
the **GLAVEN HISTORIAN**

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Editorial

Here we are again. Another summer, another Glaven Historian. This year we have cast our net a little wider, encompassing Wells, Stiffkey, Weybourne and Kelling as well as more strictly *Glaven* matters. Inevitably this expansion of our sphere of interest will continue in future years, with the Glaven Historian becoming a journal of north Norfolk history and archaeology.

Equally inevitably there is further material on the Glaven's maritime past with Michael Stammers giving us the life and works (mostly the works) of Henry Tyrrell, Wells shipbuilder, and Jonathan Hooton rounding off his coverage of Peter Catling's ship models with some information on the ships that were the inspiration for Peter's work.

Coming ashore, Mike Medlar has looked at the winners and losers from the Langham Enclosure of the early 19th century. Not surprisingly the rich seem to have come out richer and the poor poorer, though the author is careful not to use such crudely reductionist terms. Nevertheless, the evidence does show the degree to which Commoners' rights were extinguished with little or no compensation.

Brenda Worton compares and contrasts two adjacent villages with rather different histories. She examines the extent to which they can be described as 'open' or 'closed' villages and the impact this has on their development and the health, wealth and life expectancy of their inhabitants. The villages in question are Weybourne and Kelling.

In many of our local villages by far the oldest building is the church, the "improvements" of the Victorians notwithstanding, so it should not come as a surprise to know that this journal also likes to take a look at our ecclesiastic heritage. John Wright's paper is part of an on-going investigation of Stiffkey church – or rather churches. Why were there two churches on the site and which one was which?

The Reverend Neil Batcock, a committee member of this Society, is also the Priest in Charge of the Glaven Benefice, so who better to guide us through the symbolism of the retable in the St Thomas à Becket chapel in Blakeney

church. Church history – that of the buildings perhaps more than the people – is a subject that is currently being studied in great depth, coincidentally at a time when thought is also being given to alternative uses for redundant or underused church buildings throughout the country. This is definitely an area we will be featuring again in the future.

As this issue is packed off to the printers our thoughts inevitably turn to the future. We are deliberately widening our area of interest so as to bring you articles based on solid research material that has relevance to all of us even if the chosen site is say King's Lynn or Norwich – the Glaven was not an isolated, self-contained enclave but a central part of much wider trading and social networks: John Peake has already demonstrated the familial links that existed between the Glaven ports and the north east of England, South Shields in particular. What links were there with Rotterdam, or the Baltic? Were there any connections with the Hanseatic League? A fruitful area for research – but don't expect any answers soon!

There is still much good local research to be tapped: we know for instance that someone is working on the history of Holt Racecourse. Yes there really was one.

But this is for future editions, plural. For now, we hope you enjoy this latest edition of *your* journal.

RK

Correction

The editors have learned that an error crept into Andrew Hayden's article on church organs in the Glaven Historian No 10. It was stated that the Holditch organ in St Mary's Wiveton was restored with the help of a Heritage Lottery grant but this is incorrect.

Mrs Mirabel Cecil paid for the restoration together with other improvements in the church in memory of her late brother Sebastian Walker (1944-1991).

We apologise for any distress that this has caused.

Henry Tyrrell, Shipbuilder

Michael Stammers

Synopsis: a brief biography of a 19th century north Norfolk shipbuilder with a list of all the ships he is known to have built.

Henry Thomas Tyrrell was born in 1821 at Wells-next-the-Sea, the eldest son of Henry and Henrietta Tyrell. He had a sister Mary Ann born in 1832 and a brother Joseph John born in 1834. Henry Tyrrell senior (1794 – c.1870) was a grocer and draper with shops at Wells, Blakeney and Burnham Market.¹

He was clearly successful and had accumulated sufficient capital to invest in ships and in the new Wells and Fakenham Railway project. He was an important figure in the town and served on various official bodies such as the Harbour Commissioners and the Parish Vestry.

In the world of small Victorian businesses, it was usual for the eldest son to follow his father. Henry junior did not become a grocer and draper, he became a shipbuilder. According to the 1841 Census Return for Great Yarmouth, there was a Henry Tyrrell aged 19, shipwright. He would have been coming towards the end of his seven year apprenticeship. There were twelve shipbuilding firms at work in the town at that time. It was possible, he was apprenticed to Robert Lubbock if only because there was a John Lubbock working as a shipbuilder at Wells. This could be a coincidence; on the other hand the surname Lubbock is unusual enough to suggest that the two shipbuilders might have been related. Family connections counted for a great deal at the time.

It is unclear what Tyrrell did when he came out of his time. It is possible that he worked for John Lubbock at Wells. By the summer of 1845, he had set up on his own account. He launched his first ship, the 77 ton schooner Sarah in September 1845. Lubbock continued building ships until 1847 after which his yard was taken over by Joseph Southgate – the leading merchant in Wells. The two shipyards were sited side by side at the East End inland of the Quay, just beyond Jolly Sailor's Yard. Each had a frontage of about forty yards and stretched inland for about another 100.²

A wooden shipbuilder needed plenty of ground on which to store and season timber and a good firm beach from which to launch his

products. Setting up a yard did not require a huge investment. There was little or no machinery and few buildings. Most of the investment was in buying timber and paying wages. A yard could be set up for as little as £200.³

Doubtless Tyrrell senior financed his son's new enterprise and continued to support him by buying shares in his newly completed vessels. Between 1845 and 1862, at least twenty-two vessels ranging from a 334 ton barque to a 16 foot yacht were launched at the rate of about one a year. He probably built other small boats which have not been recorded. Repairs were the staple work of any shipyard and these are undocumented unless by some accident the accounts of the yard have survived. Building ships at Wells was continued by James Beeching and Robert Leamon until 1869. After that, only fishing boats and pleasure craft were launched there. When he quit the yard in 1862, Tyrrell was only forty-one and unmarried. He seems to have left Wells and pursued a career as a marine surveyor. By 1891, he was living in retirement at Great Yarmouth.

He documented the layout of his shipyard in a unique 'picture model' which can be dated to 1847 and the launch of the brig Countess of Leicester. It consists of a series of stand-up water colour scenes and people rather like a Victorian child's theatre. They show the brig ready to be launched and a schooner, the Minstrel in frame ready for planking up. Behind lie the sawpit, the store and the blacksmith's shop. A large number of shipwrights busy themselves on various tasks from sharpening tools, adzing frames to finishing off a ship's boat. There is a great deal of personal detail: the owner – distinctive in top hat and swallow-tail coat stands with a frame pattern under his arm, an old woman collects firewood and a lad carries a large jug of beer.⁴

Tyrrell was known locally as an artist and a ship portrait of the Countess of Leicester was probably his work.⁵

He clearly considered her building an important achievement and this is confirmed by a local newspaper report. On 24th April 1847 the



Photograph 1. Henry Tyrrell's model of his shipyard with the Countess of Leicester on her launching day on the left and the schooner Minstrel on the right in 1847.

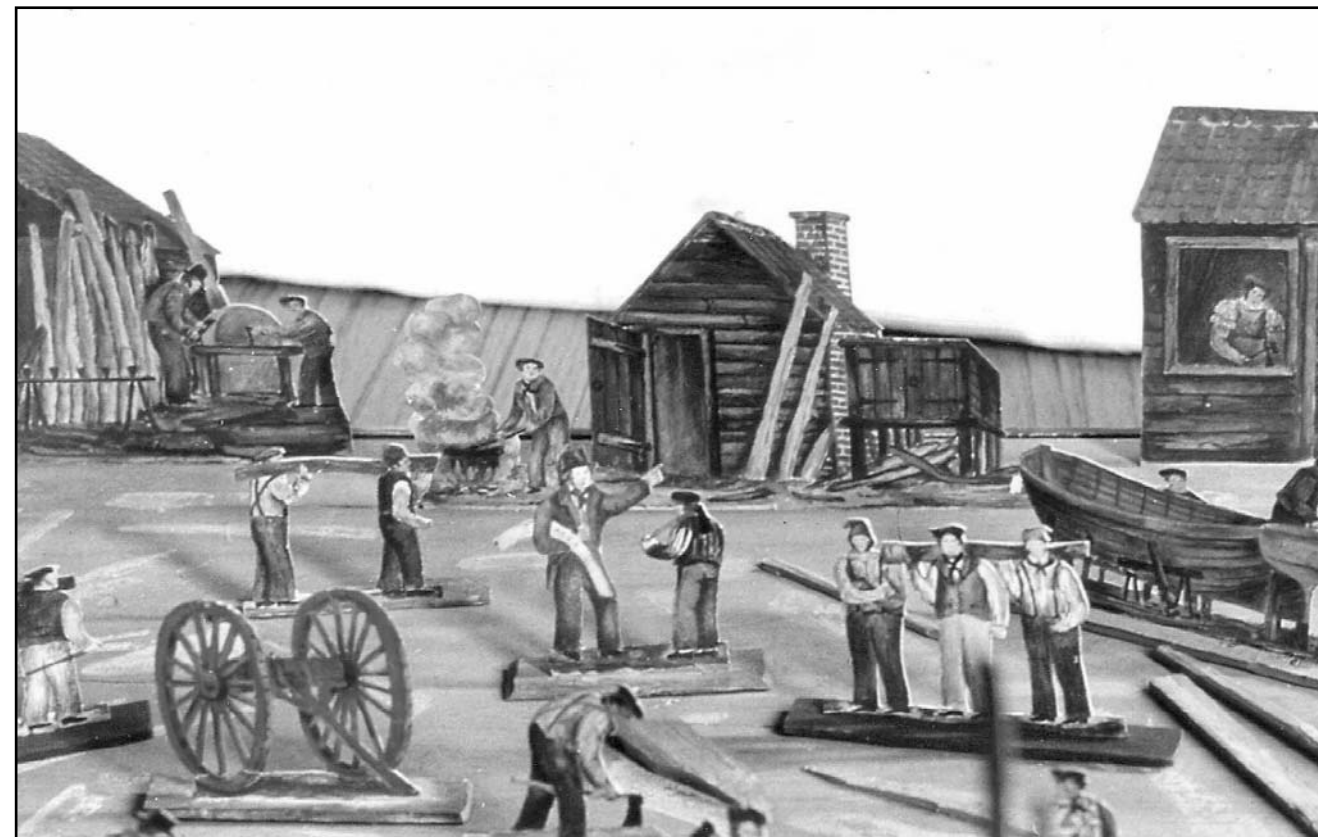
Norfolk Chronicle reported the launch of 'a splendid brig' with 'a large concourse of people present'. The ship was 'fitted up in a most substantial manner, is classed A1 for 12 years and may with credit be pronounced the finest specimen of shipbuilding ever constructed in Wells.' She was intended for the Southern trade i.e. carrying barrels of salted and smoked herring to the Mediterranean and returning with fresh oranges or dried fruit. She is known to have made a voyage to South America in 1848 and several later voyages to the Italian port of Leghorn.

The timber he used to build the ships was probably mostly local. At least, there is no evidence of direct imports from the Baltic. Pine planking, masts and spars from the Baltic were often used on British-built ships. There were several large estates in the neighbourhood which sold oak and elm – the two prime woods for hulls and in 1832 the first Earl of Leicester was pleased to witness wood that he had grown at Holkham incorporated into a new ship launched at Wells.⁶

The costs of building a ship varied with its size and quality of build. A prime quality coasting vessel would cost around £12 to £15 per ton in the mid-19th century. Good quality ships were built according to the rules laid down by Lloyd's Register. These laid down specific scant-

lings for different timber components and their fastenings, and rated different types of wood according to their strength and resistance to rot. They classified a vessel according to its initial build for a fixed number of years. Their highest rating was A1 for twelve. An extra two years might be awarded if the ship had been built under cover. So, the quality of Tyrrell's *Countess of Leicester* was apparent to the Lloyds' surveyor. Classification in turn affected the kind of cargoes a ship might carry and the cost of her insurance premiums. After 12 years, the vessel would be subject to a stringent special survey and might be downgraded to a lower classification.

