered through an upstairs window of a house in Blakeney High Street. If it proved impossible to get the coffin downstairs, one of the men would take the family into a downstairs room, shut the door and discuss details of the funeral arrangements with them, while his colleagues manhandled the body down wrapped in a blanket, often in a most undignified way. The men preferred to do this soon after the death had occurred before the onset of rigor mortis. The problem was so serious that people sometimes brought the dying person downstairs in the days immediately before their death. This was particularly so if the sick person was unusually tall or heavy.

Usually the coffin was placed in a room that was rarely used, but in many homes this was impossible. One woman who was seven years old when her mother died, remembers that the coffin was put on the table in the kitchen-cum-living room. She asked her father if it could not be taken to the church. He replied that it was her mother's home and that she would remain in it until she was taken to her final resting place.

But although the coffin was usually kept in the home until the day, or the eve, of the funeral there were times when coffins were placed elsewhere. Bodies that were washed up on the beach or marshes were put in coffins in Blakeney Guildhall, while attempts were made to identify them. Many

remembered going into the Guildhall on their way to school in a high state of excitement, although whether they were hoping to see a dead body, or a skeleton, or a ghost they cannot now recall. Sometimes coffins were placed in the north porch of Blakeney Church (and probably in the porches of other churches in the area). The porch was ideal for the purpose. It was cool, could be locked, had a grill for ventilation, and was not used as an entrance to the church. A number of people recalled that the porch was used in this way, but not why. Some suggested that it was done if the deceased had no near relatives in the village; others that the bodies were those of people whose family could not afford a funeral; others that it was due to the nature of the fatal illness.

There were many customs that were observed following a death. Gladys Jackson told me that her mother opened a window as soon as she entered the room where the dead person lay, to speed the exit of the spirit from the body. No-one else mentioned this custom. Perhaps the family did not know that Dinah did this. The curtains in the room where the death had occurred and, later, in the room where the coffin lay, were drawn as a mark of respect for the dead. It was also a signal to the neighbours that the sick person had died. In some houses, the curtains in all rooms facing the road were drawn.

As soon as possible after the death the church bell was rung to tell of the passing of a christian soul. It tolled a measured stroke for each year of life of the deceased. Many people described, most movingly, how they would stop whatever they were doing in the home,

street or field, and listen to the news told by the bell. In many parts of the country the bell announced the death of a parishioner by a peal of three times three for a man, or three times two for a woman. These were followed by the years of the dead person. Dorothy Sayer's novel, "The Nine Tailors" suggests that this was the custom in the fenlands of East Anglia, but no-one can remember whether it happened here. The custom of ringing the church bell was discontinued in 1939 when the pealing of church bells was to be a signal that an invasion had occurred and was not renewed after the war.

Graves – Burials – Funerals

Although the first crematorium was opened in London in the early 1920s, locally almost everyone was buried, not cremated, and most were buried in a churchyard, not in a cemetery. Before the 1930s the graves were dug by the sexton, perhaps assisted by the builder/undertaker's men. After this time, and particularly after 1940, the graves were dug by the undertaker's men. The graves were lined with real turf, not artificial grass or baize. Sometimes the turf was studded with flowers provided and put in place by the "Brancaster Girls". After the early 1920s these were Girl Guides from the company run by Lady Cory Wright in Brancaster. Lady Cory Wright was a keen and very skilled gardener and she had a plot of land in Brancaster on which she grew flowers for sale. She supplied her own florist's shop in Burlington Arcade, off Piccadilly, in London, and flowers for local funerals and weddings. She was, I believe, the only commercial flower grower in

North and Northwest Norfolk at the time. There are many amusing stories associated with the "Brancaster Girls". Once, for example, the girls were working in a grave close to a stone tomb. While they were busy the grave-diggers rapped on the tomb. The girls were startled and rather frightened, particularly when the men said that they had not heard anything. When the grave-diggers rapped a second time, the girls shot out of the grave and refused to go down again. The turf had to be pulled up and spread on the ground before the girls would return to their work.

There were areas in the churchyards purchased by particular families. Generally, wealthier parishioners were buried on the south side of the church; the poorer members of the parish on the north side. But this was not invariable. When the rector's wife, Mrs Lee-Elliott died in 1936 she asked to be buried on the north side because "there are no poor or rich in the sight of God". Paradoxically she asked for her coffin to be made by a specialist undertaker in Norwich. Ted Grimes who organised the funeral maintained that it was of very inferior quality compared with a locally made coffin.

There does not seem to have been a special area set aside for the destitute who could not afford to pay for a funeral. This is very different from large cities which, until the death grant, had paupers' graves – large, shallow graves which held many bodies. Such burials were often not properly recorded. No-one could remember who paid, locally, for the funerals of the destitute, although it was suggested that the rector or vicar did so himself.

Funerals took place, for obvious

reasons, as soon as possible after death, usually within three days. If this was not possible, the coffin was lined with lead and securely sealed. For example, the body of a German sailor was washed up on the shore at Blakeney soon after the end of the 1939-45 war. It was placed in a coffin in the Guildhall and arrangements made for the funeral. On the morning of the funeral the body was identified by the German Embassy. Mr Starling arranged for the coffin to be lined with lead and sealed, and the coffin was driven down to Felixstowe on the first leg of its journey to the man's home in Germany.

The coffins were conveyed to the church in a number of different ways. Ted Grimes' grandfather could remember a time, at the end of the 19th Century when a coffin was carried from the home to the church on the shoulders of four bearers, accompanied by two men carrying stools. Every now and then, the stools were placed on the ground and the coffin lowered on to them to give the bearers a rest. Round about 1900 each of the churches in the area, with the exception of Glandford Church, acquired a wheeled bier or bier carriage. These were used to bear the coffins from the home to the church for the funeral and from the church to the grave. Glandford Church used the bier belonging to Cley Church. The biers were slatted rectangular frames mounted on four wheels with a steering handle or device at the back. A coffin was held in place by leather or canvas straps. The biers were made by local craftsmen and vary considerably in shape and quality of workmanship. They were pushed (or pulled up hills) by four men, two on each side. A fifth man at the

back steered them. The undertaker walked in front of the bier from the home to the church.

Although biers were used for most funerals, the coffins of the more wealthy families – the farmers and the gentry – were carried to church on a horse-drawn hearse, which was drawn by regular carriage horses, not by the special jet-black horses used in big cities. The hearse moved at a walking pace, preceded by the undertaker. As early as 1926 motor hearses were used very occasionally to carry coffins from distant villages or towns, particularly when the men employed were not of the village.

The bier or hearse was followed by a procession of relatives and friends, men and women, dressed in black. Most people had black clothes, put aside to be used at funerals, but black garments were often borrowed, particularly by the poorer families. As the procession moved through the village people would come to their doors and stand in silence. The men would doff their hats. Anyone who was in the street as the procession passed would do the same. Vehicles on the road would stop or drop behind the procession and proceed at the funeral walking pace. They would not overtake. The blinds or curtains of windows facing the road were often drawn. It was almost as if the whole village was in mourning.

The coffins were often carried through paths rather than along the main roads. This was particularly true of Cley where coffins were carried from the Coast Road to the Fairstead through the grounds of Hall Farm, and it was commonly believed that if a path was used by bearers carrying a coffin it became a legal right-of-way.

At Blakeney and Cley the coffin was taken to the Great West Door and carried through it into the church while a muffled bell was tolled. Many of those who were choir members during the first 50 years of the last century and so were involved in many funerals, cannot recall that sound without a shiver. The atmosphere was intense and very moving.

The coffin remained on the bier throughout the funeral service. Then it was either wheeled from the church to the grave, or carried on the shoulders of the bearers. After the ceremony at the graveside, the mourners returned to the house of the deceased for refreshments. The bearers were invited back and were given some beer as a token of gratitude.

The care of the dying and the dead changed gradually during the first 50 years of the last century, but the rate of change was accelerated by the Second World War and the subsequent changes in society. The National Health Service and improved health care meant that people lived longer and often died in hospital or residential home. In the mid 1950s Starling's funeral business was taken over by Mr Sutton, a specialist undertaker, of Stiffkey – later of Wells – and in the early 1970s Grimes sold his business to the same man. Suttons opened a chapel of rest at Wells and bodies could be taken there soon after death. The body was carried from there to the church by motor hearse, though for many years Sutton would, if asked, take the coffin to the home of the deceased, and then get out and walk in front of the hearse for about a hundred yards in respect for the dead. Mourners drove to the church in their own vehicles.

Many of the pre-war customs disappeared, so by the mid 1970s funerals were very similar to those of today, with the community involved in only the very last act – that of the funeral service.

Author's note: This account is necessarily an incomplete one, partly because the events described happened a long time ago when the people I talked to were young, and partly because the memories recalled depended on the questions I asked, and I only discovered what questions I needed to ask as the study proceeded. But I hope that it does give a picture, however incomplete, of the way in which the dying and dead were cared for 50 or more years ago.

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A Family of Substance

George Brigge of Wiveton and his relatives

Pamela Peake

Synopsis: the brass memorials for George and Anne Brigge and the earlier cadaver are the starting points for exploring this family that held a manor in Wiveton, now known as Wiveton Briggess, yet seemingly never lived in the parish. Early colour is provided by wills from the 16th century, highlighting a family of substance with property across the county. They were essentially medieval in outlook where values of honour, integrity of an inheritance and the permanence of the name were paramount. Nowhere is this more clearly seen than in George Brigge's will, while his memorial is a lasting legacy to the family.

Introduction

The nature and structure of the family has changed and evolved over many generations and is not always easy to define. It has been argued that the family as we know it, where the intimate and private relations between parents and children are important values, only arose in the early modern period. Prior to this the important features were "Honour of the line, the integrity of an inheritance or the age and permanence of a name".¹ At the same time the 'big house' would have identified a certain social stratum, it would have been the place where people met, talked, did business and socialised and consequently

there was little space for the 'family', and children became adults at a very early age.¹ While such a characterisation of the family may appear rather strange to us today, it does identify some of the important themes that must have exercised the minds not only of George Brigge, the key player in this paper, but also his family before him. It also draws attention to the time-scale in which he was living, the 16th century in Tudor England at the very end of the medieval period and beginning of the early modern.

George Brigge who lived at Old Hall, the 'big house', was according to the taxation lists of 1592, the chief landowner in Letheringsett replacing the Heydons and particularly William Heydon who died the following year. He had only recently moved to Letheringsett from Guist where his immediate family had lived for some time. Although Cozens-Hardy describes him as a man of substance, often called upon for assistance by those in financial straits, there is no evidence that he ever held public or political office, although he was linked to those who did.²

Consequently he escapes attention in Hassell Smith's seminal account of government and politics in Elizabethan Norfolk.³ He is an exemplar of a level of society below the level of gentry – the minor gentry or 'middling sort' – who as Lord of at least three Manors held power at a local level.

As might be anticipated there are no surviving family archives, so how do we paint a picture of George Brigge, a man immortalised by a superb portrait brass of himself with his wife in Wiveton Church and whose family gave its surname to a manor, Wiveton Brigges? Although ironically George insisted on calling it the 'Manor of Wiveton'. Indeed this was a man of substance, who was concerned with his place in history and whose family had held substantial parcels of land in Cley, Wiveton and Letheringsett for some two hundred years since 1401.

There are only a few surviving documents that provide any clues to the nature of the man, the two most important being his will and that of his wife Anne. Additional clues to his background are provided by his brass and shield, as this throws open the door on his antecedents, and their activities begin to shed light on each other. Then through the actions of his daughters it is possible to follow the fate of some of the ancestral lands as they pass out of the family. Undoubtedly the paucity of the records ensures a number of gaps in this account, but it is a story worth recording given the importance of the Brigge family in the history of Wiveton.

George Brigge, "a man of his time" (Figs 1 and 2)

Last of the Line

The will of George Brigge provides an important insight into this Elizabethan man, it establishes a context and represents his views at a moment in time when death was nigh. He wrote his will when primogeniture

was the custom, that is, inheritance by the eldest son and when there is no male heir, daughters inheriting as co heirs.⁴ It was made at Old Hall, now Hall Farm Letheringsett, on 22nd February 1597/98, just three days before he died, a most complicated document addressing the issues that were troubling him at that time.⁵ It was presented before the Prerogative Court of Canterbury and the Norfolk Consistory Court and eventually confirmed at the latter, 4th November 1598, having been proved earlier on 16th March 1597/98 when probate was granted to his widow, Anne Brigge.

Foremost he wanted to ensure that his Manor of Wiveton and all of his other properties in Wiveton, Glandford and Bayfield or elsewhere within the County, not already bequeathed, stayed within the immediate family and that the Brigge surname continued to be associated with them. He did this in the certain knowledge that his youngest daughter Sara, as yet unmarried, had formed what he considered an unsuitable attraction to John Jenkinson, a local man who was not to his liking and not suitable for the honour of the family.

His eldest daughter Margaret had already made an advantageous marriage with William Hunt, son and heir of Thomas Hunt of Foulsham, a notable family in the area with extensive land holdings. Previous negotiations with Thomas Hunt are alluded to in the will and indicate that a marriage settlement had already been made or agreed, whereby the Manor of Callis in Guestwick would pass to Margaret and William after the death of her mother. This would complement the holdings the Hunts already



Figure 1. Brass memorial for George and Anne Brigge in Wiveton Church (rubbing by Kenneth Allen, mid 1900s).



Figure 2. George Brigge. detail from the brass memorial.

held and exclude the Glaven lands.

His instructions were then emphatic “Whereas I have had a purpose and desire of long time if it please God to match Sara Brigg with Erasmus Brigg the eldest son of Thomas Brigg of Lowestoft in the County of Suffolk”, in other words Sara should marry Erasmus, her second cousin. If this marriage failed to take place then Erasmus Brigg was to inherit Sara’s share and his male heirs and for want of issue then it was to pass to his younger brother William and his male heirs and for want of his issue, then and only then, Sara and her heirs or kindred nominees providing she had married a person agreeable to his wife and that it was not under any circumstances John Jenkinson! For Sara, “should she be persuaded to consent privately or publickly to any contract of marriage with one John Jenkinson or to any secret agreement whereby he may be benefited or relieved” was to be disinherited and all her bequests were to be

“utterly forfeit void and of none effect”.

This type of will, where a new line of succession was named, was known as an entail. It was a device used to break existing lines and transfer ownership of a property that was predetermined by law.⁶ The new line was to be through his nephew, Erasmus, and his nephew’s male heirs. However by the end of the 16th century, entails were becoming unattractive to recipients because conditions were often attached, while lawyers and courts were also finding ways of breaking them for the disinherited family.

George was consumed with anxiety about the loss of the Brigge name for the Manor of Wiveton and equally determined to put every obstacle in Sara’s way. Clause after clause covered every conceivable eventuality. This was censure in full operation and George was being true to his time in taking this action, as 16th century family behaviour was characterised by strong elements of deference, patri-

archy and authoritarianism. The power of a father over a daughter was not questioned and the rights of a child to select their own spouse were often strictly circumscribed. Marriage was a contract to protect property, personal feelings counted for little.⁶ Cozens-Hardy attributed modern sentiment when he suggested that Sara was a difficult daughter! Nonetheless one begins to see the determination that was characteristic of both father and daughter. He was the product of his medieval upbringing where values of family honour came before self and expressions of feelings.²

He then made due provision of dower for his widow for the rest of her life as was custom which included the foldcourses and liberties of foldage for the Wiveton and Glandford flocks. These rights were an essential requisite for successful sheep-corn husbandry on the light sandy soils of coastal North Norfolk and increasingly zealously guarded by Lords of the Manor during the latter half of the 16th century.

The extent and regard for the remainder of his family can be seen with an annuity granted to his brother Edward, small bequests to his married sisters and their children and finally instructions for his wife to provide for the feeding and clothing of his sister Mary for the remainder of her life. Mary Brigge was subsequently buried at Wiveton, 30th July 1616, the last Brigge by name of this line to appear in the Wiveton registers.⁷

George wrestled with yet another problem which was the matter of a debt for "£800 odd" which he and Robert Stileman of Field Dalling had stood surety for when Sir Christopher Heydon had mortgaged some land. The outcome of this

venture is not recorded but George left instructions in case his Executor was driven to pay his portion and so bequeathed all interest and title of this land to his wife and her heirs. This was a considerable amount of money that could not be ignored.

The Heydons and Brigges were well acquainted having exchanged and purchased lands from each other in the previous generation. Edward Brigge, George's father, had made an alternative bequest in his will to his younger son Edward in case, as he feared with good reason, Sir Christopher Heydon might claim fourteen and a half acres in Guestwick that were destined for Edward when he came of age⁵.

Then, rather tellingly George, unlike his father and grandfather, left £4 be distributed to the poor of Wiveton, Blakeney, Glandford and Letheringsett. Not Wood Norton where he had been brought up as a child, nor neighbouring Guist where he had started family life with his wife and children. Another sign of his determination to identify himself with the Glaven Valley and Wiveton in particular.

His will followed the custom of the time and he was exercising all the rights of a late medieval head of family. George Brigge died 25th February 1597/98, presumably at Old Hall, and was buried the next day in Wiveton Church.⁷

Anne Brigge, his widow (Fig. 3)

One has to wonder how Anne viewed her husband's will, both as an obedient and compliant wife, whilst he was still alive, and then as a mother, when she was widowed and freed from his constraints. She made her will in 1616,⁵ when her sentiments



Figure 3. Anne Brigge, detail from the brass memorial.

became abundantly clear for she not only appointed John Jenkinson Gent. as her sole executor but also left the “Manor of Wiveton with the appurtenances to him and to his heirs for ever”. In addition Anne left property to Sara’s eldest son, Brigg Jenkinson and his heirs that was to pass to his younger brother Henry if there were no heirs and then onto the three daughters of Sara. This property was described as “one Tenement or Messuage called Bases with barn, dove houses and Crofts thereunto adioyninge situate and beinge in the Town of Wiveton”.

Anne, Elizabeth and Sara Jenkinson, Sara’s three daughters, were left substantial sums of money, whilst Anne was also to have “one chest of Linnings standing in the libble parlor and one bedd standinge in the parlor full furnished as it stand to have at the dayt and day of her marriage”. In stark contrast, Margaret Hunt’s three daughters were left a house in Wiveton, Dawbers, the grandsons, nothing.

Her will was highly irregular in many respects. First it was signed without witnesses then a codicil was added, witnessed but not signed. Secondly and more surprisingly, Anne was making a statement that quite clearly contradicted her husband’s intent, and moreover, in the knowledge that she had already rendered the property in Wiveton to her late husband’s executor, although probably retaining the use of it for her lifetime. This was done in 1604, shortly after Sara came of age and married and presumably this was Sara’s inheritance which she had forfeited by her actions.

The sequence of events that followed are confusing as there is no clear evidence. Anne had property and wealth in her own right that was hers to disperse to family and servants, but what had she hoped to gain by writing John Jenkinson and the Manor of Wiveton into her will? Possibly in an age where emphasis was placed on honour, Anne was making in her will a public statement showing her acceptance and approval of the marriage and singling out John Jenkinson by making him the sole executor of her will. It suggests that, at least, in the years since George’s death, this part of the family was united.

Anne Brigge was buried in Wiveton Church on 18th July 1616, just twelve days before her sister-in-law, Mary Brigge.⁷

The Elizabethan brass (Figs 1, 4 and 6)

The status of the family is graphically demonstrated by the unique portrait brass that commemorates George and Anne Brigge, this is monumental art, the finest surviving portrait of

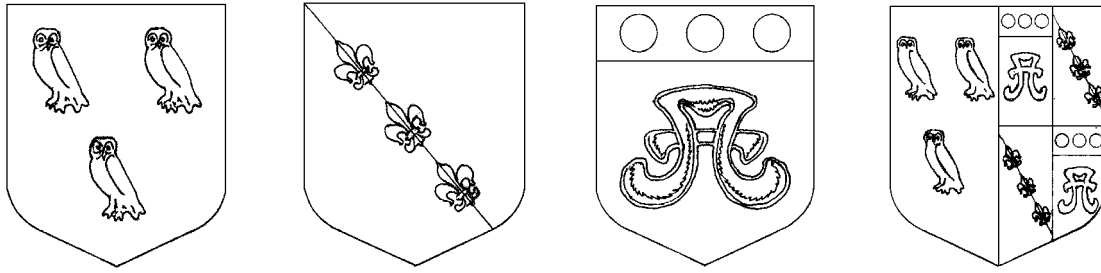


Figure 4. Family Arms: from left to right they are, Brigge, Cocket, Johnson, then George Brigge's Arms, quartered with Johnson and Cocket (F Hawes, 2003).

a civilian couple in the Holt Hundred complete with shield. Figure 1 shows a rubbing of the brass without the shield while in Figure 6 it can be seen positioned centre top, between the effigies of George and Anne. The brass makes a powerful statement about George Brigge's view of wealth and his position in society.

The brass was made in the workshop of Garat Johnson in Southwark, (south of the River Thames) 1597/98 and in addition to the two portraits and shield, there is an engraved plate with a brief biography.⁹ Originally, these brasses were designed to be set on top of a raised tomb for in 1614 it is described thus "The tombe where Mr Brigges was buried in the chancell where the high alter stood is to be taken down and the grave stone to be laid even with the ground".¹⁰ This placed the original tomb in the most prominent position imaginable, for parishioners would look to the altar and be reminded of him. It must have looked magnificent, as the brasses were also originally coloured. Today the memorial is nearby the chancel arch and laid flush with the floor. The brasses were set in a new sandstone base in 1977, replacing an older, much damaged and cracked slab of Purbeck Marble.⁹

Each effigy measures 32.5 inches tall by 12 inches wide and both are standing on cushions with hands together in prayer and are depicted in fashionable Elizabethan dress of the day. George wears a loose gown with hanging sleeves, doublet and hose underneath and the ruff around his neck; Anne is dressed in a farthingale with stomacher, ruff and brocaded petticoat and on her head, a small cap with the hint of a widow's veil at the back.

The shield has the arms of the Brigge family quartered with the Johnson arms for his wife who was, Anne Johnson, the daughter of George Johnson, and the Cocket arms for his mother who was, Katherine Cocket, the daughter of Edward Cocket.⁸ This is George Brigge's pedigree, his lineage for all to see and a reminder of advantageous family alliances made by himself and his father.

The various arms (Fig.4) are described as follows, where argent is silver, sable is black and or is gold. The Brigge arms: Argent, three owls sable beaked and legged or; the Johnson arms: Or a water bouget sable on a chief of the second, three bezants or, and the Cocket arms: Per bend Argent and Sable three Fleur-de-lis in bend counter charged.

Generations of Lords

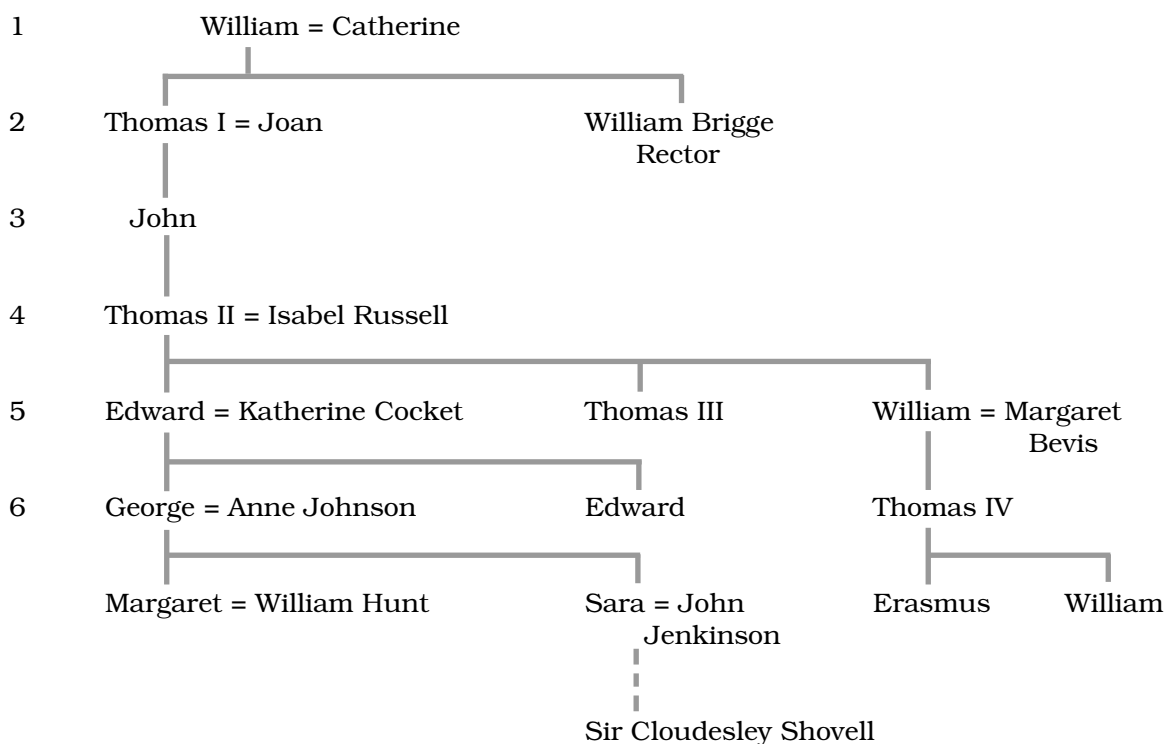


Figure 5. *Lords of the Manor: the six generations of Brigge to hold the Lordship of Wiveton Briggess, with other key members of the family.*

The Antecedents (Figs 5 & 6)

The origins of the family are far from clear, but various authors have suggested a link with the Briggess of Salle, sometime towards the end of the 14th century.¹¹ Brygges or Atte Brygge, as they were then styled, appear in this area, first in Holt then a little later in both Cley and Wiveton. Thomas Brygge of ‘pilgrim fame’ from Holt may even have been a brother of William Brygge, the first Brygge to be recorded in Wiveton in 1401 as Lord of the Manor. This manor extended across the marsh and into Cley and had been created from Stafford lands.¹²

Blomefield¹² identified the succession of six generations of the Brigge family to hold the Lordship of the Manor of Wiveton Briggess

and the rectors appointed by them and this was elaborated further by Linnell⁸ who identified John Brigge as the missing third generation in the succession. This information is summarised here in Figure 5.

Interestingly one of the very few pieces of documentation regarding William Brigge is found in the Close Rolls of 1406 which refer to him as “William Brigge, Steward of Clay co. Norfolk” when he, Lady Roos and her bailiff were ordered to return to John Valence and Robert Valence their ship together with all the contents that had been impounded when the vessel was blown ashore during a gale.¹³ Within twenty years William was dead and it was Catherine his widow who became the first member of the family to present to the living of Wiveton, the Advowson having been acquired by her hus-



Figure 6. Interior of Wiveton Church looking towards the altar, showing position of brasses with the Cadaver in the foreground, William Bisshop Rector in the chancel beyond, and George and Anne Brigge's memorial to the left.

band some time after 1417. Catherine presented Edward Hunt in 1426 and then her son, William Brigge the following year.¹²

The brothers Thomas I and William, sons of William and Catherine Brigge, Lord of the Manor and Rector respectively, were pivotal to developments in Wiveton during the middle years of the 15th century for this was a period of great activity in the parish, indeed for the whole of the lower Glaven. By 1435 a new nave had been built for St Nicholas in Blakeney, then in 1437, John

Hakon, a wealthy ship owner of Wiveton left 200 marks in his Will to build a new church for Wiveton. By all accounts building was rapid, the church being completed without major interruption.

The new church in Wiveton faced Cley not across the present day meadows but over the busy medieval harbour and it must have been built at about the time Cley Church was completed. The latter had begun a hundred years earlier and came to a halt before work was resumed in the middle of the 15th century, maybe even stimulated by

watching St. Mary rise on the opposite bank. The three churches attest to the prosperity of the Haven and provide a glimpse of the activity and populace of the time. Wealth, prosperity, merchants from near and far, trade both coastal and overseas, this was the arena that the Brigge brothers, Thomas I and William, were operating in.

Then in 1445, Thomas Brigge I made a gift to his brother, William Brigge chaplain, for the duration of his life of £4 yearly to be taken from the following lands that he held in Norfolk, namely: "Poors", a piece of ground in Letherynsete (Letheringsett), C[l]okwode in Cley (Cley), Godewyns in Eggefelde (Edgefield) and Caleyshalle in Guestwith (Guestwick). This was witnessed by William Yelverton the King's justice, John Bacon esquire and John Heydon and followed by a Memorandum of acknowledgement by the parties on 18th November, 1468.¹³ Clokwode in Cley and Callis Hall in Guestwick together with Wiveton Brigges were core assets that remained central to the family's income until the seventeenth century, when all were eventually lost.

Presumably Thomas I was providing William, the first Rector of the new church, with additional income for living expenses to facilitate his incumbency or maybe he was making it possible for William to contribute to the rebuilding of the chancel. For whatever reason, it does provide a picture of financial support for the church by the Brigges and a glimpse of the family lands.