Tyrrell developed a reputation for building high quality vessels, and this rested on his use of good materials, good workmanship and his skill as a naval architect. The newspaper reports emphasise all these and especially his building of fast vessels. While some half models of small boats have survived in private ownership, it is not clear whether they are from his time or later. The report of the launch of his own boat, the *Volante*, in the Norfolk News of 16th July 1860 makes clear that he used paper plans to draw up her design. So he was well versed in the latest ship design practice. His work attracted shipowners from outside Norfolk, and this was in an era when most shipbuilding was intensely



Photograph 2. A close up view of the model; Henry Tyrrell is directing the work in the centre, to the left is the timber drag for hauling tree trunks to the yard and to the right a ship's boat is nearly finished. In the background from left to right are the saw-pit, the store and the blacksmith's shop.

local. He built ten vessels for owners living at London, Goole and Knottingley. With the exception of the *London Packet* built for Blakeney owners in 1854 and the *Gem* for Robert Leeder of Wells and John Howard of Wells in 1856, all his later ships were built for owners in other ports. The fact that he bought a share in the French-built schooner *Robuste* in 1853 and then rebuilt and lengthened her suggests that he was short of work. By 1856, he was certainly in some kind of financial difficulty because, he could not pay the call on his ten shares in the Wells & Fakenham Railway.⁷

It is difficult to know how owners in other ports were made aware of his good work. But informal networks of shipowners, merchants and their agents existed up and down the East Coast. There is a definite connection in the case of the barque *Guadalete* and the brig *Priscilla*. One was ordered by Frost & Co. of London and the other by Bullard & Co. of London. The principals of both firms hailed from Wells and had clearly retained their connection with the port.

Tyrrell's model has thirty-three figures working in the yard. Whether this is an accurate number of employees is impossible to tell. In the 1851 Census, there were twenty shipwrights, six sawyers, two ship carpenters and one shipsmith living in Wells. There were

other marine related trades such as ropemakers who worked for themselves. As work was on a day rate, it is likely that the shipwrights rotated between the two yards and were possibly supplemented by outsiders as needed. All of them would have owned their own tools and could move to find work. In the 1861 Census, Tyrrell employed fourteen men and eight apprentices. It might seem that this was an excessive number of apprentices but it was standard practice to use apprentices as cheap labour.

Some of his employees can be identified. Frederick Whitaker (aged fourteen in 1851) was apprenticed to Henry Tyrrell between 1854 and 1861. He was the son of Richard Whitaker, a 48 year old carpenter at East End and almost certainly involved in fitting out ships. In 1872, Frederick and Miles Palmer, another shipwright jointly acquired the old fishing vessel *Young Man's Industry* built at Lynn in 1824. By 1877, he was sole owner and she was out of the Register by 1894.⁸

Whitaker worked on ship repairs in the old yard until his death in 1905 when the contents of the yard were sold. According to Craven's 1856 directory John Powditch was foreman to Henry Tyrrell and was as important as Tyrrell in organising the day to day work in the yard. He was also the victualler at the Red Lion, off the Quay, from 1845 to 1862 and a shareholder in

various local ships including the schooner *Venture* which had been rebuilt in the yard in 1853.

A rare insight into the working conditions of the yard is provided by a report of the inquest into a fatal accident in the *Norfolk News* for 24th Sept. 1853. Herbert Spencer aged 14 was employed 'to wait upon the shipwrights' employed at the yard. About 4 o'clock on the day of the accident he was sent to fetch the men's beer and while going ashore in a boat, one of the shipwrights, Robert Tyzack, threw a treenail (a long wooden fastening 'bolt') at him which hit him on the head. He fetched the beer and on his return collapsed on the deck. He was carried home and later died. Tyzack was arrested and charged with manslaughter. This recalls the boy carrying a jug of beer depicted in the model. Such horseplay was characteristic of industrial and maritime work of the period where the youngest or newest employees were subjected to all sorts of teasing and initiations. Tyzack's trial at the Assizes at Norwich was reported in the *Norwich Mercury* 22nd March 1854. He pleaded guilty but his sentence was not recorded.

We know little of Tyrrell's social life. He clearly enjoyed painting. The launch of a ship from his yard must have been a highlight as well as an anxiety if there were no firm orders in

prospect. A launch was also a public spectacle; for example the *Norfolk News* for 17th July 1858 reported that the launching ceremony for the *Priscilla* involved a band, a feu de joie and a celebratory dinner.

He was also involved in the affairs of his community. The *Norfolk News* for 15th October 1859 reported that he chaired the Regatta Committee's dinner. In the role of Regatta chairman he wrote annually between 1859 and 1861 to the Wells & Fakenham Railway and the Eastern Counties Railway asking for their subscriptions to the Regatta's prize money.⁹ The railways received a direct benefit from the event because it attracted large numbers of excursionists. In 1860, he entered his own yacht – the sixteen foot *Volante* – and came last. He did better in 1861 and won second place.¹⁰

He was a member of the Loyal Leicester Lodge of the Oddfellows and the Congregational Chapel where he was responsible for decorating the chapel with flags and evergreens for a ceremony to mark the ten year's work of the organist.¹¹

He also provided flags and an escort of shipwrights for the opening of the new railway in November 1857. In fact, he was as much involved in the community affairs of the town as his father and many other local businessmen.¹²

References

1. The details of Tyrrell's family etc are drawn from the Census Returns for Wells-next-the-Sea 1841-1871 and various editions of White's *Norfolk Directory* 1845, 1854 and 1864.
2. Holkham Hall Archive, Wells & Fakenham railway records B/WFR/37/5 letter from J S Southgate to the company secretary 12th June 1857 and various editions of Ordnance Survey maps.
3. Helen Doe *Jane Slade of Polruan* (Truro, 2002) p. 22 – Christopher Slade took out a mortgage of £200 to buy the shipyard at Polruan, Cornwall in 1847. Although this is a distance from Norfolk, the size of the yard was comparable.
4. For a detailed description of this model, see: M. K. Stammers 'A 19th century Shipyard Model, from Wells-next-the-Sea' *Transactions of the Norfolk and Norwich Archaeological Society* 1996 p.519 -526.
5. The model and the ship portrait are still owned by his descendants. There are two other paintings by Tyrrell owned in Wells – personal communication from the Archivist at Holkham Hall.
6. S. Wade-Martin *Holkham – a Great Estate at Work* (Cambridge, 1983), 83.
7. Holkham Hall Archives B/WFR/ 37(1) letter from J S Southgate to Company Secretary 20th December 1856.
8. Norfolk Record Office, Wells Shipping Register P/SH/L/7 – 1/1839
9. Holkham Hall Archives B/WFR/37/7 -9
10. *Norfolk News* 4th August 1860 and 10th August 1861.
11. *Norfolk News* 6th April 1861
12. *Norfolk Chronicle* 5th December 1857

Tyrrell's ships

Sarah 12th September 1845, 77 ton schooner jointly owned by J Southgate and J Garwood, solicitor of Wells and sold in 1853 to William Gibbs of Harding, Hants.

Hopewell 28th July 1846, 51 ton sloop (ketch 1880) owned by Thomas Mack merchant of Burnham Thorpe 22 shares, John Savory miller of Burnham Overy 22 shares and James Smith of Burnham Overy 20 shares, also her master. Wrecked off Wells in 1900 - 54 years at sea .

A testimony to soundness of Tyrrell's work

Teazer 20th April 1847, 95 ton schooner owned by Joseph J Southgate merchant, 40 shares, John Southgate postmaster 16 and James Atkins 8, her first master, all of Wells. 1855 sold to Goole owners

Countess of Leicester 24th April 1847 151 ton brig owned by George Wiseman farmer 16 shares, James Hull merchant 8 shares, Thomas Mack merchant 8 shares all of Burnham Overy, William Mack, farmer 8 shares of Burnham Norton, John Groom farmer 8 shares of Little Walsingham and Henry Tyrrell – the builder's father who had upped his status in the Register from grocer and draper to merchant - 16 shares. Sold to a Guernsey owner in 1857

Minstrel 4th September 1847 58 ton schooner owned by Thomas Mack, merchant of Burnham Thorpe. She made a number of Baltic voyages in her early career. Mack sold his shares to John Savory in 1864 and the vessel continued in the coasting trade until wrecked in 1904. See: J Hooton 'Minstrel, Biography of a Sailing Ship' in *Glaven Historian* No.8 (2005) 3- 11

Norfolk Tar 13th April 1848 103 ton schooner owned by Henry Tyrrell merchant 16 shares, Thomas and James Powditch master mariners 16 shares each, all of Wells and William Frost sailmaker of Wapping, London. The ship was transferred to King's Lynn owners in 1870.

Lapwing 2nd March 1849 71 ton schooner wholly owned by Henry Tyrrell, shipowner (not merchant or grocer and draper). Sold 4 Jan. 1855 sold to Richard Lord merchant of Wells and in 1864 of Southwold. Sunk 5th March 1871 in collision.

Hannah 13th August 1850 138 ton snow wholly owned by Joseph Southgate; 3rd February 1858 sold to Cley owners (managing owner Gibbs) and transferred to Great Yarmouth Register 1863 and still in existence 1869.

Charlotte 16th November 1850 92 ton schooner owned by William Gardner, gentleman (farmer of 200 acres) 48 shares and Robert Cubitt, merchant 16 shares both of Wells. Lost 1876.

Ocean Queen Brig (?) owned by J Shepherd of London; left Wells for London in tow of SS Lord Warden and intended for the West India trade *Norfolk News* 7th June 1851.

Ocean Wave 2nd July 1852 63 ton sloop jointly owned by Henry Tyrell shipowner and John Powditch shipwright, both of Wells. Lost in 1873.

London Packet 29th August 1854 58 ton sloop jointly owned by William and Charles Temple both merchants of Blakeney, still in same ownership 1869 and wrecked in 1895.

Guadalete 1854 334 ton barque for Frost & Co. London, Lloyd's Register 1861.

Gem 25th September 1856 68 ton schooner jointly owned by Robert Leeder shipowner of Wells and John Howard butcher Stiffkey. In 1867 Leeder sold his share to James Cooke master mariner of Wells. Lost in collision in 1889.

Graceful 1857 220 tons (burthern) brigantine for Wright & Ramsey, Goole; 'long for her size and very sharp' with a fine figurehead *Norfolk News* 28th February 1857.

Formosa 1857 97 ton schooner for David King of London (an associate of Bullard) intended for the African and Mediterranean trades. *Norfolk News* 26th September 1857 and Lloyd's Register 1858

Priscilla 1858 253 ton brig built under Lloyd's survey for Bullard & Co. of London and commanded by Captain James Sturley of Wells late of the Countess of Leicester in *Norfolk News* 17th July 1858 and the edition for 25th June 1859 reported that she made a voyage to Port Natal, South Africa in 63 days with emigrants whose praise 'is likely to be highly gratifying to her enterprising builder'.

Onward. 1859 'a neat schooner, rated A1 for coastal and foreign trade for Capt. Leonard Eckles of Goole' *Norfolk News* 26th March 1859.

Volante 1860 a sixteen foot sailing boat entered for the Wells regatta for the first time and built on lines drawn by her owner *Norfolk News* 16th July 1859.

Trio 1860 a 170 ton schooner built under Lloyd's special survey for Capt. Moore of Knottingley *Norfolk News* 28th July 1860.

Echo a cutter for R Dewing of Burnham, took part in 1860 Regatta *Norfolk News* 28th July 1860.

Ann Elizabeth 1861 140 ton coasting schooner- her New Year's Day launch was witnessed by numerous spectators in unpropitious weather. 'A handsome schooner', rated A1 by Lloyds, owned by Captain R Frank of Knottingley and launched by his daughter Lynn. *Norfolk News* 5th January 1861.

Pursuit 1861 151 ton coasting schooner built for Joseph Arnold of Knottingley, *Norfolk News* 14th September 1861

Advance 1862 78 ton coasting schooner built for William Cass, ship Chandler of Goole. Clayton's Shipping Register 1865.

Enclosure in Langham 1815 to 1820: winners and losers

Mike Medlar

Synopsis: The author looks at the enclosure of Langham following the Act of 1815 to see who gained and who lost as a result of the enclosure award.

In popular history, it has long been claimed that, at the time of enclosure, small landholders were forced off the land and became wage-labourers.

The Hammonds¹ claimed that loss of land, and especially of common rights which allowed the small landholder to feed his cattle, led to rural poverty in times of economic depression. Even as they were writing, there were dissenting voices to their argument. Writing two years before the Hammonds, Johnson² found that, with the exception of a few isolated places, there was no firm evidence to support the view that small landholders were forced off the land at enclosure.

The debate has raged over the intervening years, with historians adopting both views. This article will look at the evidence from the enclosure of Langham in the early nineteenth century.