William Brigge was Rector for 48 years, 1427-1475, giving a life time of service to the parish. His memorial stone in the chancel at Wiveton was noted by Blomefield when vis-

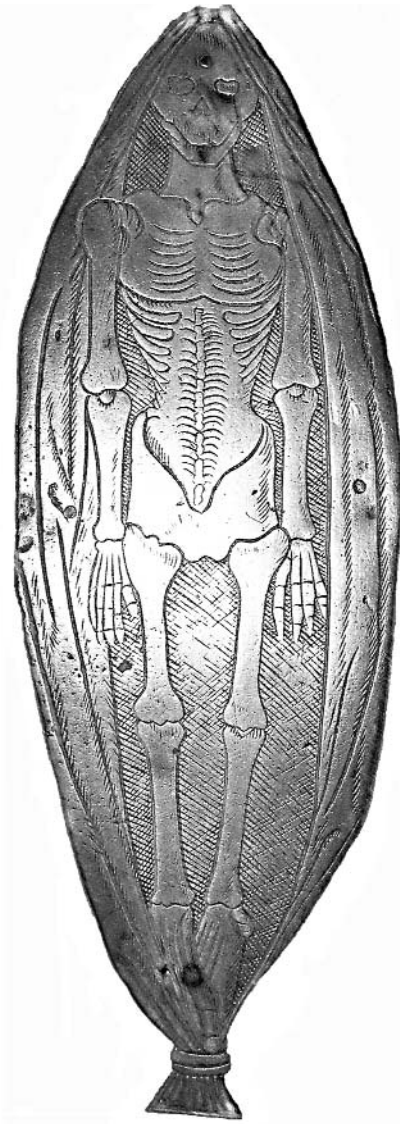


Figure 7. *The Cadaver brass.*

iting the area, probably in 1734.¹⁴ He recorded the inscription as "Orate p' a'i'a William Brigg quo'da' rectoris istius ecclie". Where did he see it, what caused it to be removed or which area of Victorian tiles and wooden pews has since covered it up for it is not there today?

And one has to ask why is there no memorial for Thomas Brigge I, Patron of this new church? Surely he would have desired a premier position for himself and his wife Joan. Does the enigmatic cadaver brass provide the clue? Positioned at the east end of the centre aisle

of the nave just before the chancel, Figure 6, a prime position and with the appropriate style being a shroud rather than a knight in armour, which Thomas was not, it is certainly a strong candidate.

In the event, Joan Brigge outlived both her husband and brother-in-law and presented William Bisshop to the living in 1475. He also enjoyed a long period of service till 1512 and his brass memorial survives set in the centre of the chancel floor, much worn but still visible, showing a priest in mass vestments that lack both stole and maniple.

The Cadaver Brass, but which Thomas? (Fig. 7)

This brass is a male skeleton wrapped in a shroud and bound both top and bottom. A matching brass (on the right side) is now missing, as is the rectangular inscription plate which would probably have identified and dated the couple. We know that the remaining portion of damaged brass represents a man because, when viewed with your back to the altar, it is on the left, the conventional position for a male, and it has a rib missing! The brass is set in a large stone slab measuring 9 ft. by 4 ft. 4 ins. and in each corner a small 3.5 inch square matrix indicates a possible setting for the four evangelistic symbols.

Brasses of this design were fashionable from the mid 15th century, although fading by the early 16th century, in each case the body was shown either as a skeleton or an emaciated corpse wrapped in a shroud. In addition the figures were often grinning and there were even examples where worms were shown devouring the

corpse. The Wiveton cadaver brass was described by Mill Stephenson as a rather crude example of local workmanship, not dissimilar to that found in Aylsham for Richard and Cecily Howard, 1499.⁸ Salle Church has a shroud brass with a naked and emaciated figure, dated 1451 for John Brigge, but the Will of his son Thomas 1494, left a sum for the purchase of a stone for his father so that the brass cannot then be earlier than 1494.⁵

Another example altogether is the Symondes shroud brass of 1511, which can be found just across the Glaven valley in Cley.

Parkin (in Blomefield) made no reference to this brass in his account of Wiveton, suggesting that the inscription plate had already disappeared.¹² Two hundred years later, Linnell was happy to suggest that it was for "Thomas Brigge I whose wife Joan presented (the Rector William Bisshop) to Wiveton Church in 1475", a suggestion that has been accepted and perpetuated in all the church guides ever since.⁸ There is much to commend this viewpoint.

In contrast Mill Stephenson gave a date for the cadaver of c.1540, a time when cadavers were out of fashion and went on to suggest that it was "possibly Thomas Briggs II, who died in 1544", the grandfather of George Brigge.⁸ Subsequent documentary evidence shows that this Thomas died 8th February 1530/31 and in his will he expressed a desire to be buried within the church at Heacham throwing further doubt on this identification.⁵

The West Norfolk Connection

The third generation represented by John Brigge is virtually without record. It is possible, though unlikely, that he could be the John Brygges on the Cley Muster Roll for 1525, but he was not the John Briggs censured in 1567 at Cley for not frequenting his parish church and subsequently absolved by paying 2d to the Poor Box “pixi di pauperum”.¹³ Apart from buying land in Heacham in 1515/1516, when he was referred to as John Brigge of Cley, all we know of him with any certainty is that he was the father of Thomas Brigge II, grandfather of Edward and great grandfather of George Brigge, the three generations of Briggses that lived throughout the sixteenth century in times of religious upheaval and change.

However the Heacham connection is intriguing because it led to the discovery of a will made by Thomas Brigge II of Heacham dated 10th February 1527/28 which was proved ten years later.⁵ This is the earliest will for any member of the family and is typical for Catholic England in respect of provision for his soul, bequests to the high altar for tythes and offerings forgotten and the services of a priest to sing for the souls of his good friends, but atypical in many other respects. Furthermore, it provides clear evidence that the family was not living in Wiveton, a fact substantiated by subsequent family wills and a trend that continued until George returned in 1592 to spend the last five years of his life in the Glaven Valley. Thus we have a long period of absentee Lords, whose affairs in the ancestral holdings of the Glaven parishes were probably managed by stewards.

Thomas Brigge II continued to acquire additional land in Heacham and in the neighbouring parishes of Snettisham, Ringstead and Sedgeford, both “free and bonde”. A pattern of enterprise emulated by his son and grandson, for it ensured that there were sufficient holdings to provide for younger sons and settlements for daughters at the time of their marriage, leaving the integrity of the ancestral lands in Wiveton and possibly Callis for the heir. It also raised their status as a family, building a position of some consequence in their communities and thus enhancing the marriage prospects of daughters and younger sons. This was a family where the men were concerned with the honour of the line and strengthening close kinship.

The significant feature of his will is that many of these newly acquired pieces of land were identified with such precision and detail to size, name of previous owner and with sufficient topographical features to suggest that Thomas was buying into an open field landscape with closes. Furthermore, his descriptions allow some pieces to be identified in the Sedgeford Field Book of 1546.¹⁵ The total area held by the Brigge family in Sedgeford alone was just over 41 acres. Edward Brigge, Thomas II's heir, retained his properties in Heacham and Ringstead until he died in 1562, while the fate of the land held by his younger brothers, Thomas III and William, is not clear.

Edward was the first Protestant Brigge to be Lord of the Manor and his family began to make their appearance in early parish registers.⁷ For the first time we get hitherto unrecorded details such

as names of daughters, death of heirs and an awareness of infant mortality, names of spouses, second marriages, cousins, ages at death and of course the parish in which these events were recorded.¹¹

Cisilye Brigge made an auspicious entrance being christened on May Day, 1558; she is the first name in the first baptismal register and the first Brigge in any of the Wiveton registers. Was she Edward's daughter who he brought back to Wiveton to be baptised in the church where he was patron?

There is no information on when Edward Brigge moved away from Heacham, but eventually his activities were centred around Wood Norton, Guestwick and Guist where he held another manor. Katherine, his widow, held court for the Manor of Dele in Brygge there shortly after he died, then again seven years later when she was widowed for the second time.¹⁶ When he died, Edward had ten children to provide for, a married daughter, three underage sons and six more daughters, again all underage. His will made provision for everyone of them, leaving the advowson and patronage of Wiveton to his youngest son Edmund with instructions that his wife was to protect it from being taken over by George.⁵ George would have been about 18 years old when his father died and you can't help thinking that his character was already noted. In the event Edmund died and George inherited the advowson of Wiveton being the last Brigge to exercise his right when he appointed James Poynton to the living in 1591. Edward Brigge died 22nd January 1562/63 and was buried at Wood Norton.¹¹

William, Edward's younger brother, moved across the county

to Bradfield, near North Walsham, where he married Margaret Bevis the daughter of Thomas Bevis of Bradfield. This is interesting for earlier Brygges had held lands there in the 13th and 14th centuries which they subsequently sold to the Harbord family, the Barons Suffield of Gunton Hall.¹⁷

William was succeeded by his son Thomas IV whose interests extended to Lowestoft in Suffolk whilst he retained a base at Bradfield. Thomas Brigge IV was thus nephew of Edward and first cousin of George Brigge and it was Erasmus Brigge, his son and heir, that George Brigge instructed Sara to marry.

This complex and sometimes confusing saga of George Brigge's antecedents demonstrates the mobility of the landed class with representatives in the west of the county around Heacham and Sedgeford, in the east at Bradfield, Holt, Wiveton and Cley and south into Suffolk at Lowestoft, besides the strong representation in the centre around Wood Norton, Guist, Guestwick and Thurning.

The Co-heiresses (Fig. 5)

The story returns to the children of George and Anne Brigge, for this couple had four daughters and a son, of which only the eldest and youngest daughters survived to adulthood. The first daughter Margaret was baptised at Guist 1575, Richard, the son and heir at Guestwick while the three younger daughters were baptised in Wiveton.⁷ George was undoubtedly 'operating' across his sphere of influence, reinforcing his family links with Wiveton when he brought his youngest daughters back.

Margaret Hunt

Margaret married William Hunt of Sharrington in Letheringsett Church 20th November 1596, the son and heir of Thomas Hunt of Foulsham, a soap boiler and successful London merchant, Lord of the Manor of Foulsham whose magnificent memorial is in the parish church. The impact of this marriage on the Brigge Manor of Callis lands would have been impossible for George to foretell, but he must have felt that they would be secure for his grandchildren.

Her husband, William Hunt, died in 1644 and within the same year Margaret was adjudged a lunatic at an inquisition, and the Manors of Sharrington, Holt Hales, Geyst, Wichingham and various others, which she was holding at the time, all passed directly to her son, Thomas Hunt.¹² Certifying an individual as a lunatic was a much used ploy at that time to break agreements and enabled relatives to seize control of an inheritance. In the fullness of time, the Callis lands at Guestwick and Thurning which George Brigge had described in his Will as “lands meadows pasture feedings rents services and other hereditaments thereunto belonging” were amalgamated with Hunt properties and conveyed to Thomas Newman in 1688.¹⁸ The deeds of this conveyance show that the Brigge portion had consisted of “all those closes sometime the closes of George Brigges called Inpins, the Fir closes and Buntings lying in Guestwick aforesaid and all those the five acres of arable land late also of the said George Briggs”.

The location of these holdings is illustrated on an estate map of 1726 that has long horned cattle depicted on the pastures and is full of descriptive field names such as

‘Milkers Meadow’ and ‘Dairy Closes’.¹⁸ A later, nineteenth century map allows these lands to be located today, in spite of subsequent topographical changes.¹⁸

Margaret’s final resting place was in Little Walsingham where she was buried on 15th March, 1652 having reached the age of 77.⁸

Sara Brigge

Sara was a teenager of some 15 or 16 years at the time of her father’s death and being resolved to marry John Jenkinson, she duly contested his will. For some unknown reason, Sara did not persist with her suit and when she failed to appear at the hearing, the will was duly promulgated. The consequence being that the Manor of Wiveton, the minor Manor of Cloc[k]wode and other property in neighbouring parishes went to her nephew, Thomas Hunt. He then sold it to his father just after Anne Brigge died and it was not long before it passed out of the family.⁸ Cozens-Hardy identified Cloc[k]wode through his family papers with Locker Breck, also known as Cley Watering which is in the south of Cley parish where today, Water Lane meets the Cley – Holt Road. It appears to have been a small parcel, no more than an enclosed Close of 30 acres.¹³

The Jenkinson name appears in Wiveton, Cley, Cockthorpe and Morston Parish Registers for some years after and a picture of Sara’s life begins to emerge although where and when she married John Jenkinson is still unknown, as is her final resting place. Her children were baptised in both Wiveton and Cley churches and using information from her mother’s will, we know that there were two sons and three daughters by 1616 and it

would appear that she lived in Cley, presumably supported by her husband, his family and quite possibly her own mother who seems to have had an affection for her grandchild, Anne Jenkinson. This reflects a sentiment, an expression of early modern family where private relationships counted and were recognised.

Ironically George Brigge would probably have been proud of the eventual outcome of this union for Sara's youngest son Henry married Lucy Cloudesley (also spelt Clowdesley) the daughter of Thomas Cloudesley of Cley and their daughter Ann, married John Shovell the son of a farmer at Cockthorpe and great grandson of a Norwich Sheriff. Sir Cloudesley Shovell, the great Stuart Admiral and Norfolk naval hero, was Sara's great grandson by this marriage of John and Ann Shovell.⁷

Sara's prospects as she married John Jenkinson may not have been as promising as George had intended for her, but her family survived. Sir Cloudesley Shovell, his great-great-grandson, who had died tragically after his ship foundered and been buried in the Isles of Scilly, was returned to England as a national hero and buried in Westminster Abbey at Queen Anne's expense – an indication of the esteem in which he was held.

Conclusion

The brass to George and Anne Brigge has lain in Wiveton Church for 400 years as a monument to a craftsman's skills and a lasting testament to the family. Strong ties of Patronage and Lordship held the Brigges to Wiveton even though three successive generations, at least, lived

away from the parish, including George Brigge himself.

Their story is still unfinished, for the 16th century wills that have formed the basis of this article, although illuminating, are at the same time misleading through omission, posing yet more lines of enquiry. In dealing with their spiritual and temporal affairs, each member of the family in turn provided an insight into their responses to religious upheaval and personal circumstances throughout the century. Each demonstrated that they were operating and controlling properties across the breadth of Norfolk and were well able to provide for all their children, probably not unlike their forebears in the 15th century. They were men of substance.

However, wills have to be tempered with caution for rarely do they mention inheritance, marriage settlements, endowments and bequests that have taken place before death. Indeed the Callis lands disappear for some 150 years before they are mentioned again in George's will, while the lands in Guist, which Edward owned, were lost from sight for 70 years till his grand-daughter's inquisition, suggesting they had been part of her marriage settlement.