Langham, in north Norfolk, is an agricultural parish of about 1,700 acres. The parish is generally about 40m (c.140ft) above sea level, although only 3km (c.1.5 miles) from the Norfolk coast. The soils overlying the parish are very mixed, ranging from some quite heavy boulder clay in the south to very light sands and gravels in the north. The parish is bisected by a stream which runs from the southeast corner of the parish before turning westward just to the south of the village centre. (See map 1)

In 1815 an Act of Parliament was passed which allowed the landowners of Langham to enclose the open fields, commons and wastes. The four commissioners appointed under the Act were able to rearrange the parish by consolidating individual holdings and closing and re-routing roads and other rights of way. This enclosure award was primarily designed to enable the landowners to improve their agricultural output.

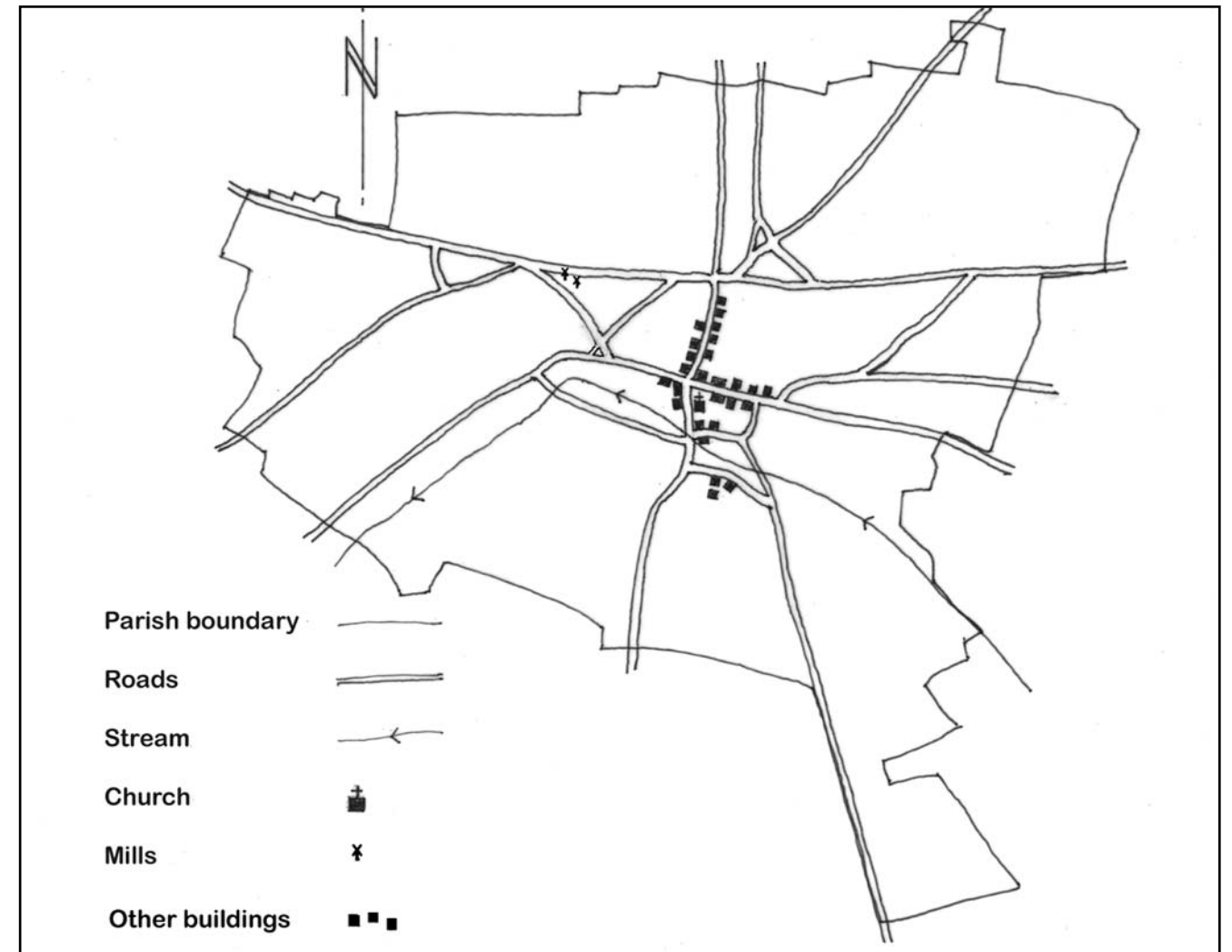
It came at the end of a 20-year period of continuous economic growth for farmers. This growth had been stimulated by wars with France, which came to an end in 1815, and an increasingly rapid rise in population.

The process of enclosure was quite complicated and could take some years to complete.

The first stage was for the commissioners to announce that enclosure was to take place, quite often by posting a notice on the church door, requesting all people with claims to land and common rights in the parish to present these claims to the commissioners by a certain date. The claims relating to the enclosure of Langham were printed in a brochure on 13th October 1815. This brochure would have been distributed to all claimants, who were advised that any other claims or objections had to be made at a meeting to be held at the Feathers Hotel in Holt on 18th December 1815. The commissioners stated they would settle all disputes by 19th December.

Table 1 shows the claimants, the acreage claimed and the number of dwellings they owned. The total of just under 1,650 acres claimed was only a small amount less than the 1,687 acres awarded by the commissioners two years after the claims were made. This table shows the acreage claimed, while table 3 shows the acreage granted under the enclosure award. Comparison of the two tables shows that Lord Fredrick Townshend claimed 7 acres in his capacity as lay rector of Morston, but he was only awarded 4.5 acres. Similarly, the acreages claimed by the Reverends Gough and Littlehales for the glebe lands of Langham St. Mary and Langham St. Andrew were reduced by a similar percentage.

Following the submission of claims, a surveyor was appointed. His job was to survey the whole parish including the commons and wastes. He would have surveyed individual holdings to check their accuracy. Following the commissioners' deliberations, the surveyor would draw up a map with the new plots and roads as had been laid down by the commissioners. The surveyor for Langham was Benjamin Leake of Holt. Leake was responsible for a number of other enclosure maps in the area including those of Binham, Field Dalling with Cley, and Blakeney with Wiveton and Glandford. Langham is fortunate that, when drawing his map, Leake also included the pre-enclosure



Map 1. Langham village prior to enclosure.

landscape. This allows one to see the route of roads which were blocked and closed at enclosure. Leake also depicted the pre-enclosure field boundaries. On his map of Blakeney with Wiveton and Glandford, it is possible to see the evidence of strips in the former open-fields. There is little evidence of this on the Langham map, suggesting that the open fields had already given way to consolidated holdings – albeit ones which were not necessarily fenced. This view is further supported by the farm complex of Cubitt Wells, which had been built in the fields to the south of the village, very much in the style of ring-fenced farms of the years following enclosure.

It was often a number of years between the start of the enclosure process and the final distribution of land and settlement of expenses. The enclosure award for Langham was made in 1817, only two years after the start of the process, suggesting that there were no major obstacles for the commissioners to overcome. There were objections to some of the claims; for example, on 24th November 1815, Stephen Frost and William Astley objected to the claim of

the Rev. Richard Thomas Gough on the basis that he was not entitled to pasture his cattle on the commons and wastes of Langham.

It would appear that this objection and others were easily settled to enable such a swift resolution of the enclosure process. An annotated copy of the claims relating to Langham's enclosure, held at the Norfolk Record Office, indicates that there were objections against half the people making claims. The majority of these claims related to grazing rights over the open field lands, or whether particular houses had common rights. The attempt to claim double common rights for houses which had been divided into smaller dwellings was disallowed. Some people, such as Stephen Frost with his claim for common rights for nine dilapidated dwellings, withdrew the relevant part of their claim, but the commissioners were still left to decide in at least eight cases where they disallowed claims. These cases included Lord George Calthorpe's request for rights of soil as Lord of the Manors of Snitterley Astley, Snitterley Calthorpes and Wiveton of the Duke.

Table 1: Claims in Langham at enclosure – printed 13th October 1815

Name	Name	Claim		
Owner	Occupier	Land in acres roods, perches	Dwellings	Other rights
William Astley	William Boyce	2 0	1	Common rights as Thomas Wright
Thomas Balls	Samuel Southgate	1 0 0	2	Common rights as Thomas Wright
Thomas Boyce	Thomas Boyce	6 3 0	2	Common rights as Thomas Wright
George, Lord Calthorpe	Robert Simpson	14 0 0		Common rights as Thomas Wright; rights of soil as Lord of the Manors of Snitterly Astley, Snitterly Calthorpe and Wiveton of the Duke; advowson of the rectory of Langham Parva
William Chambers	William Chambers		2	Common rights as Thomas Wright
Thomas Truesdale Clarke				Right of sheepwalk and foldcourse
Alexander Copland	Alexander Copland	2 0	4	Common rights as Thomas Wright
Stephen Frost	John Rump	205 0 0	1	Common rights as Thomas Wright
Stephen Frost	Stephen Frost	274 0 0	22	Common rights as Thomas Wright, lease of the Great Tithes of 1350 acres of Langham
Stephen Frost	Alexander Copland	2 0 0		
Rev Richard T Gough	Rev Richard T Gough	20 0 0		Glebe of Langham Parva, Cockthorpe and Blakeney within Langham and great tithes of Langham Parva
John Hooke	John Hooke		2	Common rights as Thomas Wright
Richard Paul Jodderell	Thomas Hurrell	35 0 0		Common rights
Mary Johnson	John Massingham	5 0 0	2	Common rights as Thomas Wright
Rev Joseph Littlehales	Rev Joseph Littlehales	18 0 0	1	Glebe of Langham All Saints
James Massingham	James Massingham		1	The Bell, common rights as Thomas Wright
John Massingham snr	John Massingham Snr		2	Common rights as Thomas Wright
William Nelson	Samuel Gidney		1	Common rights as Thomas Wright
Churchwardens and Overseers			3	Common rights over commons, heaths and waste and fuel rights
William Pond	William Pond		2	Common rights as Thomas Wright
Thos William Temple	Thos William Temple	4 0 0		Common rights as Thomas Wright
Lord John Townshend	Alexander Copland	460 0 0	1	Common rights as Thomas Wright
Lord John Townshend	Jane Garrett	281 0 0	1	Common rights as Thomas Wright
Lord John Townshend	William Buck	1 0 0		Rights of soil as Lord of the Manor of Langham with Morston
Rev Lord Frederick Townshend	Matthew Wells	7 0 0		Glebe of rectories of Morston and Stiffkey in Langham
William Walker	William Walker	40 0 0	1	Common rights as Thomas Wright
Cubitt Wells	Matthew Wells	114 0 0	12	Common rights as Thomas Wright
Cubitt Wells	Peter Barton	2 0	1	Common rights as Thomas Wright
Thomas Wright	Thomas Wright	160 0 0	12	Common rights for commons, heath and wastes, rights of shack on half year lands and fuel rights
Total		1649 1 0	76	

Table 2. Residents of Langham 1815-1820

Name	House type	Landlord	Street in 1820
Thomas Allard	messuage	Thomas Wright	
John Barnes	messuage	Thomas Wright	
Thomas Barnes	messuage	Thomas Wright	East
Peter Barton	double cottage	Cubitt Wells	
William Bastard	messuage	Thomas Wright	East
Rose Beavers	cottage	Overseers, Churchwardens	
Mary Beck	messuage	Thomas Wright	