The inherited lands of Thomas and Edward, who both had sons, were safe with an heir but for George and Anne who had lost Richard, their only son, the outlook was quite different. Everyone of his antecedents back to his three times great-grandfather had produced a son to inherit the Wiveton lands and it befell George to face the prospect of this two hundred year link coming to an end. Was he overcome with melancholy at the disappearance of the ancestral

lands from the family and the loss of his Brigge name?

His will, in spite of all its complexities, was a vain attempt to safeguard against these eventualities. In doing so he demonstrated that right to the end, he continued to be a late medieval man valuing honour, integrity and name above all else.

Acknowledgements

A special thank you to Paul Rutledge for alerting me to interesting and obscure sources, nuances of word meaning and generally opening my eyes to the hand of 16th century scribes; to Frank Hawes for his help with the Arms and Linda Nudds's generosity in sharing her research.

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The Glebe Terriers of Cley

Changes in the landscape during the 17th and 18th Centuries

John Peake

Synopsis: changes in field patterns in Cley are analysed using a sequence of 200 years of glebe terriers. The few years between 1760 and 1765 are identified as the period when the medieval pattern of open fields largely disappeared and a new order was established. Information on 4 parsonages is presented and the Thomlinson family identified as key players in initiating change.

Introduction

Fields and hedges set against sea and marsh are reoccurring themes in the landscape of North Norfolk, a pattern broken occasionally by church towers that remind us of the omniscient presence of the church. Yet the origins of much of this familiar scene are comparatively recent with the present pattern of fields and hedges only emerging during the 17th and 18th centuries and even as late as the 19th. Yet how, why and when this happened is often far from clear at a local level. This paper uses one set of documents, glebe terriers, to explore some of the questions relating to fields and parsonages in the parish of Cley.

The production and form of the glebe terriers was established by the Acts of 1571 and 1604 and in a series of associated canons. They were to be prepared 'by the view of honest men in each parish' and

performed regularly prior to an episcopal visitation and examination; copies were then deposited in the diocesan registry. They were concerned primarily with information on: (1) parsonage house or vicarage plus associated buildings; (2) glebe lands; (3) church plate and other moveable objects; (4) churchyard, and (5) rates and tithes.^{1, 2} Much of their value for this study lies in the continuity of this record, nevertheless as these documents were prepared solely for the church (and not historians) the picture that emerges can be in places tantalisingly fragmentary.

As Dymond so expressively stated "The parson's glebe, in a sense, was the last surviving medieval tenement in the modern landscape". Indeed the origins of the glebe holdings must reside in the early development of parish churches and the endowments of benefactors wishing to make provision for their souls. Surprisingly, the upheaval of the Reformation left the glebe lands largely unaffected, but our knowledge of them was expanded by the production of written records.²

Cley Glebe Terriers

The first terrier is from 1613³, prepared about a year after the major fire in Cley, then there is a gap until 1677⁴ and from then onwards a continuous series

has survived, with usually one being available in each decade, although two were produced in a single year when there was a change of rector. Their value for the study of landscape history diminishes, however, with the production of detailed surveys for Parliamentary Enclosure and tithe apportionments in the 19th century.

The terrier for 1613 is a simple document containing basic information on the parsonage, the area of each piece of land held, where it was found and the whole divided into two groups on the basis of their location in the North or South Fields. This format persisted until 1765, although the descriptions of each piece of land were expanded from 1677 onwards to include data on abutments and buildings. The abutments gave the basic information for fixing the position of each piece by naming the occupiers of land to the north, south, west and east, and occasionally topographical features such as a highway or hill. Consequently the abutments provide a wealth of information that expands the value of the terriers enormously.

These pieces of glebe land would have been cultivated either by or on behalf of the benefice or let to suitable tenants, while the surrounding pieces were farmed by lay people not necessarily living in the parish of Cley. Here a distinction has to be made between glebe lands and land owned by the Rector; the former are the property of the benefice with the Rector only being a transitory occupant, while the latter is held in his own right having inherited, purchased or even been given it. Indeed many rectors have held lands in Cley as individuals, including it would appear, rectors from other parishes.

The complicated structure of manors in Norfolk also impinges here, for often more than one manor held land in a parish and then not as single block, but scattered throughout the fields. In Cley there were at least five manors or honours recorded as holding land in the parish, while the Manor of Cley held land in Salthouse, Wiveton and Blakeney. So that glebe land for the benefice of Cley held in Salthouse abutted at times onto lands of the Manor of Salthouse on one side and the manorial lands of the Manor of Cley on another!

Care has to be taken when using information gleaned from the terriers, as the sample of land they cover is small compared to the overall size of the parish and the unique position of the glebe lands as the property of the benefice means they may have been atypical, while the possibility of data being copied from one terrier to the next without revision will always be a concern. On a more practical note, the value of the information is dependant on being able to follow individual pieces of land through successive terriers. For the period between 1613 and 1760 this is feasible, but after 1760 the reorganisation of the field patterns obscured many of the distinguishing features.

Fields

Cley lies in a part of the county where the medieval pattern of farming was based on large open fields with individual farmers holding many small strips of land scattered across them. These strips were usually organised into blocks called furlongs that were then grouped together to form

fields. Characteristically there were no hedges marking the boundaries between strips and woodland was often scarce; a glance at Cotman's sketch of Wiveton and Blakeney from Cley emphasises the paucity of trees in this area even as late as the early 19th century. As Williamson states "These were bleak and open landscapes".⁵

Gradually this landscape changed as land was enclosed, with hedges being planted around larger pieces of land formed by the amalgamation of smaller strips; typically these enclosed areas were owned by a single individual. The negotiations needed to achieve these changes must have been complex and protracted given the number of people who were involved. So the rate at which enclosure progressed varied enormously between parishes and regions and in many areas it was not completed until Parliamentary Enclosure was enforced during the 18th and 19th centuries. Cley presents another interesting complication for during the 17th and 18th centuries a diverse array of economic interests were represented in the Town ranging from farming to fishing and maritime trade, suggesting people with entrepreneurial flair were present.

The characteristic village of the open field system was large and nucleated with the farmers living within its envelope. However, despite being a linear village with nearly all the buildings concentrated along the interface between the land and the estuary, Cley still shows many of the appropriate characteristics. Yet this structure was also a response to its functions as a port during medieval and modern times. The manor court books show there were further

refinements as the village was divided into Northgate, Southgate and Fleagate.⁶ Southgate is now called Newgate and is the district around the church where in the 17th and 18th centuries the parsonages were concentrated.

The information from the Cley terriers is summarised in Tables 1–5. The basic data for fields being organised into four groups (Tables 1 and 3) that reflect stages in the evolution from a broadly medieval pattern of open fields to the enclosed fields of the 19th century:

Group 1: Years 1613 – 1725: land divided into furlongs lying in two fields with some closes or enclosures

Group 2: Years 1740 – 1760: a transition period with small changes in the organisation of the furlongs and one of the open fields subdivided

Group 3: Years 1765 – 1812: major changes – the two field arrangement disappears and a series of new divisions emerge

Group 4: Years 1812 onwards: further reorganisation under Parliamentary Enclosure; all the small pieces of glebe lands disappear and are replaced by a larger unit.

Group 1: Years 1613 – 1725 (Table 1)

The terriers reveal a very simple arrangement during the 17th century with, at least, two fields, North and South; on the east side of the Town the boundary between them followed a line that would have lain close to the route of the present road leading from Cley to Holt. The glebe land consisted of 18 pieces or strips spread over 16 furlongs with a total area of just over 23 acres, and these continued to form the

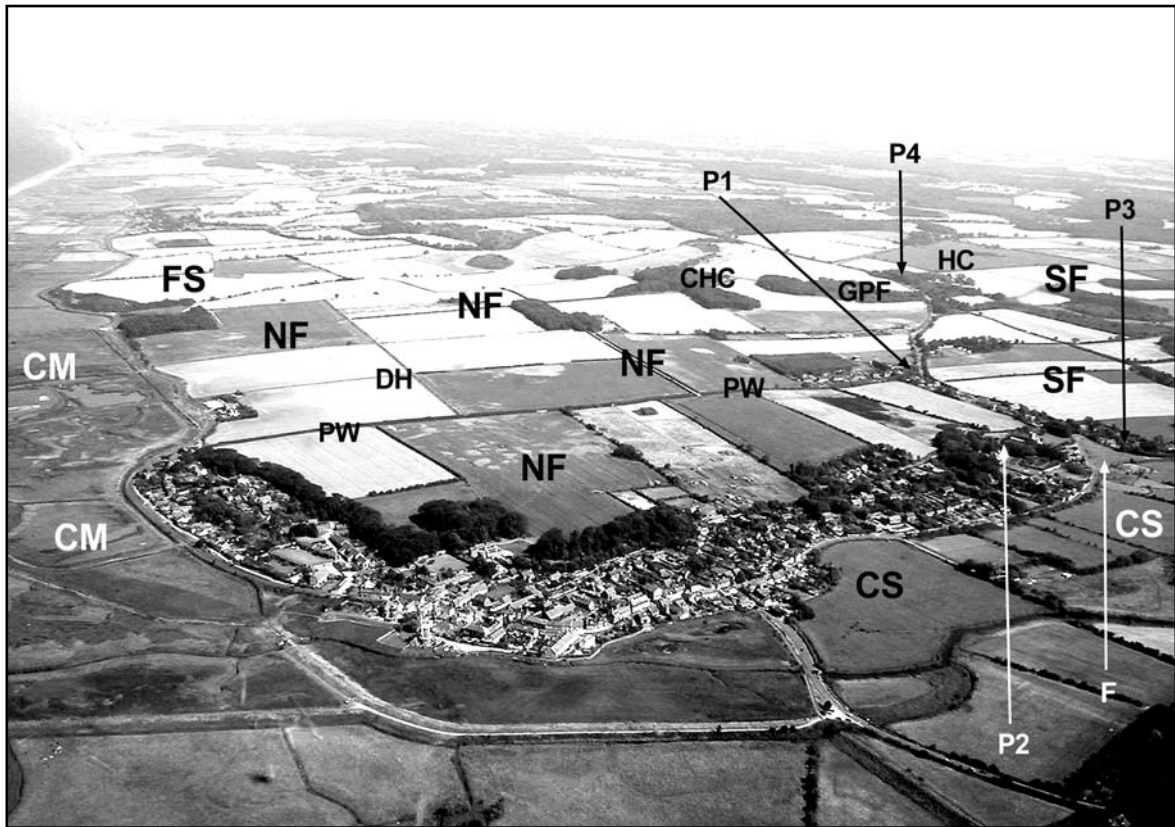


Figure 1. Aerial photograph of Cley looking south-east, 27 July 2002. Letters identify places or areas mentioned in the text: CHC = Cophill Close; CM = Cley Marsh; CS = Common Saltmarsh; DH = Dog Hill; F = Fairstead; FS = Field of Salthouse; GPF = Gravel Pit Field; HC = Hay Croft; NF = North Field; P1-4 = sites of four parsonages; PW = Processional Way; SF = South Field.

core of the glebe holdings over the next two centuries, for the habit of giving land to the Church and the benefice appears to have largely ceased by this time. The majority of these pieces had areas of less than one acre, with just a few pieces larger at 5, 3 and 2 acres.

The sizes recorded for each strip appear remarkably precise, but it is clear from commentaries in later terriers that this precision is somewhat illusory. Certainly earlier in medieval times, acre was not a precise area and it even varied between counties up to 1800.⁷ The use of phrases in the terriers such as 'by estimation' or the qualifications 'a good' or 'generous' and even reasons why changes have been made suggest imprecision. However, towards the end of the 18th century precision appears to

have increased with areas being quoted as 'by measurement'.

The frequent use of the term 'furlong' and the presence of two fields indicates that much of the parish retained a predominately medieval form with open fields divided into smaller units, furlongs, that were further subdivided into strips cultivated by individual farmers. It is impossible to deduce from the terriers whether there were any additional fields, but it was not unusual for parishes to have only two. In 1613 this scene would have been enhanced by open saltmarsh to the west and north and with Cley Common to the south-east, all providing common grazing for sheep and cattle.

Although the first terrier gives no indication of whether any land was enclosed, other sources are

more informative. Blomefield¹¹ records the gift by Lord Roos to the Rector in 1524 of a messuage and a close (see below), and in various documents relating to the Britiffes from the end of the 16th and early 17th centuries, closes surrounded by walls were recorded within or near to the Town⁸. While, in 1632 some 30 acres of Clockwode Close were recorded as a minor manor to the south of the parish near the boundary with Letheringsett, Cozens-Hardy¹² equating this close with a field known as Locker Breck that sloped down to Water Lane.

From 1677 onwards the terriers show a slight increase in enclosed lands, although the numbers recorded are small suggesting that enclosure was limited (table 2). At a micro level, other changes included adjustments to the size or shape of existing closes. For example, a comparison of the abutments for a one acre piece of glebe land in the North Field shows that in 1686 it abutted Little Cophill Close only on the east, but by 1706 it abutted on both the east and the north indicating that the close had expanded or changed its shape. By 1686 this piece was described as having “furs growing thereon ye pasture” and by 1706 this had expanded to “ffuzz growing thereon having the Pasture of the Lord on the south”. It was still described as pasture in 1725, but by 1735 there was no mention of pasture and it abutted Clay Pit Close to the south. Then by 1740 the description identifies it as abutting on the “Common Way to the Gravel Pit south” with no mention of the Close. Such descriptions provide a rich picture of the dynamics of short-term changes and perceptions suggesting that some enclosures, like Clay Pit Close, may have survived for only a short period.

So from 1613 to 1725 the glebe lands demonstrate a picture of stability with only a limited number of changes being introduced in the North Field and none in the South. The addition of three pieces in the ‘Field of Salthouse’ in the adjoining parish is rather puzzling, but it is interesting to speculate on the reasons – did they result from land exchanges or purchases or even additional gifts to the benefice? In stark contrast, during this period three separate buildings were listed as parsonages.