Name	House type	Landlord	Street in 1820
Mary Beever	messuage	Thomas Wright	
Earle Bird	divided messuage	Stephen Frost	
Amy Bond	messuage	Stephen Frost	
William Bone	divided messuage	Stephen Frost	North
John Boyce	messuage	Stephen Frost	
John Boyce	double cottage	Cubitt Wells	South
Thomas Boyce	messuage	Thomas Boyce	East
William Boyce	cottage	William Astley	
John Carr	divided messuage	Stephen Frost	
William Chambers	cottage	William Chambers	East
James Coe	cottage	Cubitt Wells	
William Coe	divided messuage	Stephen Frost	North
Alexander Copland	farmhouse	Lord John Townshend	
John Curl	divided messuage	Stephen Frost	
Edward Fisher	divided messuage	Stephen Frost	
Jane Garrett	farmhouse	Lord John Townshend	
William Garrett	divided messuage	Stephen Frost	
Samuel Gidney	messuage	William Nelson	North
James Green	messuage	Thomas Wright	
James Hogg	messuage	Thomas Boyce	
John Hooke	blacksmith's shop	John Hooke	East
Mary Hopper	messuage	Cubitt Wells	
Richard Hopper	cottage	John Massingham jnr	East
Richard Jacob	divided messuage	Stephen Frost	
James Jervis	cottage	William Chambers	
Benjamin Johnson	divided messuage	Stephen Frost	
Mary Johnson	messuage	Mary Johnson	
Henry Kerrison	messuage	Thomas Wright	South
Thomas King	messuage	Stephen Frost	
Rev Joseph Littlehales	parsonage	Rev Joseph Lillehales	
John Long	divided messuage	Stephen Frost	East
William Long	divided messuage	Stephen Frost	
William Marcia	divided messuage	Stephen Frost	
Frost Massingham	divided messuage	Stephen Frost	North
John Massingham	messuage	Stephen Frost	East
John Massingham	cottage	Mary Johnson	East
John Massingham snr	messuage	John Massingham snr	East
William Napkin	cottage	Alexander Copland	
John Naughton	cottage	Alexander Copland	
William Nelson	The Bell	James Massingham	
William Nelson	messuage	John Massingham snr	East
Mary Nichols	cottage	Cubitt Wells	
Richard Nichols	cottage	Cubitt Wells	North
Richard Nichols	cottage	Cubitt Wells	
Anne Page	messuage	Cubitt Wells	
John Pentney	divided messuage	Stephen Frost	West
William Platten	cottage	Alexander Copland	
Ellen Pointer	cottage	Overseers, Churchwardens	
William Pond	messuage	William Pond	East
James Ramm	cottage	John Hooke	
Thomas Reynolds	blacksmith's shop	William Pond	East
Thomas Rice	messuage	Stephen Frost	North
John Rump	farmhouse	Stephen Frost	
John Rump	divided messuage	Stephen Frost	
John Sadler	cottage	Overseers, Churchwardens	
Samuel Southgate	cottage	Thomas Balls	
Mary Stangroom	cottage	Cubitt Wells	
Charles Twiddy	divided messuage	Stephen Frost	
James Ward	cottage	Cubitt Wells	
Matthew Wells	farmhouse	Cubitt Wells	
Matthew Wells	cottage	Cubitt Wells	
James West	messuage	Thomas Wright	East
James Withers	cottage	Alexander Copland	North
Henry Woods	cottage	William Chapman	
Thomas Wright	cottage	Thomas Balls	South
William Wyard	messuage	Thomas Wright	

Table 3: Langham Enclosure Awards

Name	Acres	Roods	Perches
William Astley	1	1	25
Thomas Balls	1	0	22
Thomas Boyce	4	3	27
Lord George Calthorpe	4	1	20
William Chambers	0	1	30
William Chapman	0	1	16
Thomas Truesdale Clarke	1	2	2
Alexander Copland	624	1	30
Rev Richard Thomas Gough	49	2	25
John Hooke	0	1	10
Richard Jodrell	25	2	32
Mary Johnson	1	3	36
Rev John Littlehales	101	0	34
Henry, Lord Bishop of Norwich	205	0	26
James Massingham	0	0	37
John Massingham jnr	0	1	11
John Massingham snr	0	3	14
William Nelson	0	2	6
William Pond	0	0	22
Overseers of the Poor	0	1	16
Stephen Frost Ripplingall	150	0	7
Thomas Ripplingall	230	2	2
Mary Temple	2	2	8
Lord Frederick Townshend	4	2	0
William Walker	33	3	20
Cubitt Wells	107	3	3
Thomas Wright	123	3	14
Churchwardens	0	1	24
Total	1687	1	39

After the settlement of all disputes, the commissioners then determined the amount of land allotted to each claimant. When doing so, they followed an agreed order of precedence. The first allotments were to the surveyors of the highways. These were the people responsible for the maintenance of the public roads of the parish. Four pieces of land totalling 3 acres were granted in Langham. These were the three small sites for the extraction of sand, gravel and chalk marked S1, S2 and S3 on map 2, and the small pond just to the south of the church marked S4 on map 2, which was a communal watering hole for the villagers' stock and horses. This last allotment shows the dry nature of much of the parish and the need to give all former common rights holders a continued access to water which may not have been available on their new plots of ground.

The second allotment was to the lords of the various manors who were entitled to compensation for their rights of soil on the former commons. The owner of the land was able to extract any minerals from under his property and, ultimately, lords of the manor owned the commons.

The principal purpose of commons in north Norfolk was to provide daytime grazing for sheep which would have been moved to the arable areas at night where they would have been folded close together to manure the soil. A secondary function was to provide fodder for the cattle of all owners of common rights. In Norfolk, by the 16th century, sheep flocks became concentrated in the hands of lords of the manor and the ordinary villager was seldom allowed to own his own sheep. Thus the lords of the manor could dictate whose land received manure first. This system of agriculture was known as the foldcourse system, and its drawback was that it did not allow enclosure of land because of the right to bring sheep across the arable fields to where the lord of the manor wanted his land manured.

The lord was also allowed to put his flock on fallow land for the period between harvest and the start of the growing season the next spring. The foldcourse system gradually broke down during the 18th century with improvements in farming techniques, and because smaller farmers who wanted to enclose their land to improve



Map 2. Langham enclosure showing the consolidation of the holdings of the principal land owners in the parish.

productivity would allow the lord of the manor to enclose part of the common for his own use in return for suppressing the rights of foldcourse.

Langham fell somewhere between the two extremes, with Thomas Truesdale Clarke claiming "to be entitled to a Right of Sheepwalk, or liberty of Foldcourse for a Flock of six hundred Ewe sheep computing six score to the hundred with followers, upon part of the Commons and Wasteland in Langham ..." whereas Nathaniel Bacon had reached an agreement with the villagers in 1593 which limited his right of foldcourse. Bacon agreed to give up his right of foldcourse in return for being able to enclose the common close to the present Binham Road, while the villagers were allowed to enclose any arable land over which Bacon's sheep had the right to graze. This earlier settlement led to the commissioners rejecting Lord John Townshend's claim for the "rights of foldcourse, shackage and feed for 1,400 ewe sheep and followers on all

and every heath, common and waste ..."

Alexander Copland received 4a 2r 31p as compensation for his rights of soil of Langham's commons, while Thomas Truesdale Clarke received a mere 1a 2r 2p as compensation for his loss of rights of foldcourse. This implies that the surviving common in 1815 was not very extensive and that its value was quite low. The total of just over 6 acres out of the 1,700 acres of the parish given in compensation for old manorial rights would not have seriously affected any other person's allotment.

The third group of people to be granted allotments under an enclosure award were the clergy. Clergy could be allotted land for two reasons. First, where glebe land was held in a parish then an allotment was made in compensation.

Langham's ecclesiastical set-up was quite complicated. In the medieval period, there had been two parishes: St. Andrew appears to have always been the larger and more important and

its church survives today as the parish church of the combined parishes of St. Andrew and St. Mary. When St. Mary's fell out of use in the mid-16th century, its living, including the glebe, was consolidated with that of Cockthorpe.

Cockthorpe was later consolidated with Blakeney, giving the rector of Blakeney a claim at the time of Langham's enclosure. The glebe of the two Langham parishes was similar in size. Glebe terriers of the 18th century show Langham St. Andrew with 16a 1r 20 p and Langham St. Mary with 15a 0r 36p. Claims were made for 18 acres by both incumbents.

It was not uncommon for glebe land to be located in more than one parish. Those claiming glebe land in Langham in 1825 included the Rev. Gough of Blakeney, who claimed an acre of Blakeney's glebe and another acre of Cockthorpe's glebe which lay within the boundaries of Langham; while the Rev. Lord Frederick Townshend claimed 7 acres of the glebe of Morston and Stiffkey which lay in Langham.

The commissioners were quite rigorous in determining the amount of land awarded for the glebe claims; the Rev. Littlehales of Langham St. Andrew received 10a 2r 30p, while the Rev. Gough received 10a 3r 7p for the glebe of St. Mary, 1a 0r 14p for the glebe of Cockthorpe and 3r 1p for the glebe of Blakeney. These awards represent a little over 60% of the acreage claimed.

Many enclosure acts had the computation of tithes as one of their principle aims. Tithes were a tenth of farm produce when ready for market, originally levied to support the clergy. During the medieval period in some parishes, including Langham St. Andrew but not Langham St. Mary, the tithe had been granted to monasteries or other religious institutions. On the dissolution of the monasteries under Henry VIII, these tithes were often sold to lay people. Langham St. Andrew's tithes had been granted to the bishop of Norwich in 1536. The bishop collected the great tithes – those on grain – while the small tithes were collected by his vicar, the Rev. Littlehales. Typically, great tithes represented about 80% of the value of the tithes. To landowners, tithes represented a tax which increased as they made improvements in their farming practices and were sometimes seen as a deterrent to agricultural improvement.

Computation of tithes was the exemption of tithes in return for some form of compensation, normally an allocation of land under an enclosure award.

The tithe owner was frequently in a strong bargaining position during the process of enclosure, as his agreement was needed for a speedy resolution to the process. Speed was of the essence, otherwise the cost of enclosure could spiral upwards with the need for many commis-

sioners' meetings with the associated costs. The wars with France, lasting from 1793 to 1815, had seen food prices rise to very high levels and, as a result, farm rents were high in 1815 encouraging land owners to allow generous allocations to tithe owners to free themselves of tithes. Mingay³ states that a settlement of between 14% and 25% of the land was to be expected.

Under the Langham enclosure award of 1817, the bishop of Norwich received 205a 0r 6p, the Rev. Littlehales 89a 3r 27p and the Rev. Gough 36a 0r 3p in compensation for their tithes. This makes a total just under 331 acres of the 1,687.5 acres of the Langham award – representing slightly more than 19.5% of the parish.

Following all the above awards, the remaining land in the parish would have been distributed among the claimants on the basis of how the commissioners had determined the validity of their claims. Following the settlement of tithes, there was considerably less land in Langham to be allocated than had been claimed. This land would have included the remaining common land of Langham. Unfortunately, it is not possible to determine from the award the extent of the commons prior to enclosure, although Fadens map of Norfolk shows a small common in the west of the parish in 1797 and a very marshy stream bed to the west of the village, which may have been common marsh.

Throughout the 2-year enclosure process, it appears there was considerable negotiation between the large landowners together with some sales and exchanges, which makes it difficult to be precise in determining exact awards against claims. The largest claim was that of Lord John Townshend, but his name does not appear in the award. Alexander Copland, the major tenant in Langham in 1815, took possession of the largest award of about 624 acres. Assuming that he had purchased this land from the Townshends, his allocation was about 85% of their claim. This contrasts favourably with the 123 acres received by Thomas Wright, and the 382 acres received by the Frost family which were just under 80% of their claims. Cubitt Wells, on the other hand, received 107 acres against a claim of 114 acres (94%), suggesting that he had not exaggerated his claim while the others had. Smaller landowners received a similar award in relation to their claims.

The small landowners, such as John Massingham and Thomas Balls, received only the gardens which surrounded their cottages, implying they were not compensated in any way for the loss of common rights.

To add insult to injury, these small landowners had to pay their share of the costs of enclosure; thus, Thomas Balls had to pay £3 18s 0p

Table 4: Cost of enclosure

Name	£	s	d
William Astley	4	5	0
Thomas Balls	3	18	0
Thomas Boyce	14	11	4
Lord Calthorpe	19	7	0
William Chambers	1	17	0
Thomas Truesdale Clarke	2	12	6
Alexander Copland	1502	4	9
John Hooke	1	5	0
Richard Joddrell	34	19	0
Mary Johnson	5	9	0
James Massingham		18	0
John Massingham jnr	1	5	0
John Massingham sen	2	5	0
William Nelson	2	0	0
William Pond		11	0
Overseers of the Poor		18	0
Stephen Frost Rippingall	366	19	0
Thomas Rippingall	602	13	3
Mary Temple	2	1	0
Lord Frederick Townshend	9	3	0
William Walker	20	15	0
Cubitt Wells	201	7	0
Thomas Wright	2	2	0
Thomas Wright	284	13	3
Churchwardens	1	0	0
Total	3088	19	1

for his plot of a little over an acre. They would also have had to find the cost of fencing their gardens if these were not already so enclosed. Compared with these men, the Bishop of Norwich would have had his fences provided free of charge and did not have to make a contribution towards the enclosure expenses. The other owners of tithes had their fences and expenses met by the landowners under this award.

Conclusions

The real winners from the enclosure of Langham were the owners of the tithes. They received nearly 20% of the land and did not have to pay any of the fees or fence their land. In return, they gave up their 10% tax on the produce of the village. The extent of this gain can most readily be seen in the extra income the Rev. Gough received from his property in Langham. During the French Wars, there had been a steady increase from the £28 0s 0d he received in 1791 to £45 0s 0d of 1811. In 1816, even before the award had been finalised, but at the start of a period of falling rents, he leased his expected award for 14 years to Stephen Frost Rippingall for £63 0s 0d – an immediate increase in income of £18 0s 0d. On the expiry

of that lease in 1830, Gough's Langham lands were leased again to Mr Sampson for £73 10s 0d.

The large landowners gained as, although their allotments were smaller than their claimed holdings, they were free of tithe and were concentrated into ring-fenced farms. In addition, Stephen Frost Rippingall was able to arrange exchanges with various other landowners, which enabled him to create a large plot opposite St. Andrew's church on which he built a new Italianate-style hall in 1821.

The losers were the small landowners who gained no land, lost their common rights and had to pay a contribution to the enclosure expenses. These small landowners were not forced off their land as the result of enclosure, but were more dependent on wage-labour following the award of 1817. Small landowners appear to have been deprived of their land well before the enclosure process. The majority of property with common rights had passed into the hands of the large landowners, particularly Stephen Frost, Cubitt Wells and Thomas Wright, by 1815. Owner-occupiers were few in number, and the majority of the population of Langham lived in rented accommodation in 1815 and continued to do so following the enclosure period. They may have been able to exercise the rights which went with their rented property in 1815, but these rights would have been few because of the small extent of Langham's commons prior to enclosure. No provision was made for the poor under the enclosure award so, if they had common rights prior to enclosure, then they would have been worse off in 1818 when they would have been totally dependent on receiving wage labour.

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Peter Catling Ship Models – Part 2

Jonathan Hooton

Synopsis: In the Glaven Historian No 10 I wrote an article about Peter Catling and his ship models. This article is meant to complement that one by giving some background information about the vessels that Peter modelled.

Bluejacket

It is likely that more is known about the *Bluejacket* than any other of the ships that traded from Blakeney. Apart from Peter's excellent model there are at least three paintings and many good photographs.¹ The vessel herself lasted longer than most being converted to a houseboat in 1911 and was dug into a creek to the west of Morston Creek. It was here, in 1932, that Peter Catling took the measurements that he used to construct his model, though she had largely disintegrated by 1938.

She was built in Norfolk at Walsoken just north of Wisbech and completed on 27th April 1860.² Lloyd's Register for 1863 lists the builder as Henson, although later registers credit Meadows.³ She was registered at Wisbech (2/1860) and owned initially at Boston, before being sold to Benjamin Harvey Nicholls and transferred to Blakeney where she was re-registered at Wells in February 1868.⁴ Her first entry into the Blakeney Harbour Account Book was in May 1867 and perhaps this is when Benjamin Nichols first saw her. Ten years later, in May 1878, he was in financial difficulties, or facing a cash flow problem, for he mortgaged *Bluejacket* to the bankers Gurney & Co of Fakenham for £450.00. By the end of September of the same year he had managed to sell *Bluejacket* to Martin Fountain Page and thus discharge his mortgage. In 1882, Martin Page and Edward Clifford Turner became joint shipowners until 1896 when Turner bought all the shares. In 1908 he became a joint owner once again, this time with Ellis Capps Turner and Alfred Edward Turner.⁵ Soon after this date her masts were taken out and she was used as a lighter being towed to and from the Pit by the tug *Comet*. She was too cumbersome to be a good lighter and so was sold, first to the Cozens-Hardy's and then to the Hamond's to become a houseboat.

Bluejacket was a type of billyboy. This was a collective term given to the traditionally built

seagoing craft that originated in the Humber and were developed from the Humber sloop. Traditionally, they had one mast and were cutter rigged. Other notable characteristics were that they were double ended, which meant that they had rounded bows and sterns. They were slab sided and had flat bottoms, which made them ideal for the shallow tidal creeks or for landing on the beach, as happened at Cromer and Mundesley. They had clinker built hulls and although they were built with a conventional keel, their rotund shape and flat bottoms meant that they were fitted with leeboards to help when working to windward. They were also usually tiller steered.⁶ The well known picture of the *Angerona* at Cley quay in 1876 (figure 87, pictured on page 282 of *The Glaven Ports*) is a good example of a cutter rigged billyboy; the single mast, rounded bow, clinker built hull and leeboard all being clearly visible.

Bluejacket was a billyboy ketch and this rig differed from the cutter rigs in several ways. It was a development that took place in the larger billyboys after about 1850. The most obvious difference was that she had two masts and they were ketch rigged with a taller mainmast and shorter mizzen. But a conventional ketch rig would have fore and aft sails, which is how *Bluejacket* ended up, but to start with she had square sails and yards on the top of her mainmast like a topsail schooner. The three yards, at right angles to the front mainmast, show up well on the model, but are not quite so clear on the sail plan that Peter Catling drew for *The Norfolk Sailor* and which was reproduced as figure 67 in *The Glaven Ports*. It is much clearer in the sail plan reproduced in David MacGregor's 'Merchant Sailing Ships 1850-1875' which was based on Peter Catling's drawings. Other differences from the smaller cutter rigged billyboys were that *Bluejacket* was carvel built (with the planks of her hull being flush, rather than overlapping with a clinker build) and that she had no leeboard. However, she did have the distinc-



For the benefit of those readers who do not have a copy of issue 10 to hand, we are repeating some of the ship model photographs.

Photo 1 (left) is of the Bluejacket. Photo 2 (above) is the Comet.

tive round ends, straight sides and flat bottom of the typical billyboy.

Like most billyboys, *Bluejacket* was slow but reliable. The most eventful thing that happened to her was in 1887 (although sometimes Peter Catling states it was 1886) when she was loading coal, probably in Hartlepool. A coal truck fell into her hold breaking her main beams and damaging her keelson. Tradition has it that she was towed back to Blakeney in fair weather by the *Jessie* and then repaired. It was probably then that her rig was changed and the square sails on her mainmast removed and replaced with the more traditional fore and aft sail plan of a ketch, which is shown on the paintings of her made at the start of the next century. David MacGregor believes that this repair was the probable reason for the small discrepancy in her length and breadth measurements, in the official records and those made by Peter Catling from the rotting hull in 1932.⁷

This excellent model of *Bluejacket* before her accident is a fine example of the craft that frequented Blakeney at the end of the nineteenth century.

Clam

The *Clam* was one of Peter's later models and lacks the detail and precision of his earlier models. She was a lighter and involved in unloading ships out in the deeper water of the Pit and transferring the cargo to quays at either Blakeney or Cley. She had sail power, but also could be quanted or towed by a tug. Peter told me that she was originally a

Thames lighter, although he never told me how he knew. It was likely that she belonged to someone at Cley, since there are several photos of her tied up at Cley quay. She was well constructed of oak and teak and lined with match boarding being 55 feet in length and 19 feet wide. Possibly because of this she lasted longer than the other lighters and was converted into a houseboat. She was auctioned at The White Horse Hotel in Blakeney on Friday January 13th 1950, along with the anchors and chain moorings from the last Blakeney lifeboat. On the poster advertising the auction she was described as 'the last of the old "Lighters" plying to the historic harbour of Blakeney, known as "The Clam" (now converted to a Houseboat).'⁸ In the 1970s she was kept at Burnham Overy.

Comet

The *Comet* was a steel hulled steam tug built by William Cook in Middlesbrough in 1889. She started working for Allen Brown Ltd. of Newcastle but was bought by Edward Clifford Turner in October 1897 and transferred to the Glaven. Her gross tonnage was 29.16 tons, although since 82% of that tonnage was for her engines, she only had a register tonnage of 5.29 tons. She was one of the most photographed vessels at Blakeney, owing to the fact that she rarely left port. She was captained at different times by James Newland, John Butters and Ted Buck, and employed pulling lighters or guiding the sailing ships in and out of port, regardless of the strength and direction of the wind. In 1908 she became jointly owned by Ellis

Capps Turner, Alfred Edward Turner along with Edward Clifford Turner and witnessed the final days of Blakeney as a trading port. This model was one of the ships that Peter knew and had been on board as a child. He once told me "I remember eating biscuits in the cuddy in 1914, her last captain was Ted Buck". Her black hull and buff funnel was a familiar site in the harbour. She remained in the Glaven until May 1916 when the Turner's sold her to Charles Robinson in Great Yarmouth who sold her on a year later to Walter Reeder, a Dry Dock proprietor of Fenchurch Street in London.⁹

Early & Late

There are two models of the *Early & Late*. It appears that she was originally an oyster smack later converted to steam by Temple of Morston where she continued to dredge for oysters. On the caption on one of the models it is recorded that she was captained by Eddie Baines of Blakeney. In a conversation, Peter Catling informed me that she was owned by Temple who also built the engine and that she was eventually broken up in 1936.

Miranda

This model is the only one in the collection not made by Peter Catling. I was not aware of its existence whilst he was alive and his daughter does not know where or when he purchased it. However, she does know that he believed it to be a model of *Miranda*. If that is the case, then it was captained by one of Peter's ancestors. The shipping registers tell us that *Miranda* was a brig of nearly 187 tons with 2 masts, a square stern, 1 deck, carvel built with a female figurehead. The model is fairly rough, but it is a brig with what appears to be a square stern. There is no discernable figurehead and the model is not in enough detail to confirm or deny whether it is carvel built or not. It does fit the description of *Miranda*, but the model would also fit the description of hundreds of other brigs that sailed the east coast during the nineteenth century. *Miranda* had been built in Newcastle in 1847 and was transferred from Aberdeen to Blakeney in 1858 when she was bought by Benjamin Nichols. As was common at the time he soon passed on many of the shares to others to spread the risk. A year after the purchase Nichols had sold on 11 shares to William Jarvis Boyce of Blakeney, master mariner (who had married Eliza Nichols), 10 shares to James Parker of Blakeney (master mariner), 21 shares to William Schollar, another master mariner of Blakeney (who later sold 11 of his shares to Robert Schollar, master mariner of Blakeney) and 11 shares to Douglas Cooper, a

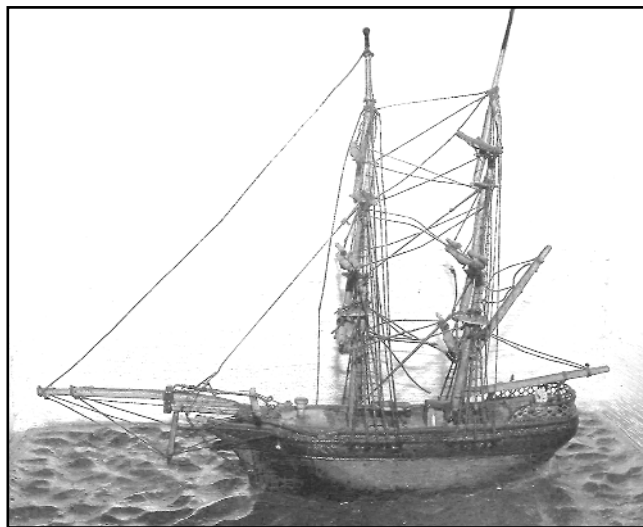


Photo 3. *The Miranda*.

ship broker based in Newcastle.¹⁰ Douglas Cooper may well have been related to R. H. Cooper, ship owner, of Cley who is recorded as owning two vessels (the barque *Alert*, 198 tons and the brigantine *Electryon*, 190 tons) in 1865.¹¹ *Miranda* would have been too large to reach the quay at Blakeney and was likely to have been trading out of Newcastle. James Parker was the link with Peter Catling. He was born in Guist in 1818 but married Susannah Nichols, sister of Benjamin.