Here the limitations of the glebe terriers are evident, for Simon Britiffe, as Lord of the Manor, embanked the salt marshes to the north of the parish in about 1650,^{8, 9} thereby creating both new land and improving access to existing land on Cley Eye, an island that had previously been isolated in the estuary. Whether these areas were used for pasture or arable crops is not known, but their availability could have reduced the pressure for enclosure elsewhere in the parish and increased the quality of pasture available. However, these changes would have impacted on common grazing rights, although the common saltmarshes to the west of the parish survived until 1823, when the sluice and road were constructed and the marshes reclaimed.¹⁰

At a county level the beginning of the 18th century saw landowners and farmers responding to opportunities presented by new crops and new practices. The responses, however, were not uniform and considerable variation existed at regional and parish levels and this persisted until Parliamentary Enclosure. This was also an era that saw the emergence of large estates and along the coast

Table 1		Group 1				Group 2	
<i>Year</i>		1613	1677	1706	1725	1740	1760
Location							
Barn + yard			2a	2a	2a	1r	1r
	(site of Parsonage 1)						
Parsonage 2			X	1r	1r	1a	1a2r
Close			2a	2a	2a	2a2r	2a
Parsonage 3			-----	X	X	2a	2a
North Field							
Parsonage 2		X					
Close		2a					
No. of Furlong							
13		3r	3r	3r	3r	1a	1a
20		3r	3r	3r	3r	3r	3r
26		3r	3r	3r	3r	3r	3r
29		3a	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
29		2r	2r	-----	-----	-----	-----
30		1.5r	1.5r	1.5r	1.5r	1.5r	2r
31		1a	1a	1a	1a	1a	3r
32		2a	2a	2a	2a	2a	2a
32		-----	3r	3r	2a	3r	2r
33		0.5a	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
33		-----	1a	1a	1a	1a	1a1r
34		0.5a	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
South Field						No. of Furlong	
1		5a	5a	5a	5a	35	5a 4a
2		3r	1a	1a	1a	36	1a 1a
17		3.5r	3r	3r	3r	52	3r 3r
18		1.5r	1.5r	1.5r	1.5r	53	.5r 1.5r
19		3.5r	3r	3r	3r	54	3r 3r
19		2r	2r	2r	2r	55	2r 2r
						Hay Croft	
25		3r	3r	3r	3r	61	3r 3r
27		2a	2a	2a	2a	63	2a 2a
Field of Salthouse							
Walshough Furlong			1a	1a	1a		1a 1a
Mose (Moors) Furlong			3r	3r	3r		3r 3r
Thirleshough Furlong			1r	1r	1r		1r 1r

Note: 1. 'X' building recorded , but no area given for associated land.
2. Areas given in acres and roods: 4 roods = 1 acre.
3. In 1613 Parsonage 2 and Close included in North Field, in all subsequent terriers treated separately.

Table 1. Summary of glebe lands for selected years between 1613 and 1760: the information is divided into two groups (see text). NB: in the first terrier there is no mention of Parsonage 1 or the barn.

at Holkham improvements in land use and extended leases for tenants were being implemented.¹⁴

What was the impact of these developments on Cley? All the evidence from the terriers suggests this was a parish where traditional methods of agriculture continued and where extensive enclosure or consolidation of land into larger blocks was slow to develop. Indeed the survival of the open fields indicates that sheep-corn husbandry still flourished and was vital for maintaining soil fertility on the largely 'hungry' sandy soils of the area.

Group 2: Years 1740 - 1760

(Table 1)

This small group of terriers covering the period from 1740 to 1760 can be characterised as transitional, foreshadowing the major changes that were to occur in the five years after 1760.

The first of these terriers is somewhat curious; the data in Table 1 demonstrate that the numbering of the furlongs in the South Field changed to form a continuous series with the North, with variations in the sequence between 52 and 63. This suggests that other changes affecting the organisation of the furlongs had occurred, although not revealed in the terriers.

By 1743 the South Field is subdivided into two parts, one retained the old field name and this was probably the largest portion, while the other was called the 'South-East field commonly call'd Hay Croft'. The name 'Hay Croft' is interesting, as 'croft' is usually associated with a small enclosure, but as one of the key texts on field names¹⁵ indicates "other elements may combine with 'croft' to indicate a piece of land set aside for the

growing of particular crops" and therefore not necessarily enclosed. In this case the crop was hay and the area included at least two furlongs with several tenants; this could be the forerunner of changes about 20 years later when fields were subdivided.

Then in 1760 two terriers were produced with almost identical wording; one was signed by the retiring Rector, J W Girdlestone, the other by the new Minister, Robert Thomlinson. This signalled the replacement of the old with the new, but with the father of the new, John Thomlinson, sitting in the wings. There is no evidence of two terriers like this being produced on any other occasion and the change was even reflected in the style of the documents, one was clearly organised and written with a bold hand, the other was clear but written in an archaic style on a narrow strip of parchment!

The Thomlinsons first appeared in the terrier of 1725 with Richard Thomlinson being named in the abuttals, having recently acquired the Cley Hall estate.⁶ In hindsight it is tempting to interpret this as an entrepreneurial family seizing an opportunity to purchase a minor estate. By mid-century Richard is replaced by his son, John Thomlinson, who became one of the major landowners and holder of the advowson for the church. Here the sequence is not clear, but according to Cozens-Hardy,⁶ John Thomlinson wanted to appoint his son, Robert Thomlinson, to the living but Robert was under age being born in about 1742. So as an interim measure Dr Backhouse was appointed Rector; yet irrespective of this measure it was Robert who wrote and signed the

Table 2

<i>Year</i>	<i>1677</i>	<i>1735</i>	<i>1760</i>	<i>1765</i>	<i>1791</i>	<i>1801</i>
Field	2	2	3	4	5	5
Inclosure	4	5	5	7	5	7
Piece				4	5	5

Table 2. Numbers of fields, enclosures or closes and pieces recorded in selected years.

terrier of 1760 as Minister with no mention of Backhouse.

Group 3: Years 1765 - 1812 (Table 3)

The contrast between the terrier of 1760 and that made 5 years later can only be described as dramatic. The term 'furlong' disappeared from the descriptions of the glebe lands as the pattern of two open fields was replaced with new divisions sporting a new suite of names. However, some degree of caution must be applied, as the sample in the terriers is probably too small to be certain whether the open field pattern disappeared completely in one initial burst of reform or whether the process was ongoing. Nevertheless, it was as though the appointment of Robert Thomlinson as rector had provided the catalyst for change.

In the new order, open fields were subdivided to form large blocks of land with consequential consolidation of many furlongs and probably the engrossment of farms. The names given to these new divisions are informative: a few were obviously derived from local features such as Dog Hill (a field) or Gravel Pit Field, while others were termed 'pieces' with a prefix giving an area and in some cases the name of an individual, presumably

the owner (see Table 4). The addition of the latter was obviously needed to distinguish one '12 acre piece' from another. The proliferation of such simple descriptors in these names probably reflects the speed of change and in the absence of any traditional names the need to concoct an identifying tag; this follows a similar pattern of naming found in other parts of the country.¹⁶

The use of the terms 'field' and 'close' in the terriers from 1677 onwards was unambiguous, as was 'piece' to describe a small parcel of land and these terms continued to be used in this context after 1760. But if the use of the word 'piece' in the names of the large blocks of land from 1765 onwards was different, what did it imply? Certainly the names were the precursors of the field names that appeared in the tithe apportionments of 1841. So why, in 1765, were the new blocks of land not called 'fields'?

The abutments and the names of the pieces indicate that these new blocks were occupied or owned by one or only a few individuals with occasional strips or closes, like those belonging to the glebe, embedded in them. They were certainly not organised around furlongs and may even have operated as a series of smaller 'open fields'



Figure 2. A traditional form of husbandry: a flock of sheep grazing on Cley marshes tended by a shepherd (detail from early 20th century postcard).

enabling specialist crops to be grown in a more effective manner. In this new situation it is likely that decisions regarding crops or rotations were no longer the prerogative of village assemblies, but rather the responsibility of a few individuals who could have operated in an autocratic manner. Using an alternative to the familiar term 'field', with its links to the past, may have reinforced the changed circumstances. So by the end of this period the medieval pattern of open fields had disappeared, at least, over substantial areas of the parish, although the typically enclosed landscape with small fields in the ownership of a single individual was not fully achieved. Was this compromise peculiar to Cley and a halfway stage towards full enclosure?

It is interesting to speculate on the visual impact of this reorganisation on the landscape; initially it may have been far less intrusive than might be anticipated, for much would have depended on whether the new blocks of land were enclosed with hedges. Sheep and cattle would have continued to be important components, as John Winn Thomlinson testifies in his

enclosure claim, even though this was undoubtedly biased to maximise the area of land he was awarded. This Thomlinson, the son of Robert Thomlinson the Rector, held the Manor of Cley having inherited land acquired by successive generations of his family and he claimed "exclusive rights of sheepwalk and shackage over and upon the common salt marshes, commons, commonable lands and waste grounds" and he also mentions "commonable cattle".¹⁰

Whether these animals were 'folded' on open fields or whether they grazed on enclosed pastures must remain speculative, but the use of the term 'shackage' implies that at least in some areas the traditional rights of grazing were retained.

Shackage was the right to graze or fold sheep on open fields from the end of harvest until March or longer on fields being left fallow, thereby ensuring the fertility of the soil and the maintenance of high yields of corn, particularly barley.^{13, 14} At other times of the year grazing would have moved not only onto the heathland common to the south of the parish, but also on the extensive saltmarsh, an often

Table 3		Group 3			Group 4
	<i>Year</i>	<i>1765</i>	<i>1791</i>	<i>1801</i>	<i>1827</i>
Location					
Barn + yard		2a	2a	2a	28p
(site of Parsonage 1)					
Parsonage 2		1r	X	X	1r
Close		2a	2a	2a	
Parsonage 3		1a2r	1a2r	-----	-----
Location not specified		2r	2r	-----	17a2r13p 3r 1r
Dog Hill (Field)					
		2a	1a	1a	
16 Acre Piece		5r	5r	5r	
Fifty Acre Piece		3r	3r	3	
Twelve Acre Piece		2r	2r	-----	
Gravel Pit Field		2a2r	2a2r	2a2r	
		2r	2r	2r	
		1a1r	1a1r	1a1r	
Hay Croft		3r	3r	3r	
		2a	2a	2r	
South Field		2r	2r	2r	
		3r	3r	3r	
		1.5r	1.5r	1.5r	
		3r	3r	3r	
		4a	4a	4a	
		1a	1a	1a	
Field of Salthouse					
Walshough Furlong		1a	1a	1a	1a
Moors		3r	3r	3r	3r
Girdlestones Furlong		1r	1r	1r	1r

Note: 40 perches = 1 rood; 4 roods = 1 acre.

Table 3. Summary of glebe lands for selected years between 1765 and 1827: the information is divided into two groups (see text).

North Field 1613

Long Furlong 1677
St Adams Hill 1677
Little Cop Hill Close 1677
(Coppice 1765)
Procession Way 1725
Fairstead 1760
Dog Hill 1760
Gravel Pit Field 1765
Mr Hipkin's 16 Acre Piece 1765
50 Acre Piece 1765
Richard Johnson's 12 Acre Piece 1765
Roger's 12 Acre Piece 1765
John Johnson's 12 Acre Piece 1791
23 Acre Piece 1791

South Field 1613

Dowell's Pightle 1677
Candle (Kandle) Hill 1677
White Bread Hill 1740
Hay Croft 1760

Table 4. Place names appearing in the terriers together with the date of their first appearance.

underestimated resource for these coastal parishes.

Unfortunately place names provide few clues to land use in any of the terriers from this period, 'Hay Croft', Clay Pit Close and Gravel Pit Close are three examples that do. Another is Little Cop-Hill Close, where in a single instance Close is replaced with the word Coppice indicating this was a managed woodland where the young growths from stools were harvested. Although not land use, Procession Way appears in the abutments to land in the North Field, referring to the road now known as Old Woman Lane and this extended across the embanked marshes to Cley Eye.⁹ This 'Way' refers to 'beating the bounds', the traditional practice for securing and maintaining the boundaries of the parish that had been enforceable in law since Tudor and Stuart times.

The far-reaching changes in the organisation of the land that occurred in the very short period-between 1760 and 1765 would

have demanded the agreement and drive of the major landowners or occupiers who wanted to 'increase efficiency'.^{13, 14, 17} This objective was probably motivated by the opportunities presented by a marked rise in agricultural products being traded through Blakeney Haven in the second half of the 18th century, a trend whose origins must have been apparent earlier in the century.¹⁸ So economic pressures would have, at least, reinforced the desire for land reform and even provided the driving force that initiated it.

The names of some of the individuals involved in these reforms can be deduced from Table 5 where for selected years the occupiers of land abutting onto the glebe land are listed together with the number of times these individuals were mentioned. The table also illustrates the trend for land to be concentrated in the hands of fewer individuals or families during the 18th century. However, this list does not include all landowners or

1735		1760		1765		1791	
Richard Thomlinson	11	Robt Rogers	15	Richard Johnson	15	John Johnson	18
Thomas Rogers	11	John Thomlinson	12	John Thomlinson	12	Rev. Robert Thomlinson	11
Elizabeth Low	8	Thomas Dewing	9	Augustine Dewing	12	John Thomlinson	10
Henry Baynes	7	Framingham Jay	6	Framingham Jay	10	Heirs of Framingham Jay	7
John Royall	4	late Robert Lowd	5	Robert Jennis	7	Robert Jennis	6
'diverse men'	4	'diverse men'	3	'Various Owners'	2	John Mann	1
William Stirges	2	Robert Frankling	1	Peter Coble	1		
Elizabeth Greeve	1	Elizabeth Greeve	1	John Johnson	1		
Barbara Garret	1	John Johnson	1	John and Mallet Musset	1		
Framlingham Jay	1						
Peter Mallet	1						
Joseph Ward	1						
Lydia Pells	1						

Table 5. Names of individuals appearing in the abutments to glebe lands during the 18th century, together with the number of times the names appear.

tenants, indeed major players such as Lord Calthorpe are absent; rather it is an attempt to use the terriers to identify some individuals who could have benefited most from land reforms. These would have included landowners and merchants, individuals like Robert Rogers, John Thomlinson, Thomas Dewing and Framingham Jay in 1760, or Richard Johnson, Augustine Dewing and Robert Jennis in 1765.

Group 4: Years 1812 onwards (Table 3)

There were two Enclosure Awards for Cley, the first¹⁰ was concerned primarily with existing land and reclaimed marsh, the other with the enclosure of the saltmarsh that lay between Cley and Wiveton¹⁹. The former extended the consolidation of land into blocks and established the process of legally enclosing fields with hedges. These reforms left John Winn Thomlinson as the major beneficiary dominating the land holdings in the parish.

While these acts signalled the final stage in the demise of the Medieval field system in Cley, the glebe lands survived to provide an income for the benefice, albeit in a modified form. They were consolidated into a single block with the addition of some small pieces. In contrast, the three pieces of land held in furlongs in the Field of Salhouse continued to survive for a short time. So even at the beginning of the 19th century the diversity of land management on a local scale persisted.

Parsonage and Associated Buildings

Cley is recorded as having four parsonages, even though there is only one standing today. In the terrier for 1611 a Parsonage is listed in the North Field with land of two acres. In the next, for 1677, there is a new Parsonage and the old one is indicated as "the old parsonage". This is followed in the terrier of 1706 by a further new parsonage



Figure 3. Cley Church from the the south-east; this would have been the view from the site of Parsonage 1 across the North Field. In the early 17th century there would have been no hedges except around a close on the right, very few trees, and the field would have been divided into furlongs and strips. Parsonage 2 was near the house nestling in the trees to the right.

and by the middle of the 19th century there was still another. It is tempting to think the Rectors of Cley were rather careless with their parsonages or did the wealth of the benefice play a role!

There are no descriptions of the first two parsonages, for the third there is an informative account and the fourth is still standing and lived in, albeit not by the Rector. Why successive houses were abandoned is not recorded, but the fact that both of the earlier buildings disappeared rapidly after being abandoned suggests they were in poor repair. Gales and rages could have wreaked havoc and although there are no records for Cley, across in Wiveton there are faculty documents for 1687²⁰ preserved in the diocesan archives recording storm damage to the tithe barn and seeking permission to pull it down.

Parsonage 1

The limited information available on this parsonage emanates from references in many terriers to a barn on a site where "...long time

since ye old parsonage house did stand containing by estima(t)ion two acres, & it standeth att ye East end of ye Towne by ye high-way side". This was the description in 1677 and the location can be identified on an estate map of 1841 by the presence of a tithe barn; today the site is occupied by a large metal barn belonging to Cley Hall Farm near the junction of Old Woman Lane and the Holt Road.

This parsonage probably defined the eastern extremity of Newgate at a time when it was a prosperous area. Christopher Newgate, the wealthiest inhabitant of the parish in 1592, lived in what is now called Newgate Farm and the discovery of house foundations when the road was widened through this area indicates that once there were more habitations in this part of the Town.⁶

In 1791 a detailed description of the barn states: "Also a large Barn seventy five feet long & twenty feet wide – a Lean too eighteen feet long, and twelve feet wide – all Brick, stone and tiled".

Unfortunately the age of this barn is not known, but it could have dated from the early 16th century or even earlier. It was certainly large, but it did not compare with the gigantic barns at Waxham and Paston that were 180 and 175 feet long respectively.² The disparity in size may be a reflection of differences in the local economy of the two areas: one having a mixed economy with maritime trade, fishing and farming, the other being solely farming; one being sheep-corn, the other arable, and with the lands having different levels of productivity when the barns were built – the sandy soils of Cley giving lower yields compared to the rich loams of east Norfolk.

Parsonage 2

The site of this parsonage is instantly recognisable for it is clearly stated in every terrier, the churchyard lay to the south and this enables it to be equated with a gift made to the benefice in 1524. Indeed some of the site, if not all, was eventually incorporated into the present churchyard.

In Blomefield's History of Norfolk¹¹ there is recorded under Cley that "On July 3, 1524, license was granted to *Thomas Manners Lord Roos* to give a messuage, with a close, late *Colles*, lying between the churchyard of Cley to the south, and a messuage belonging to the guild of *St. Margaret* to the north, and the close lying thereby between the churchyard, west, and the demean land of the lord, east; clear to *John Wyatt*, then rector of this church, and to his successors for ever".

It is hardly surprising that nearly two centuries later this building was in a bad state of repair, although in the terrier of 1686 it is

still referred to as the 'new parsonage, but by 1706 there was yet another new parsonage! The wording of the terriers in both 1706 and 1725 suggests it was demolished. The abuttals are also illuminating for they identify the close on the east separated from the churchyard by a 'common way'; so this close would have been sited near the present churchyard extension. While the messuage that belonged to the 'Guild of St Margaret' was no longer occupied by them.

Parsonage 3

This parsonage was first mentioned in 1706, it was a substantial building as the description in 1791 makes clear, although by then it was let having been occupied by the Rector until, at least, 1768. This description also indicates the nature of the lifestyle and status of the Rector: "...in Front to the West thirty one feet & eighteen feet wide a staircase to the North ten feet wide – a Kitchen & Back Kitchen to the South thirty feet long & nineteen feet wide – one Hay House & Stable adjoining forty seven feet long & ten feet wide – a Chaise house fourteen feet long & fifteen feet wide – another building across the yard eighteen feet long & fifteen feet wide – a coal House & small Stable twenty feet long & ten feet wide – all the above buildings are Brick & Stone and all tiled with Pantiles"

It was sited with the Fairstead, now called Newgate Green, on the east, close to the site where the Cley Fair was held until the enclosure of the marshes. Different descriptions state there was a garden and yards containing about one acre and a half and lying with the Kings Highway and the Common Marsh on the west. The

main house was eventually demolished, but it is possible that some of the buildings now abutting onto Newgate Green are remnants of the parsonage complex.

Robert Thomlinson, as Rector, lived in this parsonage when he was first appointed to the parish, but by 1791 he was the major landowner in Cley and installed in the improperly named 'Manor House' in The Street.⁶ It was this Thomlinson who recorded in the parish registers much of the information on the 'rages' when the sea flooded the Town at least 8 times in the 18th century. So Robert Thomlinson's interest in storms may have emanated not solely from his position as Rector or as the major landowner, but from a very personal viewpoint living in a Rectory vulnerable to flood damage. One can imagine him sitting in his parlour watching the sea level rise and adding another note to the registers!

Parsonage 4

The last parsonage was built in the mid 19th century and is, therefore, not part of this story. It is an imposing building still standing today, although in private hands and in a location divorced from the village.

Conclusions

Cley lies at the interface between sea and land and much has been written about the history and impact of maritime trade and the magnificence of the Church. Yet many of the gravestones in the nave and the chancel are also a lasting testament to men who were involved with the land, some were merchants, others Lords of the Manor,

with the most important landowner in his time being the Reverend Robert Thomlinson, Rector of the Parish, buried in the chancel not far from the altar.

The glebe terriers enable changes in the landscape to be charted in a parish that is devoid of records from a major estate. Moreover, these changes must have been initiated or influenced by those men whose memorials lie in the Church. As could be anticipated the resulting picture is imperfect and incomplete, but the terriers provide a simple framework that can be examined and expanded.

At the start of the 17th century open fields dominated the landscape and their persistence well into the 18th century is indicative of the continuing power of traditional forms of sheep-corn husbandry. Nevertheless, there is evidence of some piecemeal enclosure and the division of one field leading to the establishment of 'Hay Croft' in the mid 18th century heralded an important shift in the organisation of the land.

Dramatic changes occurred in the short period between the terriers of 1760 and 1765; open fields were consolidated into larger blocks controlled by either single or a few joint owners, but with strips of glebe lands embedded. Initially such arrangements might appear chaotic, but in the progression from open fields towards enforced enclosure such situations should be anticipated, especially in villages where the potential existed for 'strong' individuals to be vying for their share. Cley with the close juxtaposition of landowners and merchants might have provided such a situation, for here were men familiar with business and legal agreements. And maybe some were

attracted to the area by the opportunities presented by rising trade in agricultural products through Blakeney Haven?

The final death knoll for the open field system in Cley was sounded by Parliamentary Enclosure, nevertheless the medieval concept of glebe lands continued to flourish with the only change being their consolidation into a larger unit.

The parsonages present a less coherent story, as they are episodes in a much broader picture concerned with the wealth of the benefice and wider church affairs. The history of the first three buildings appears to be one of deterioration, demolition and building on a new site, with the fourth parsonage still standing. Yet appropriately the gift from the Roos family in 1523 remains within the control of the church, incorporated into the main churchyard and with at least some of the adjoining close returned as the churchyard extension.

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Some Comments on the Blakeney Census of 1871

John Wright

Synopsis: some 25 years ago the author copied out, on visits to the Public Record Office in London, the 1871 census returns for Blakeney. While looking for names to append to the family tree, other questions came to mind. What were the occupations of the residents? How many were born in Blakeney? How many children were there? Could comparison with the censuses of 1770 and 1971 help to illustrate long-term social changes? This article revisits notes made at the time, but it remains a collection of comments rather than a systematic demographic study.

Introduction

Most people with an interest in local history will know that censuses have been taken every ten years since 1801 and that detailed results from more than 100 years ago can now be seen without having to go the PRO – indeed a visit to the History Centre Blakeney is all that is required. Since 1841 all the enumerators' original lists have been preserved. From 1851 they contain the names of every person present, together with some standard information about them: principally their age, sex, marital status, birth-place and relationship to the head of the household. There is much of interest to be gleaned from these listings for each local community.

This article uses the 1871 census for Blakeney as an example and comments not on particular people but about the whole population and some groups within it.¹

Total Population

Cynical jokes about the value of statistics apply as much to census material as to any present-day figures. The issues lie mostly with definitions. An obvious example is 'How many people live in Blakeney?' Not an easy question to answer today when so many houses are used as second homes or as holiday accommodation. In 1871 there were probably no such houses at all but there were people away at the time of the census who are not listed in the returns. Conversely there were a few people visiting Blakeney on census night who were included in the Blakeney total.

Table 1 shows that 806 people were recorded, or 803 if visitors are excluded. If absent household heads ('Strays') are included the total rises to 830. In theory, other Blakeney residents temporarily away from the village (including those on ships) could be ascertained from the census records but this has not been done and no estimates have been made. Further comments about the 'total' population will refer either to the 'net' or the 'gross' population as appropriate.

Category	Males	Females	Total
Recorded population	372	434	806
Visitors	0	3	3
'Net' Population	372	431	803
Absent household heads	26	1	27
Other absent residents	?	?	?
Gross Population	398	432	830

Table 1. Blakeney 1871: Population totals.

Household size

The 'gross' population lived as 233 separate households, which means that the average household size was 3.6 people per household – perhaps nearer to 3.7 if all those absent could be included. The two-person household was the most common size (57) but over a quarter (62) had five or more people living in them. Bearing in mind that the majority then lived in High Street and Westgate Street it can be imagined that living conditions then were far more crowded than they are today. The largest households, incidentally, were those of William Pond, a blacksmith, with wife, nine children and a servant, and Henry Beck, an agricultural labourer, with a wife and nine children. William Baker, postmaster and auctioneer (and a widower) also had nine children to support.

Age Structure

Children comprised a high proportion of the population: one quarter of the net total were under ten (rather more than today!), 286 (35%) were under 15, and 355 (43%) were under 20. Only 28 people were, or claimed to be, aged 75 or over, while the remaining

447 (54%) were fairly evenly distributed over the age range 20-74.

One odd feature of the age structure is the relatively low number of men of working age compared to the number of women. In the age group 20-59 there were 204 women but only 124 men. Adding in absent household heads changes the figures to 150 men to 205 women. This disparity looks odd when there were more boys than girls and when the numbers aged over 60 were exactly equal (60 men, 60 women). It suggests that there could have been another 30 or more men away from home on census night. This unknown element, mostly sailors no doubt, is a reminder that population figures need to be read in conjunction with their definitions.

Birthplace

It is often assumed that until the First World War most people remained in the village of their birth. The 1871 census shows that 500 Blakeney people (62%) were born there. However, this is only to be expected when children form such a high proportion of the population. If all those under 20 are excluded then fewer than half of all adults (48%) gave Blakeney as their place of birth. This means, of course, that a small majority of adults were born elsewhere, the proportions for men and women being virtually the same. Whether this is a typical figure for villages at that time (assuming there is one) is not known to the author, but no doubt much depends on population trends. A growing village will bring in people from outside – but Blakeney's population had been falling during the previous 20 years or so.

Perhaps those not born in Blakeney came from villages close by? A count shows that 100 of the 235 'foreigners' were born within five miles of Blakeney, and a further 47 within ten miles. This covers 80% of all adults and leaves just 62 who came from elsewhere in Norfolk and 26 from outside the county. (It's a fair bet that today rather more than 26 adults living in Blakeney were born outside Norfolk.) In view of the strong links between Blakeney and the Northeast in the 1800s it is surprising that only two adults were born there – and neither of them in South Shields.

Blakeney-born couples were not very numerous: a 'head of household' and his wife both from Blakeney can be found in only 27 of the 233 households in the village.

Occupations

Most married women were busy enough looking after their families and had no additional occupation. On the other hand virtually all men had a specific occupation, sometimes more than one; very few had the leisure of 'retirement'.

Marine occupations can be expected in any coastal village. Of the 236 men with known occupations in Blakeney at least 108 (46%) derived their living from the sea: 28 were fishermen and 62 were mariners, including master mariners. The others were mostly officials, including six pilots, and there were also four shipwrights and a sailmaker.

Compared with these, there were 114 men (48%) engaged in 'land-based' occupations. Almost half of these were farmers and farm workers, while the remainder

were 'professionals', tradesmen and shopkeepers, and building workers.

The missing 6% were merchants with shipping interests (including coal merchants) and coal porters (musical or otherwise), land-based perhaps, but dependent on the sea nevertheless. If the supposed additional absent seamen are also considered then it could be argued that sea-based livelihoods were in the majority. And no doubt tradesmen, shopkeepers and building workers would have been fewer in number without their maritime customers. So perhaps Blakeney's seabord location accounted for somewhere near 60% of all jobs taken by men.

Other insights can be gained by linking occupations with birthplace and age structure. It is notable, for example, that all the fishermen were born either in Blakeney or within ten miles of it, as were nearly all the mariners. Taking the two groups together, 71% were born in Blakeney. Agricultural workers, on the other hand, show a rather different pattern: of 55 such workers only 45% were born in Blakeney. The difference between these two figures (notwithstanding the small sample) suggests that Blakeney men may have preferred to go to sea, despite the attendant dangers, leaving others to take up agricultural jobs.

The census figures also show that a relatively high proportion (36%) of the professional and skilled workers came from beyond the ten-mile radius, and that only 28% were born in Blakeney. This tendency can be seen in the maritime sphere as well. The coast-guard and the customs officer, as well as two of the four shipwrights, came from more than ten miles away, as did the rector, schoolmas-

ter, druggist, barber and shepherd, for example. This need not imply that Blakeney was incapable of producing such people – only that mobility was greater in such occupations.

As well as being the most 'local' of the main working groups, the fishermen also had a distinctive age structure: over 60% were aged 55 or over – and only two were under 30 (one being the teenage son of a fisherman). Conversely, almost 90% of the mariners were aged under 55, presumably an indication that being a sailor was preferable to being a fisherman. Yet though these statistics tell us (roughly) 'how many' they do not tell us 'why'. Perhaps mariners were more than happy to convert to fishing once they had seen the world – and could afford a boat of their own.