The bust of *Miranda* still survives, now owned by Peter's daughter. I saw this bust when it used to stand outside 'Hunters' the house Peter retired to in Cley. Before that it stood outside 'The Cot', on the coast road in Cley, where Peter's father, Alfred Magnus 'Curly' Catling had lived. 'Curly' had acquired the bust via his marriage to Miriam Susannah Parker and she in turn had inherited it from her uncle, Joshua Cook Parker, the well known photographer of Blakeney towards the end of the 19th century. He lived in *Miranda* Cottage, in one of the lokes off Blakeney High Street. Presumably his cottage got its name from the figurehead. He was the second son of James Parker, who was, as we have seen, a part owner of the vessel.¹²

There is a family tradition that James Parker came back from the wreck of *Miranda*, off Flamborough (c1880-1) with the figurehead that he passed on to his son Joshua Parker. This however, may only be partially correct, since *Miranda* was actually lost on Boxing Day 1868 on the Gunfleet sands near Harwich. The Norfolk Chronicle records that "The brig *Miranda* of Wells from Shields to London, foundered on the Gunfleet above Harwich. Crew saved by the steamer *Iona* of Leith and landed here" (i.e. Yarmouth). The account in the Norfolk News has her leaving Newcastle and goes into more detail. "The brig *Miranda* of Wells with 320

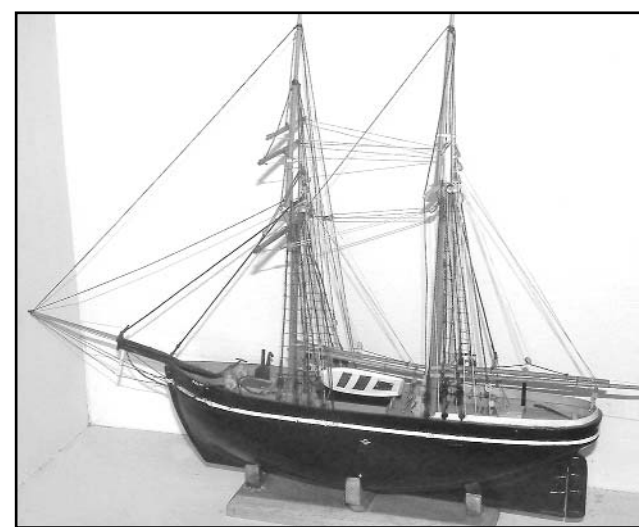


Photo 4. *Palmers*

tons of coals, from Newcastle for London has been totally lost. At 9 pm on the 26th she was near the upper part of Gunfleet sand. A heavy gale was blowing and it was thick with rain. Some of the sails were blown away, and suddenly the helm was obliged to be starboarded in order to go clear of another vessel. Immediately afterwards the brig struck upon the sand. The crew were compelled to take to their boats, and were picked up and landed here by a steamer. The loss of the vessel is estimated at £1,000 and that of the cargo at £150 – insured."¹³

There remains the problem of how the figurehead came to be rescued. It seems unlikely that the crew spent time saving the figurehead in an emergency and heavy gale when they were 'compelled' to take to their boats. Could it have been rescued at a later date when salvaging was undertaken? Or had the figurehead been removed before the voyage, perhaps during a re-fit? Or is the figurehead not actually *Miranda*'s? At present, until further evidence comes to light, this will have to remain speculation.

Miriam

The *Miriam* was a Norfolk crab boat. They were double ended, clinker built with a dipping lug sail and a rudder that projected below the keel to help give some lateral grip on the water. They were once common along the north Norfolk coast. A typical characteristic, present in this model were the "orrucks" holes cut through the top strake to take the oars, instead of rowlocks. Once ashore, the oars could be fed through the "orrucks" on both sides and be used by the fishermen, one on each side of the boat, to lift and carry it up the beach. The hull of this boat was actually made by 'Kammy' Brett, son of the Cley boat builder, Howard Brett, who had built boats himself. In his latter

years he used to build these hulls as children's toys, as well as producing models of Cley Mill. The planks were actually double the width they should have been. Peter Catling, however, was responsible for the completion of the rigging (supervised by 'Kammy' Brett) and the interior, crab pots, bailer etc. It was modelled to represent the *Miriam* Peter's father used to own. This boat was used for crabbing, but also as a family sailing boat which took part in the Blakeney Regatta during the 1920s. She was named after Peter's mother, Miriam Susannah Parker.¹⁴ In an article that Peter wrote with Robert Malster entitled 'North Norfolk estuary and beach boats' it was mentioned that Peter had in his possession two of 'Kammy' Brett's hulls which were rigged with the two basic types of rig, "the big dipping lug for sea work and the balanced lug with shallow rudder for use in estuary work" although it is not known what has happened to the other model.¹⁵

Monkey Puzzle

This is an oddity. It was a man powered tug built by Howard Brett in the 1870s and broken up around 1905. It was propelled by paddles worked by hand and was a model Peter had a particular fondness for.

Palmers

Built in Hartlepool in 1862, *Palmers* was a 73 ton topsail schooner. She came to Norfolk in 1867 when she was bought by J & G Smith of Bacton. George Smith of Bacton was her master and she was involved in the coal trade taking cargoes from Hartlepool and Blythe to the Kent and Sussex ports as well as off loading cargoes directly on to the beach at Walcott.¹⁶ Lying on the beach and off loading coals into carts was a practice that occurred at several Norfolk coastal towns, notably Cromer, but it was a risky business. On 15th April 1872, she was lying on Walcott beach about to unload when she was caught in a gale and damaged, as well as losing her cargo.¹⁷ She had to undergo repairs in Yarmouth for a month before continuing with her visits to Norfolk and Kent, before being laid up in Lowestoft for the winter. One of these trips was to Blakeney, which might have been significant, for in the following year she was sold to William Starling of Blakeney. Her registration, however, remained at Lowestoft. In the past, when a ship had been bought her registration was usually transferred to the local port, but since Blakeney had been downgraded in 1853 and merged with Wells, all the subsequent ships had a Wells registration. William Starling presumably felt that his vessel might just as well be registered at Lowestoft as at



Photo 5. The tug Patriot.



Photo 7. The steamer Taffy.

Wells, or perhaps he was aware that the writing was on the wall for Wells. It was only another eight years before Wells was downgraded and both Blakeney and Wells became creeks of Lynn. In August of that year (1873) Starling sent her from Newcastle to Gothenburg with Robert Thurston of Cley as master. She then made regular trips from the north-east to Blakeney, as well as visiting other British ports. During the census of 1881 she was in Woolwich, Kent. Her crew on that occasion was as follows: William Bowles, (master) 40, William Starling, (mate) 38, Loda Thompson (able seaman) 29 and Jacob Dew, (ordinary seaman) 16.¹⁸ On 19th November 1875 she was caught in a north-westerly gale 6 miles off Scarborough when she lost her sails and her master, Robert Holmes (aged 46) when bound for Blakeney from Newcastle.¹⁹ In 1881 William Starling sold her on to Martin Page. She was subsequently owned by Edward Turner 1885 and jointly by both Page & Turner in 1895 before she was sold to Sunderland in the following year. She finally ended her days on Valentines Day 1900 being stranded near East

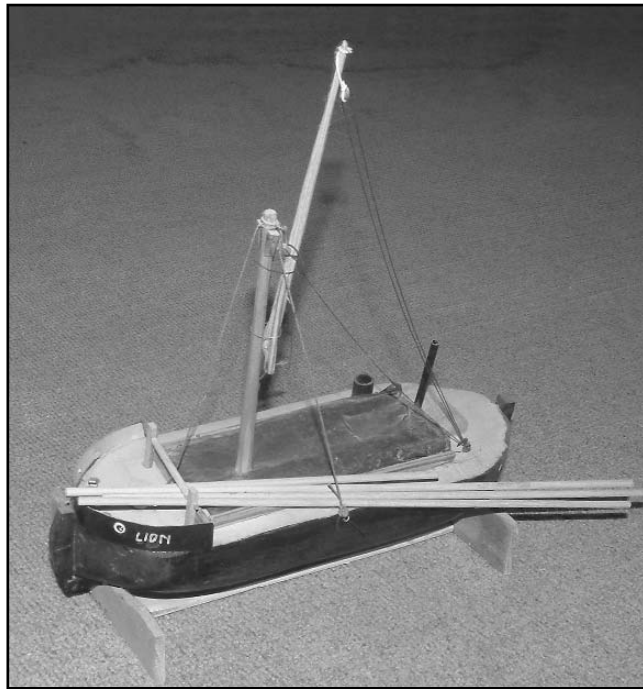


Photo 6. Lion.

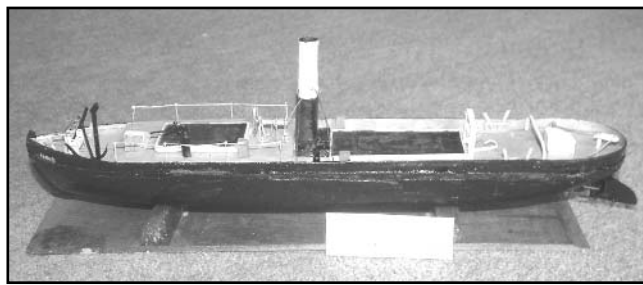


Photo 8. Yankee.

Lane, Suffolk where she became a total loss after 38 years of service. She was bound from Sunderland to London with wheat with a crew of 4 under the master R Skinner.²⁰

Lion

The *Lion* was one of the lighters used for unloading the larger vessels that could not get to Blakeney quay but anchored in the deeper water of the Pit. In this respect she was similar to *Clam*, but, I believe older. They were either quanted along the channels or towed by the tugs. She was one of several, *Tiger* and *Tigress* being two of the others.

Patriot

The *Patriot* was *Comet's* predecessor, although there is a puzzling gap of thirteen months between the sale of *Patriot* in July 1896 to The Pendinnis Co Ltd at Sutton Bridge and the purchase of *Comet* in October of the following year. Did Page & Turner feel they

could do without a tug or was this when *Yankee* was converted to steam, or was there just a problem in finding a suitable replacement? *Patriot* had been built in South Shields in 1861 and like her predecessor *Warrior*, she was a steam paddle tug. *Warrior* was sold to John Batey a tug owner from Newcastle in July 1876 shortly after *Patriot* had been transferred from Sunderland in April of that year. Martin Fountain Page was the owner of *Patriot* until 1882 when he became a joint owner with Edward Clifford Turner. It appears that she did more than just act as a tug since in 1884, the registers record her as a fishing vessel (probably used for trawling) and there is both a photograph and painting of her existing with the Lynn registration of LN74 on her bows, and this is also included on Peter Catling's model of her. After continuing her work in the north east, she was finally broken up on the Tyne in 1902 after 40 years of service.²¹

Pioneer

The *Pioneer* was a dandy rigged sloop (28 tons) built by William Jarvis, of Anstruther, County Fife in 1882. By 1884 she was registered in Yarmouth and then at Lynn by 1897. Edward Clifford Turner of Blakeney bought her from Lynn fisherman, John Leaman (who had previously mortgaged her for £40) in July 1902. The following year Clifford John Turner became her managing owner and in 1906 ownership passed to Ellis Capps Turner. She stayed in the Turner fleet until August 1917 when she was sold on to Matthew Butcher, a shipbroker from South Quay, Great Yarmouth. Two years later she came off register when she was converted into a dredger to be used in inland waters only.²² Perhaps the most exciting event of her career was when she ran aground in the lower part of Blakeney harbour during a rough sea in a strong east-south-easterly breeze and the crew of two were rescued by the lifeboat *Zaccheus Burroughs*. Mick Bensley has captured the incident in one of his paintings published in the "The Rescues of the Wells & Blakeney Lifeboats".

Renown

I know very little about the steamer *Renown*. There are no photographs of her, nor has her place of registration been found. Sam Parsons said that she was a small steamer from Hull and was often hired by Augustus Hill, a ship owner who lived in the Red House. The only other piece of information he gave me was that she was smaller than the *Taffy*.

Taffy

The *Taffy* was a single screw steamship with a gross tonnage of nearly 173 tons, but after deductions for the crew space and engine room only had a register tonnage of 66.57 tons. Therefore her cargo holding capacity was only about one third of her gross tonnage, unlike the sailing vessels that frequented the harbour. This was one of the reasons why shallow harbours like Blakeney continued to rely on sail rather than steam. However, Edward Clifford Turner must have felt that it was worth the risk investing in steam, when he bought the *Taffy* in 1898 from her first owners, The Taffy Steam-Ship Company. *Taffy* was built by David J Dunlop of Port Glasgow in 1894 for John Brundrit, a quarry owner & merchant in Runcorn, where she was registered (2/1894). Soon she became the property of the newly formed Taffy Steam-Ship Company, whose share holders were a mixture of stone merchants, coal merchants and sugar refiners. She plied her trade around the ports of the north west until December 1898 when Edward Clifford Turner bought her in Runcorn and brought her to the east coast. Although he did not set up a limited company, he did sell on the shares to a number of people locally and also as far afield as Ipswich, Lynn and Sunderland. Loady Thompson of Blakeney was her master, and shortly after her purchase she was re-surveyed in Sunderland and her tonnage slightly altered.²³ It was an indication of the decline of the port that the registration of the *Taffy* was never transferred to the east coast and the result of this resurveying had to be relayed back to Runcorn. The *Taffy* is famous for reputedly being the largest ship to reach Blakeney quay, and there are photos to prove that she got there. The New Cut, constructed as part of the Blakeney Harbour Company works in 1817, was dredged to allow vessels of 150 tons to reach the quay. A good 90 years after it was built the 173 ton *Taffy* reached the quay when the channel must have been much shallower on a high tide one Good Friday according to Sam Parsons. However, she was reputed to have laid there a month, until the next spring tides. Sam Parsons, who had a wonderful memory, disputed this in a taped conversation with Godfrey Sayers from which I will quote: Sam Parsons "but whoever told him the *Taffy* laid there a month, told him wrong. I was there all the while they were loading on 'em. Godfrey: She was quite big wasn't she? Sam Parsons: Of course, as soon as the tide turned she had to go. They finished her off with lighters. Godfrey: Because they swung her round when she was light, when she was coming up. Sam Parsons: They swung her round near the bridge."²⁴ Sam Parsons also told me

that the *Taffy* used to do the longest trips, sometimes to Leith in Scotland, and sometimes to France, but frequently to Mistley in Essex.²⁵ In July 1913 the *Taffy* was finally sold to the Rix brothers in Hull. However, there was still a local connection. The head of the firm, Robert Rix, although living in Hull, had been born in Wells in Norfolk, and had obviously maintained a connection with north Norfolk.²⁶ Although I have no evidence yet, I think it quite likely that the *Renown*, also modelled by Peter, was a Rix steamer.