To some extent the pattern at sea was paralleled ashore: agriculture was essentially a young man's occupation. Agricultural workers and mariners together comprised over 60% of the 15-19 age group, whereas these two groups formed only 20% of the similar number in the 55-64 age group. Many of the older men were tradesmen and shopkeepers – had some started life in agriculture?

Population Changes

Every census represents just one moment in the continuous process of population change, a 'still' from a moving picture. Looking at one census in isolation gives no indication of what these changes might be, and a much longer article would be needed to give a fair account of them. All that can be done here is to make just a couple of points with the help of the census taken 100

years before 1871 and the one taken 100 years after. The 1770 census was taken by the Church.² Each household is listed, with all adults named and a count of the number of children living there (stated to be those under 16). It appears to represent the usually resident population regardless of whether they were at home at the time. The 1971 census is part of the decennial civil series begun in 1801. Much information is available by parish although that relating to individuals, of course, cannot be seen until 2071.

The total population in 1770 was 458, including three women in the Townhouses and six children who appear to be orphans. This implies that the population nearly doubled between 1770 and 1871, although other census totals show that the peak of Blakeney's population was around 1850.³ In the following 20 years Blakeney 'lost' some 250 people – where did they go? By 1971 the total had declined further to only 660 (or thereabouts).

The only two elements of the population which can be compared directly in all three censuses are the proportion of children and household size. In 1770 those under 16 (169) comprised 37% of the village total; by 1871 the child population had risen to 295 but still formed 37% of the total. By contrast, in 1971 there were only 110 children under 16, just 17% of the total.

In contrast to the fluctuating total population, average household size has been falling steadily. In 1770 the average was 4.1 people per household, in 1871 it was 3.6, and by 1971 only 2.3 (since when it has fallen further). The main reason for this inexorable trend is the

rise in the number of people living alone, especially older people. Table 1 illustrates the changes that have been taking place. These include an increase in the number of single-person households from 6% of all households in 1770 to 29% in 1971. Conversely, households with four or more people fell from 56% of households in 1770 to 17% by 1971. Such figures are a reminder of how society has evolved towards the more solitary living conditions typical of today. They also explain why communities need ever more houses even if their population is falling – quite apart from any demand for second homes or holiday accommodation.

Comment

This article has no ‘conclusion’ in the conventional sense for there is no story being told, no particular conclusion to be

reached. Rather it is a reminder that census material can shed light on many questions – but only if it is approached with such questions in mind. Even a brief study of census material can produce useful and perhaps unexpected insights into the way people in the Blakeney area lived during the nineteenth century.

Notes

- 1. The figures in this article may not be exactly the same as those which appear in census volumes but if the author has not been exact in his transcription neither are enumerators infallible in their additions.
- 2. Norfolk Record Office, PD.619.31.
- 3. A graph of population change in Blakeney during the nineteenth century can be seen in an article by Monica White, *Morston Road, Blakeney: Building in the 18th and 19th Centuries* The Glaven Historian No. 5, 2002.

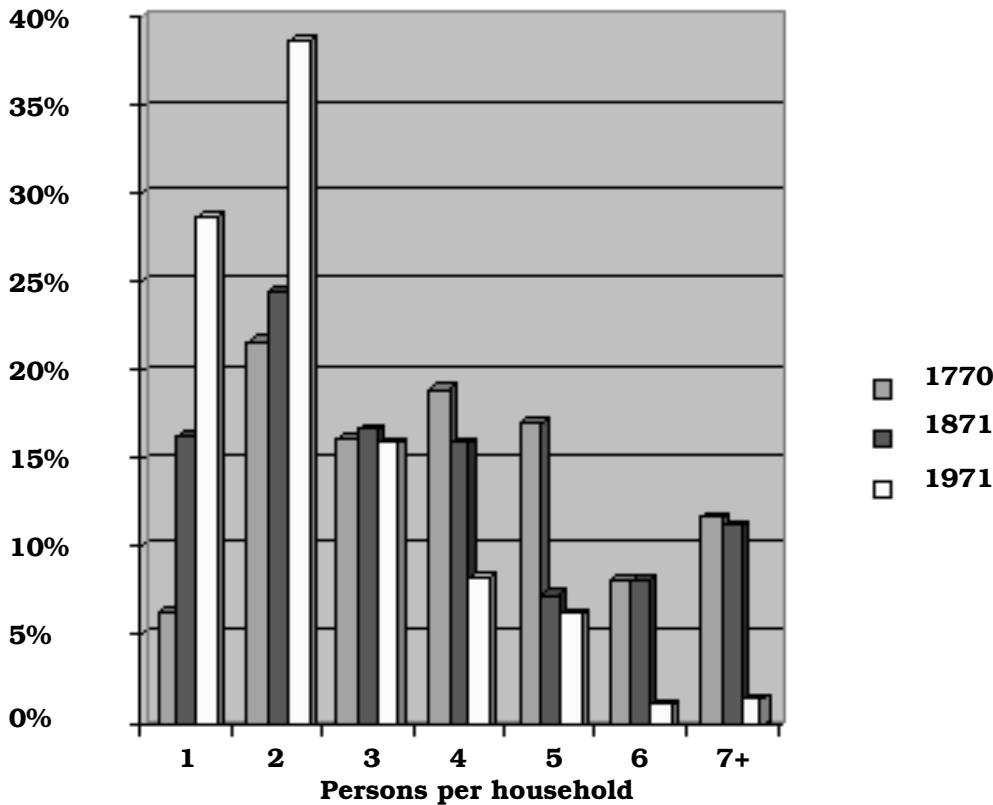


Figure 1. Blakeney: Households by size (as a percentage of the Total).

Further Field Walking in Field Dalling

by Eric Hotblack

Synopsis: a follow up to two sessions of field walking undertaken by BAHS members.

Introduction

The two field walking events organised by the BAHS on the 9th February 2002 and 8th February 2003 provided some interesting finds in spite of the variable experience of the participants and the previous extensive work on this site by Ted and Eric Hotblack (TEH) which had already produced more than 10kg of pottery.

I am therefore grateful to the Editors for allowing a short update of the previous article,¹ and to explain the work carried out by Society members.

The Romano-British site (Sites and Monuments Register no. 21317) was chosen for the two events because of the relatively high frequency of pottery finds previously made by TEH, while the cropping of winter barley made it available on each occasion. Early February was chosen to try to achieve good conditions for field-work: the artifacts on the ground would have been well washed of loose soil by autumn and winter rain. On both days there was some wind and some direct sunlight which was slightly less than ideal.

The site is dissected roughly east-west by a hedge line (see the

previous article) which provided a base line to mark out a 25 x 25 metre square grid as shown in Figure 1. In 2002 the nine squares to the west were walked and in 2003 the nine squares to the east.

Results

Romano-British

From the work reported in the previous article one would expect a concentration of Romano-British finds along the hedge line fading out to the west, south and east. Indeed the combined results confirm this pattern (see Figure 2).

Surprisingly one piece of Samian Ware was found in 2002 and two in 2003. This is interesting because it was probably produced at Lezoux, near Clermont-Ferrand, and imports to Britain ceased around AD 200.² Prior to 2002 there had only been one piece of pottery with such an early provenance, a piece of Greyware, identified by the late Tony Gregory as 1st or 2nd century. So this site may have had activity during the early Roman period.

In contrast to the pottery finds, tile fragments and one piece of Box Flue tile (totalling eight pieces) were found in the western squares in 2002, but none were found in the eastern half. Some pieces of Post-Medieval tile were found in the same area, so surely if Romano-British material were present to the east it should have been found.

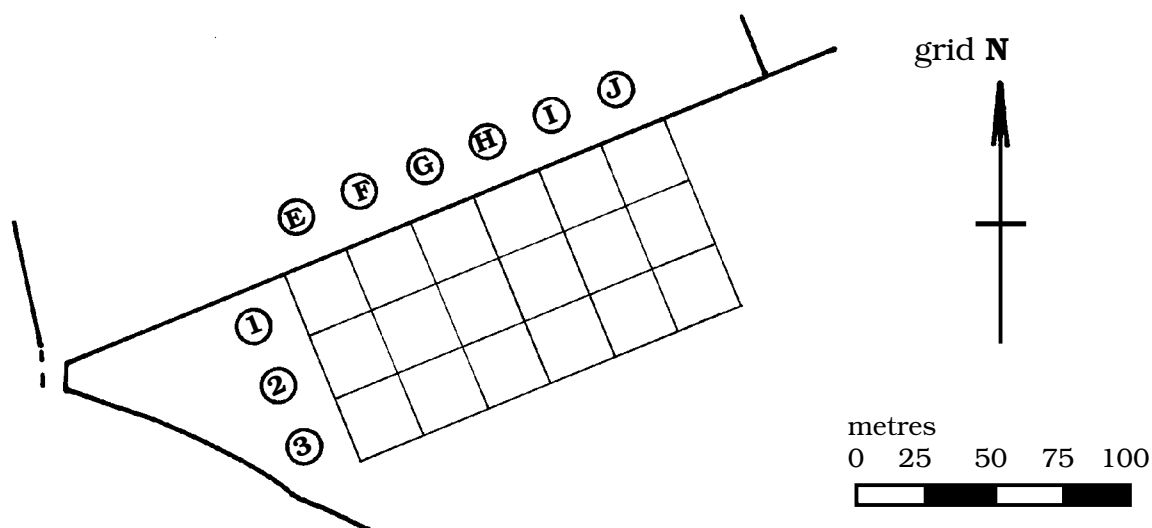


Figure 1. Field walking grid
SMR 21317, from OS sheet TG 0137

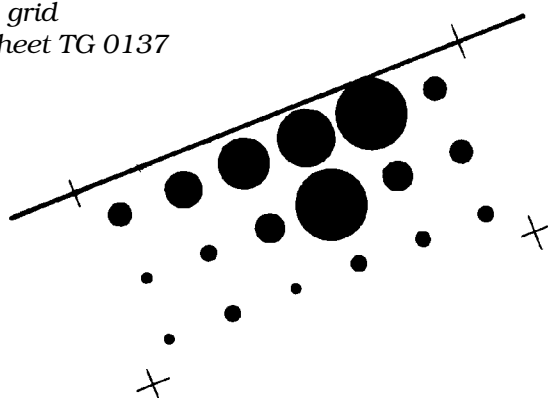


Figure 2. Romano-British period pottery
distribution

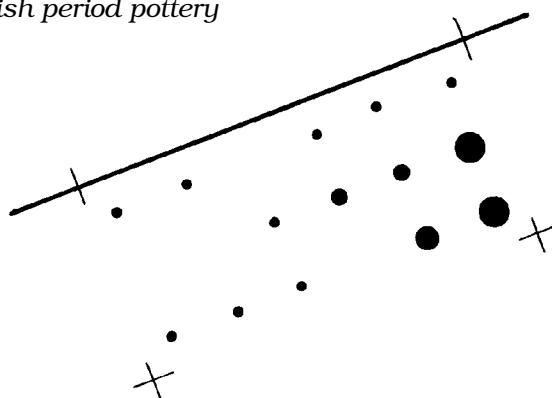


Figure 3. Medieval period pottery distribution

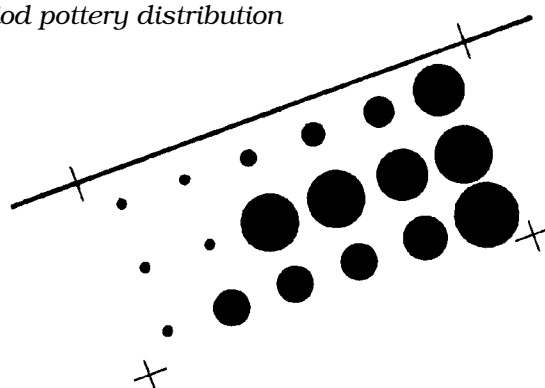


Figure 4. All worked flint distribution

Key to the number
of finds per square

- 1 to 5
- 6 to 10
- 11 to 15
- 16 to 20
- 21 to 25
- 26 to 30
- 31 to 35
- 36 to 40
- 41 to 45
- 46 plus

Stone Age, Iron Age and Saxon

The distribution of worked flint (Figure 4) is difficult to interpret. It is of course challenging to find worked flints in a field covered with flints!

Activity throughout all the 'stone ages' seems to create a certain blotchiness in distribution of worked flints.³ Unfortunately no individual diagnostic pieces were identified by Prof Robins to indicate which periods were represented.

The scarce local wares of the Iron Age and pagan Saxon period are difficult to distinguish even for the expert. None were found in the 2002 walking but nine shards were found in 2003. No plot has been made for these periods which are immediately before and after the far more find-rich Romano-British period. The best square was H2 with one shard identified as Iron Age and the remaining seven identified as "Pagan Saxon perhaps including some Iron Age".

Medieval

A scatter of Medieval pottery was found, concentrated to the east (see Figure 3). This could result from 'manure scatter' during arable use. SMR site no.22442, two fields away to the northeast, had a medieval scatter of 2-9 shards per whole 25m square when walked by TEH in the winter of 1988/9, which supports this interpretation. If further adjoining squares were walked it would show whether the pottery density carried on increasing to the south and east, indicating some habitation, or if the quantity stayed at a density comparable with a 'manure scatter'. Comparing Figures 2 & 3 it can be seen that the finds density is higher even than the Roman period in some squares.

Post-Medieval

The Post-Medieval period distribution, is not plotted, but it could be interpreted as another 'manure scatter' like the Medieval one.

A few pieces of 'china' were found in both years, as were pieces of iron slag. Clay tobacco pipe stems were found in 2002 but not in 2003; the latter are so conspicuous they are bound to have been picked up if present, but as only two were found in 2002 their absence the following year is not surprising. Also in 2002 one fragment of lava quern (undatable) was found, but none in 2003.

Summary

Bearing in mind the varying skills of the BAHS participating members it is encouraging that some interesting finds were made, particularly the Samian Ware. In spite of walking a total of only 18 squares comprising 1.12 hectares (2.78 acres) some differences in distribution of finds in the various periods are evident:

- Romano-British pottery concentrated in a central area
- the Romano-British building material only to the west
- medieval pottery shards increasing to the east
- the concentration of the Pagan Saxon/Iron Age shards in square H2

These eight Pagan Saxon/Iron Age shards were in a single square with 39 Romano-British shards so could easily have been overlooked which shows the value of thorough searching.

As discussed the worked flint distribution totalling 376 items is difficult to interpret, due to the lack of diagnostic finds.

Gridded field walking is a comparative method and despite having different people participating, this exercise demonstrates that some useful results can be achieved.

Acknowledgement

Again many thanks are due to Dr Andrew Rogerson and Prof Peter Robins of the Finds Identification and Recording Service of the Norfolk Museums Service for their expert examination and identification of our finds.

References

1. Eric Hotblack, 2002, *Fieldwalking at Manor Farm, Field Dalling*, 2002, The Glaven Historian No.5
2. Kevin Greene 1986 *The Archaeology of the Roman Economy* p161
3. Robert Silvester, *In Barton Bendish and Caldecote: Fieldwork in Southwest Norfolk*, East Anglian Archaeology No.80 1997, p79 and fig.37.

Norfolk Archaeologist in a hole?



See page 70 for the nitty-gritty...

Blakeney Eye: Some Comments on Current Investigations

John Wright

Synopsis: the Chapel on Blakeney Eye has been a 'fact' of local history for centuries yet evidence of its existence is hard to come by. The BAHS recently (1998/99) carried out field work at the site and prepared an account of the surviving documents. Even more recently (2002/03) an extensive archaeological investigation of the Eye has been conducted on behalf of the Environment Agency. This note outlines the nature of the studies. Any fuller account must await the release of the detailed report on the work carried out and the interpretation of finds.

Background

‘Eyes’ are a feature of the marshes that lie between the villages of Salhouse, Cley and Blakeney and the sea. These Eyes (from an Old English word meaning ‘island’) consist of mounds of sand and gravel of glacial origin easily distinguished from the surrounding marshland, fresh marsh now, but formerly salt marshes open to the sea. On this part of the Norfolk coastline, the landward movement of the beach is a conspicuous and continuing feature as it is rolled landwards over the marsh during storm conditions. One result is that some of the Eyes, particularly at Salhouse, have wholly or partly disappeared. The same fate is in prospect for

Cley and Blakeney Eyes which lie on either side of the River Glaven as it approaches the beach. At this point the river turns westward through a man-made channel into Blakeney estuary. This channel was built in 1924 to replace one further to seaward which was filling with shingle. This process is now threatening the present channel and some action needs to be taken to provide a secure passage for the river.

On Blakeney Eye, to the west of the Glaven but actually in Cley parish, there once stood a building now represented by low mounds of turf in the shape of two adjacent rectangles, with traces of flint walls protruding. This building was depicted on the first known map of the area, dated 1586, and since then it has been described in documents as a former chapel. The general supposition is that friars from Blakeney Friary were responsible for it until the Dissolution when it may have had many uses before becoming a ruin.

The presence of these enigmatic remains and the gradual but inexorable approach of the sea led to the fieldwork conducted by the BAHS in the winter of 1998/99 and reported in *The Glaven Historian* No. 2 for 1999.¹ Resistivity and magnetometer surveys were supported by a sample survey of mole-hills – these being the only form of ‘excavation’ allowed on this

Scheduled Ancient Monument! The findings suggested that the building consisted of two cells, the smaller one being less substantial and perhaps built at a different date. There was little sign of any building material, except for fragments of slate associated with the smaller cell. The molehills provided some other objects but nothing that could be dated to the medieval period. Such negative evidence is not incompatible with use of the building as a chapel but it does leave room for other interpretations.

After publication of the results, samples of the slate fragments were identified by the expert on building materials at the British Geological Survey who concluded that they could not come from North Wales, Leicestershire or the Lake District and that it was highly likely they were from Devon or Cornwall as they were similar to material from Delabole.² This is particularly interesting as similar slate is known to have been used at various locations in southern England in medieval times.³ Roofing slate from this period had not so far been found in Norfolk or Suffolk but it has recently been reported from a 15th century building in Colchester.⁴ Although the use of the slate fragments on the Eye cannot be dated, it is worth noting that before the advent of rail transport slate was an expensive commodity and tended to be used only on important buildings.

The Environment Agency's Programme

Since the publication of the two articles in *The Glaven Historian*¹ a much larger study of the Eye has been initiated by the Environment Agency as part

of a wider investigation of Blakeney Freshes. The context is the need to replace the Cley Cut in the near future with an alternative channel for the Glaven. Depending on the option chosen the likelihood is that the Eye and its 'chapel' will be left to seaward of the river. The existing seabank will provide protection for a while but eventually the Eye will go the way of those at Salhouse – into the sea.

The north Norfolk marshes in the vicinity of Blakeney and Cley are at risk both from marine flooding and from the potential blocking of the river Glaven. As the statutory authority for coastal and flood defence, the Environment Agency is required to maintain flood defences and drainage and has begun a programme of studies to propose a scheme that would qualify for funding from the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA).

Although there are several stages yet to negotiate before funding is secured, the current expectation is that the selected scheme for re-routing the Glaven will be completed relatively soon. It will, however, need to proceed in parallel with a linked scheme for flood defence at Cley/Salhouse.

Archaeological Studies: Winter 2002/3

In the latter part of 2002 the Norfolk Archaeological Unit (NAU) prepared a Project Design setting out in some detail the archaeological work required on Blakeney Freshes including the Eye in conformity with a Brief established by the County Council's Norfolk Landscape Archaeology (NLA). The Brief specified that the evaluation should pro-

ceed by means of geophysical survey, borehole survey, trial trenching and field observation. It also set out the research that would be necessary to place the site within its archaeological and historical context. All relevant sources were to be searched: published and unpublished reports, historical documents, maps and aerial photographs.

The geophysical work, conducted during December 2002 by Stratascan, entailed magnetometer and electromagnetic surveys of the whole 10 hectares of the Eye. A resistivity survey was not included because on the lower parts of the Eye ground conditions would have been too damp. The results have not been released but it is known that a number of potential archaeological features were identified in various parts of the Eye.

In January 2003 boreholes to retrieve palaeo-environmental samples were augered down to 15 metres but only one penetrated the underlying chalk. This was followed by trial trenching to cover some 5% of the site. Some 50 trenches, each 2 metres wide and 50 metres long, were arranged in a herringbone pattern but adjusted so as to pick up the anomalies recorded by the geophysical surveys. The 'chapel' building was to be examined by at least two trenches, on north-south and east-west axes.

BAHS Visit

Towards the end of the trenching phase the NAU's Project Director showed a group of BAHS members the work being undertaken at the 'chapel' site. At this time, 24th February, the north-south trench had been

put across the building but the east-west one had yet to be started. A tray of representative finds was put out for inspection. These included a piece of Beaker pottery from an unstratified source, a piece of Grimston ware, which could not be closely dated, fragments of slate and tile, and various pieces of ironware, including a door brace, gin traps and .303 bullets. The slate finds had been confined to the southernmost, smaller, cell while the tile had been concentrated in a layer in the larger cell. Around the building was a very sparse scatter of debris – bits of pot, small animal bones and oyster shells. The spoil from the trenches had been metal detected although relatively few objects had been recovered, a medieval penny being the best find at the time. For the archaeologists a most interesting find had been a small piece of rope at the base of one of the walls.

The southern cell had a brick rubble base, apparently post-medieval, with a couple of small sandstone blocks included. In the larger cell the north wall, below ground, was substantial and had a ledge and batter on the outer side, similar to examples (believed to be medieval) seen by Society members in Wiveton in recent years. Some of the wall had fallen and had sand and gravel deposits over it. No floor was visible in the larger cell although a cobble floor was subsequently revealed by the main east-west trench.

Within the larger cell, there was evidence of features in the sandy deposits sealed under the base of the building indicating earlier occupation of the site. Elsewhere, trenching had uncovered an area of prehistoric pits, some containing worked flints and some pottery

apparently of Neolithic date. Some of the other features shown up on the geophysical surveys appeared to be of geological rather than archaeological origin.

Current Position

Since the Society's visit to the site in February the trial trenching has been completed and work has continued off site. A record of the finds and features discovered during the various studies, together with an assessment of their significance, has been presented to the sponsors in the form of an Evaluation Report. The case for further excavations at the Eye is being assessed in order to elucidate the nature and significance of the long history of this site.

This note has been prepared by the author because the interpretation of findings has not been made public. It is expected that an authoritative report will appear in the next issue. In the meantime this note should be treated as a personal view written by someone observing events from the outside on behalf of the Society.



Editors' Postscript

The photograph above was taken looking east along the trench dug through the larger cell (photo: J Peake). This shows the cross wall subdividing the cell and the cobbled floor at the west end, both possibly constructed during the post-medieval period (J Bown 2003 Norfolk Archaeological Unit, The Quarterly No. 50, pp 24-5).

Notes

1. P. Carnell, *The Chapel on Blakeney Eye: Initial Results of Field Surveys*, The Glaven Historian No. 2, 1999.
J. Wright, *The Chapel on Blakeney Eye: Some Documentary Evidence*, The Glaven Historian No. 2, 1999.
2. Personal communication 1999, Graham Lott (BGS) to J F Peake).
3. E. M. Jope and G. C. Dunning, *The Use of Blue Slate for Roofing in Medieval England*, The Antiquaries Journal, Vol. 34, pp 209-217.
4. Essex Archaeology No. 31, p. 123.
Reference supplied by Edwin Rose, NLA.

Back Pages

Snippets:

Them stones, them dry stones

At the eastern end of the Chancel in Cley Church there is a reminder of the many changes that have taken place in parish churches. Hidden from sight underneath the present Altar, there is a large stone slab that was eroded and cracked before being set in its present position. The slab, called a 'mensa', is the top of a medieval altar. Although many disappeared after the Reformation and the edict of 1564, they are not uncommon.

Distinctive features of these altars are the five crosses incised into the surface, for the five wounds of Christ, which were anointed when the altar was consecrated. One cross was central with another in each of the four corners. In the Cley altar four simple and rather crude crosses are still visible with the central one being illustrated in figure 1.

In the north aisle there are remnants of another medieval altar. Two stones set in the floor under the present Altar have in total four crosses or parts of crosses cut into their surface. The arrangement of these crosses suggests the two stones were part of a larger slab with the central section now missing. They may have been part of a subsidiary altar or even an altar in the earlier and much smaller church.

In Wiveton, the origins of two stone slabs of Purbeck Marble, on either side of the pulpit, are more problematical (figure 2: A and B).



Figure 1. Central cross of the Cley Altar



Figure 2. The two slabs of Purbeck Marble in Wiveton Church.



Figure 3. Close-up of one of the Wiveton slabs showing the quarter circle removed from the corners.

Both are now much eroded, with the smallest (A) having quarter-circles removed from each corner (figure 3). Were these also parts of altars? There are no crosses visible

on the surface of either stone, but in Medieval times some subsidiary altars did not have the distinctive crosses as at Cley. There is, however, another possibility - these slabs may have been part of an ornate tomb with pillars set in each corner to support a canopy or table-top. The original raised tomb of George and Anne Brigge is an obvious candidate (see page 33). We know the portrait brasses were once set in Purbeck Marble and in 1614 an order was made to dismantle this tomb.

John Peake

Feedback: Importation of Stone for memorials

In the course of a fascinating tour around the graveyard at Wells (reported in the BAHS Newsletter, June 2003) conducted by Nina Bilbey, the question arose of whence the material used for all the lovely headstones in this area's many churchyards came.

The obvious answer given was that, as North Norfolk is not well endowed with freestone, they came by ship, possibly in lieu of ballast. These stone slabs must have been a valuable commodity – and presumably dutiable – so it is surprising just how rarely they feature in the Cley and Blakeney Port Books.

A quick perusal of my Port Book transcripts for the years 1770 and 1780 reveals precisely one entry for 'gravestones', nine for 'flagstones' (measured in Dozens) and one 'slabstone', all shipped from Newcastle or Sunderland in company with a holdful of coal. The 'gravestone' entry is:

5 Dec 1770 in the John & Rebecca (John Taylor master) from Newcastle carrying 26 chalder of coal and 2 British Gravestones.

(PRO ref E190/576/2)

Presumably British stones attracted a lower rate of duty than foreign ones. I cannot believe that only two people, wealthy enough to afford a headstone, died in Blakeney, Cley and district in 1770. So how did the rest get their stones?

By the by, the Port Books also had four entries for grindstones, three of them in 1780. Curiously these grindstones were measured by the chalder rather than being individually counted as they had been in 1770 (there *were* only two to count). So, how many grindstones did one get in a chalder? Was there even a constant size? Was there a reason for the change in the style of entry in the Port Books, or was it merely a quirk of the person making the entries?

Richard Kelham

Snippet: From the Norfolk Chronicle 1770

"Last Sunday evening [15 Jan] a fishing smack, riding in 6 fathoms water off Blakeney, was run down by a coasting sloop, and sunk directly. The people were with great difficulty saved by a boat."

"Monday 7 May, Rev Thomlinson, Rector of Cley, was married to Miss Winn of Holt, a very agreeable young lady, endowed with every qualification to render the married state happy, and possessed of a fortune of £15,000."

Feedback: The Windows of Wiveton Church – an additional note

Following the discussion in *Glaven Historian* No.4 (2001) a reference has come to light which might provide yet another explanation for bullet holes in church windows.

K Thomas, in his important work *Religion and the Decline of Magic* (1971) discusses the irreverent behaviour of members of church congregations in the early 17th century, and the resulting referrals to the ecclesiastical courts. He quotes a case (page 191, taken from Ely Diocesan records B2/20 f79v) of a man who took a fowling piece to church intending to clean it during sermon. Having done so, he thought he might as well check that it was working, and so discharged it into the roof.

Leaving aside the glass at Wiveton, one wonders how many of the shotgun pellets discovered in church roofs, attributed to Cromwell's men having shot at the angel figures, may have a similar origin.

Edwin J Rose
Norfolk Landscape Archaeology

Obituary: Basil Greenhill

The death has been announced of Basil Greenhill, the maritime historian and former Director of the National Maritime Museum at Greenwich. During his tenure at the NMM, Greenhill greatly expanded the scope of the museum and, inter alia, founded the

Archaeological Research Centre – known to some NMM staff as the “soggy wood department”.

He was the author of numerous articles and not a few books, the most famous of which is his two-volume study of *The Merchant Schooners*, essential reading for anyone interested in the coastal traders of Britain. He was 83.

Contributors

Jonathan Hooton teaches geography and environmental science at Notre Dame School, Norwich. He is probably better known here as the author of *The Glaven Ports*.

Eric Hotblack is a farmer whose field walking experience has led to a wider interest in landscape archaeology.

Richard Jefferson, former cricketer and teacher, is an avid collector of things historical, especially those relating to the Glaven Valley.

John Peake, biologist, formerly worked in the Natural History Museum, London, and recently retired; has many early links with north Norfolk.

Pamela Peake, author, lecturer and recently retired adult education tutor; has a long-time fascination for social history.

Monica White is a botanist and formerly lectured at University College, London.

John Wright is a retired town planner who worked most recently for Norfolk County Council.