Yankee

Peter Catling said *Yankee* was originally a lighter that had a steam engine put in her so that she could act as a tug. She was converted to a houseboat round about 1916. Ted Eales, in 'Countryman's Memoirs' says she was a trading vessel "in and out of Blakeney and she finished up on the beach as a houseboat and a home for Professor Hart."²⁷

References for Ship Models Part 2

- 1 There is a painting owned by Mr Wright in Blakeney painted by Middleton and dated 1905. There is also a painting owned by Anne Massingham's mother whose grandfather, Arthur 'Bishy' Jarvis crewed it for 6 years under Captain Pells, also painted by Middleton and dated 1902. It is titled *Blue Jacket of Blakeney Capt J Wells*. Peter Catling also had a black & white photograph of another painting. This could be the 'large scale water colour of her passing Flamborough' in the Anchor Inn. This George Long, the licensee, lent me to get an accurate rigging plan in its later form – about 1890 that Peter Catling wrote about in his article in *The Norfolk Sailor* No 10 1965.
- 2 NRO P/SH/L/8
- 3 D R MacGregor (1984) *Merchant sailing Ships 1850-1875* p108
- 4 NRO P/SH/L/8
- 5 NRO P/SH/L/8
- 6 For a general discussion of billyboys see Roger Finch & Hervey Benham, (1987) *Sailing Craft of East Anglia* Lavenham, and J Combes, 'Old Billy-boys' in *The Norfolk Sailor* No 9 1965
- 7 D R MacGregor (1984) *Merchant sailing Ships 1850-1875* p108; M Catling in *The Norfolk Sailor* No 10 1965; M Catling Notes for an exhibition *Blakeney in Colour 1880-1910* by John Page in Catling notes in Norfolk Studies Library
- 8 Photograph of sale poster in author's possession.
- 9 Tyne & Wear Archive Services 2870 – B385F
- 10 NRO P/SH/L/8
- 11 *Claytons Register of Shipping 1865* reprinted by National Museums & Galleries on Merseyside with an introduction by Michael Stammers.
- 12 Personal communication with Serica East.
- 13 Norfolk Chronicle 2/1/1869; Norfolk News 2/1/1869.
- 14 Personal communication with Serica East, Peter Catling's daughter.
- 15 Catling, M & Malster, R 'North Norfolk estuary and beach boats' *The Norfolk Sailor* No 13 1967.
- 16 Maltster, R The 19th century maritime trade of Cromer and other minor East Anglian ports in Longcroft, A & Joby, R (1995) eds *East Anglian Studies* Norwich p159
- 17 LRO: Index PLRS
- 18 1881 British Census
- 19 Memorial Card in Hooton, J J (1996) *The Glaven Ports* p266; LRO: Index PLRS
- 20 LRO: Index PLRS
- 21 NRO P/SH/L13; NRO P/SH/L8
- 22 NRO P/SH/L/4; NRO P/SH/L/4 Transactions no 49
- 23 Cheshire Record Office: Bundle of registration papers in respect of the Taffy (NR 4098/141).
- 24 Taped conversation between Godfrey Sayers & Sam Parsons (author's possession)
- 25 Taped conversation between Jonathan Hooton & Sam Parsons (author's possession)
- 26 Cheshire Record Office: Bundle of registration papers in respect of the Taffy (NR 4098/141).
- 27 W E R Eales (1986) *Countryman's Memoirs* Fakenham.

The Mysteries of Stiffkey Churchyard

John Wright

Synopsis: In 2007 the Stiffkey Parochial Church Council invited the author to help prepare a new edition of the Guide to the Parish Church (published in March 2008). This stimulated further research on the history of both church and village. Three particular questions about the church are addressed in this article. Some new evidence is brought to bear but definitive answers remain elusive.

Introduction

Stiffkey church stands in a prominent position overlooking a bend in the river Stiffkey. In the valley upstream lies the old village, mostly on the south-facing slope; downstream the valley would have been tidal in medieval days. Stiffkey has always been primarily an agricultural village and never had the maritime importance of the nearby villages on the Glaven estuary.

There is now only one church in the village, but until the later 1500s there were two – not only in the same village, but in the same churchyard. Why did Stiffkey have two churches so close together? And where exactly did the other church stand? Some humps in the churchyard could well represent the site but there is local opinion, of uncertain antiquity, to suggest that it might have been elsewhere. The present church is dedicated to St John, which is only to be expected as there are records suggesting that the companion church of St Mary's was to be abandoned and St John's retained. Yet there is a strong local tradition that the present church is actually St Mary's and that St John's was demolished. What is the basis for this view, and which of the two medieval churches still stands?

This article addresses these three 'mysteries'. On the first, the reason for two churches, no evidence has been sought other than views already in print. On the second, the site of the other church, a resistivity study has been conducted to help come to a conclusion, and some interesting finds have emerged from the ground. On the third, the identity of the present church, a range of documentary evidence has provided some useful evidence but no definitive answer.

Two Churches

Development of parish churches

In mid-Saxon times the ecclesiastical landscape was largely one of 'minster' churches (early monasteries) with a complement of clergy serving surrounding villages. In some parts of the country the distribution of minsters can be inferred but it is much more difficult in Eastern England. By 1066, however, the rural areas were filling up with small churches which had their own priests and landholdings; Tom Williamson refers to the 'ferocious' scale of late-Saxon church building.¹ The tithe system was developed to support local priests, parish boundaries were established to apportion tithes to churches, and the new churches became a focus for burials.

A variety of reasons can be suggested for the introduction of local churches, though rarely is it possible to be sure about the origin of any particular one. At one time the ownership of a church was expected of anyone who aspired to high status. Later on, church provision became focused at a more local level and flourished in the fragmented manorial system so typical of Norfolk. These churches were often located within the manorial enclosure for the benefit of the lord; later ones may have been placed outside the enclosure, but perhaps close by, for the benefit of manorial tenants. In many cases this form of church provision might be sufficient for the whole community. Elsewhere there were groups of freemen who were unable or unwilling to attend manorial churches and who had the means to erect their own. Whatever their origin, churches gradually came to assume a more 'parochial' function, as alehouse, guildhall and council chamber, and were less the perquisite of the landowner.²

Multiple churches in Norfolk

Norfolk is a large county which in the medieval period had a large number of parishes, although exact totals are difficult to establish. Existing medieval churches can be counted, but others have been demolished over the centuries and for these the documentary evidence is incomplete and the archaeological record very thin. Most Norfolk villages had a church at the time of Domesday in 1086 though only a minority (274) are actually mentioned; at least 928 parishes are known to have existed by the 1200s.

A peculiarity of East Anglia is that some villages – at least 79 in Norfolk – were provided with two or more churches. Even more unusual is the phenomenon of two (or more) churches in the same churchyard: Norfolk had at least 12 examples, Suffolk 4, Cambridgeshire 2 and Essex 1. Stiffkey is one of the dozen such places, together with Antingham, Reepham (with three churches) and South Walsham, and others in the southern half of the county. Some other settlements have two churchyards physically separate but still close together.³

In Norfolk the origin of churches appears to reflect the complexity of medieval social structure and land holdings, and multiple churches (two in one village) derive from the same forces that gave rise to other rural churches. The siting of churches is a more difficult issue, for the reasons very rarely feature in contemporary documents. Some churches were built on burial grounds or on other sites that were thought to have had some sacred function. Others were built on new sites where they were needed – though in the early days people were not expected to attend church frequently. Freemen may have built on their own property or, by agreement, on some other site. But how did two churches come to be sited in the same churchyard, or in churchyards originally adjacent but now combined? If the site already had some communal function, this might be reason enough, but if one church was established on a new site it is not clear how a second could be built on land in the same ownership as the first.

Multiple churches, even churches close together, would have served separate groups of people. Reepham's three churches in one churchyard serving separate settlements is a special case; in South Walsham the boundary which snaked through the narrow space between the two churches divided a single village in two. Yet this and other such internal boundaries appear not to have been defined until the Enclosure, and it is by no means clear how church affiliation was arranged previously. In the words of Nick Groves, did a man who moved from one end of the village to the other change his church or did he continue to be affiliated to his original church?⁴

Dedications

One author (Peter Warner) has suggested that as many as 37 villages in Norfolk once had churches in the same churchyard, or in adjacent ones, though some of the examples seem open to question.⁵ Nevertheless, of these 37 'pairs' of churches 22 have one church dedicated to St Mary representing 30% of the total number of paired churches – compared with 20% in the county as a whole. Does this difference have any significance? John Blair suggests that this pairing of a 'major' dedication (often to an apostle) with a 'minor' one to the Virgin would have followed the long-standing practice of minsters, where sometimes a later church dedicated to St Mary stood in line with, and to east of, the main church. However, he also says that paired churches can result from the relatively late formation of adjoining churches by different lords, and makes no suggestion that Stiffkey was ever a pre-Viking minster. Groves, on the other hand, does not dismiss this idea entirely, although the presence of two churches in alignment (as at Canterbury and Jarrow, for instance) would not mean that the site necessarily operated as a minster – many privately-owned 'abbeys' in Anglo-Saxon England were that in name only.

Domesday

According to Domesday there were two main landholdings in Stiffkey. The smaller one, with 11 smallholders and 3 slaves (people with no land), belonged to Toki before the Conquest and now belongs to Godric as tenant of the king. The principal holding, once Ketel's, now belongs to Reynold son of Ivo; there are 16 smallholders and 3 slaves (probably adding up to 19 households). To add complication, 4 freemen also 'appertain to this village' and there are another 7 smallholders as well. The value of the whole village is assessed at £4 and the 4 freemen paid £2. Then comes a note that there is one church with 30 acres, value 2 shillings. To complete the record, there are also smallholders and land in Stiffkey which belong to landholdings assessed elsewhere – in Aylsham, Morston and Wighton.⁶ It cannot be assumed that because Domesday mentions only one church then only one existed.

There could have been two – forerunners of the medieval St John's and St Mary's. If so, who built them? Domesday appears to link the church with the major landholding which had once belonged to Ketel; it is likely that the church had been built by him or his predecessor. If the other church was also there in 1086 then perhaps Toki had provided it; if later than 1066 then his Norman successor – or maybe the freemen of the village erected it as they appear to have had the resources to do so.

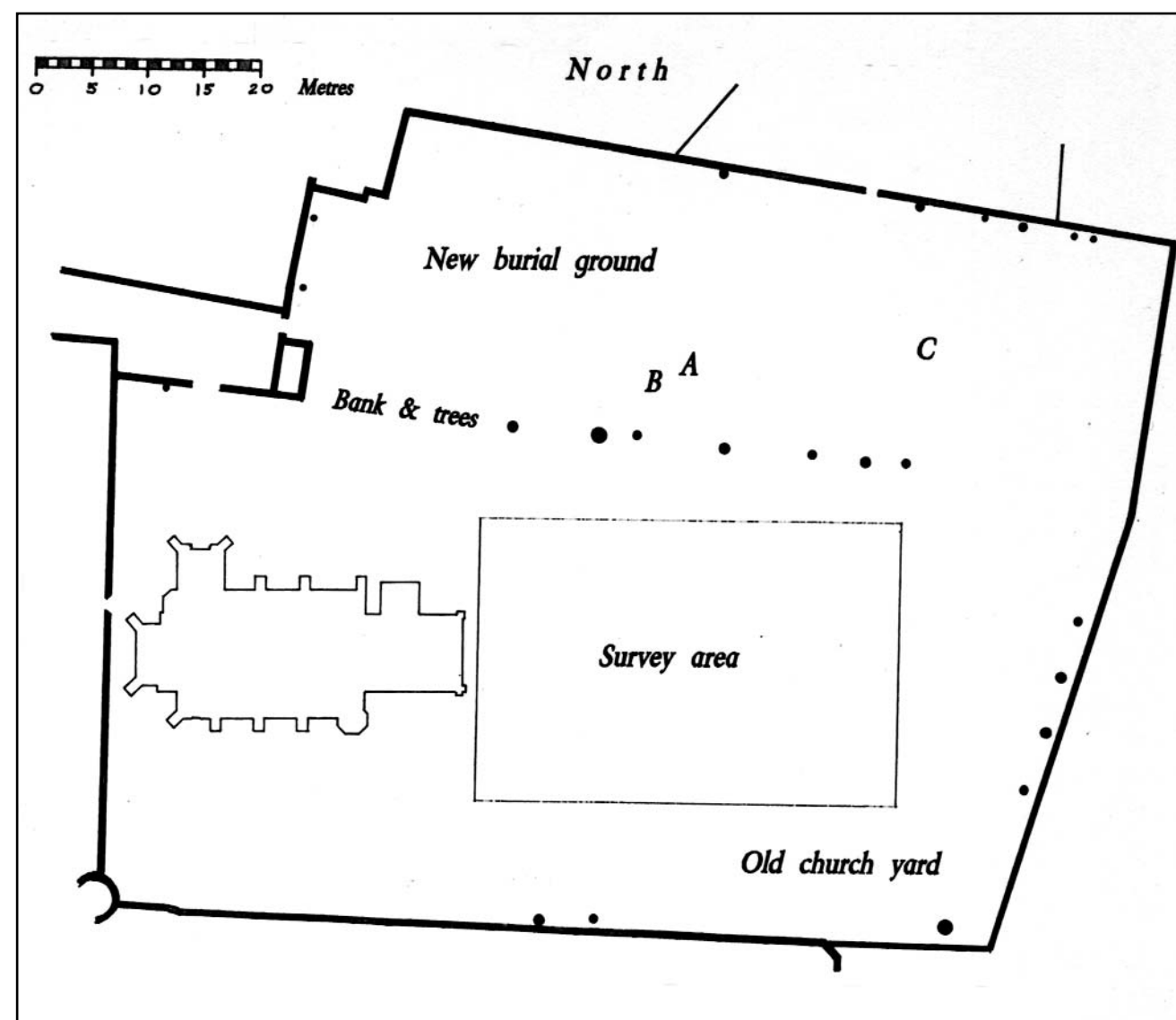


Figure 1. The churchyard and survey site.

Comment

There appears to be nothing in the documentary record to suggest a reason for the two churches being sited so closely together – probably the first stone-built churches occupied the same sites as their wooden predecessors. There may have been two adjacent churchyards in separate jurisdictions. Or one landowner may have provided land for a second church funded by others. On the other hand, in view of the prominence of the church site within the landscape, it may be that two churches were acceptable on a site which had some long-standing significance in the community, perhaps as a burial ground. Bearing in mind that the churches were on the periphery of the village, it is a matter of conjecture how the parish boundaries were defined within the village, but a manorial survey of 1525 appears to show glebe lands interspersed in the arable strip system.⁷

Church Site: geophysical study

The churchyard

Stiffkey churchyard comprises two parts: the old area round the present church and an extension added in 1933 which increased the area by nearly 50% (Figure 1). Although the extension is fully integrated with the old, the former walled boundary between the two is denoted by a line of trees and a slight slope down from the new area to the old. The church is not central within the old churchyard but lies close to its western boundary, beyond which lie the grounds of Stiffkey Old Hall built by the Bacon family in the later 1500s. The Old Hall gardens extend round to the southern side of the churchyard and fall steeply down to the river. On the eastern side lies a field which also slopes down to the river. Towards the north are the old Rectory and modern houses lying at the eastern extremity of the village. Within the churchyard itself the ground slopes down quite steeply in the south-eastern

quarter. The whole site lies close to the (modern) coast road, separated from it by a small area of open land known as The Knoll.

Within the old churchyard is an area of hummocky ground, extending away from the east end of the church, which is tended as a conservation area; plant growth is cut once a year. This hummocky ground covers an area similar to that of the church and in one or two places flints can be seen protruding, so it is hardly surprising that many people have assumed that this is the site of the church demolished sometime around 1600. In this area where much rubble might be expected a good many burials have taken place – some 20 grave-stones now stand here, ranging in date from 1819 to 1927. Hugh Bryant, in his survey of Norfolk churches,⁸ says (of the former church) that some ruins were visible as recently as 1883, though he does not say where, but Mrs Herbert Jones, writing in 1879, says that no traces remain above ground.⁹ Bryant's source is unknown, but Mrs Jones was writing about Stiffkey specifically and should have known about any visible remains. Perhaps there were just a few flints protruding from the ground surface.

Most village churches, even those now isolated, stood close to the settlement they served. Stiffkey was no exception for there were houses close to the church before the Old Hall was built – some were demolished to make way for it. A map of the parish dating from the early 1600s also shows houses extending up to the church but not beyond it.¹⁰ Buildings are shown in elevation, and the rectory barn (one still stands on the same site) is thereby distinguishable from the houses. No buildings are drawn on the area subsequently added to the churchyard, nor are any shown on subsequent maps (Figure 2).

Resistivity survey

If a second medieval church once stood in the churchyard then a resistivity survey in the right place should find it. Resistivity readings record the resistance of the soil to the passage of a very low-voltage electrical current. The resistance offered by the soil depends primarily on its moisture content: wet soil conducts electricity very well and so presents little resistance, reflected in low resistivity readings. Conversely, high readings denote dry conditions. Once the survey has been carried out, the readings can be presented in various ways, principally in map

Top: figure 2a c1620 sketch based on contemporary map.

Middle: figure 2b sketch based on 1840 tithe map.

Bottom: figure 2c sketch based on 1900 OS.

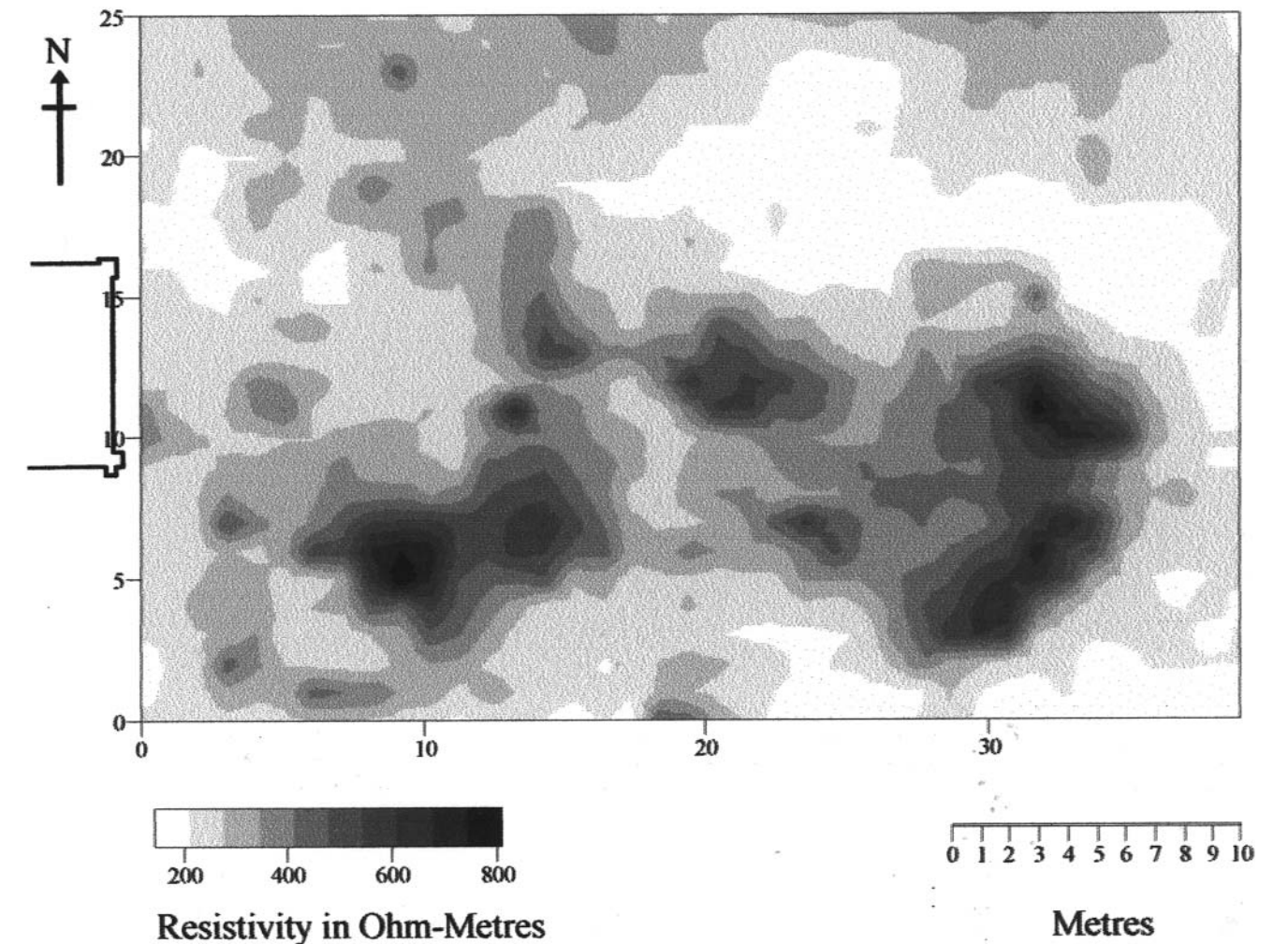
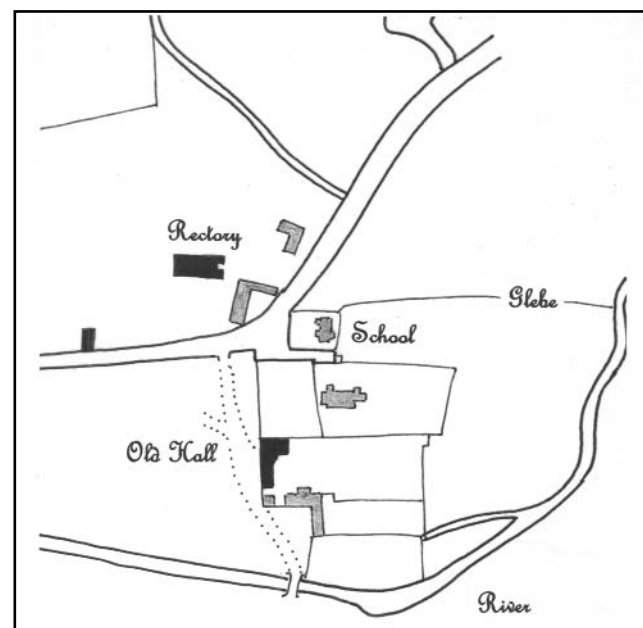
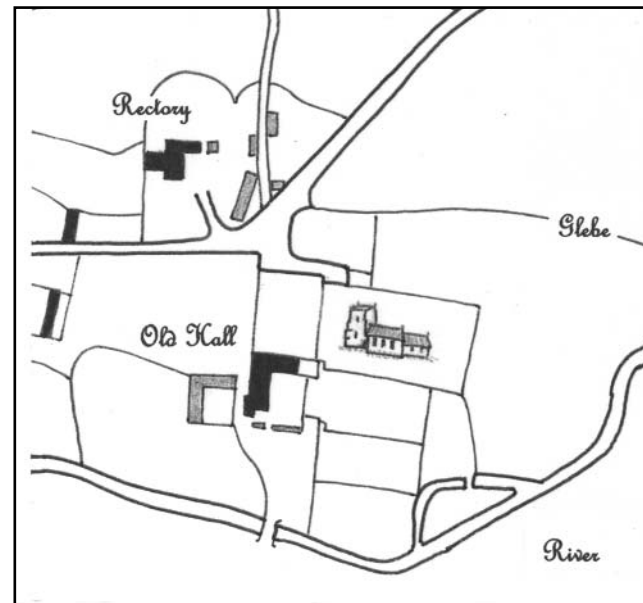
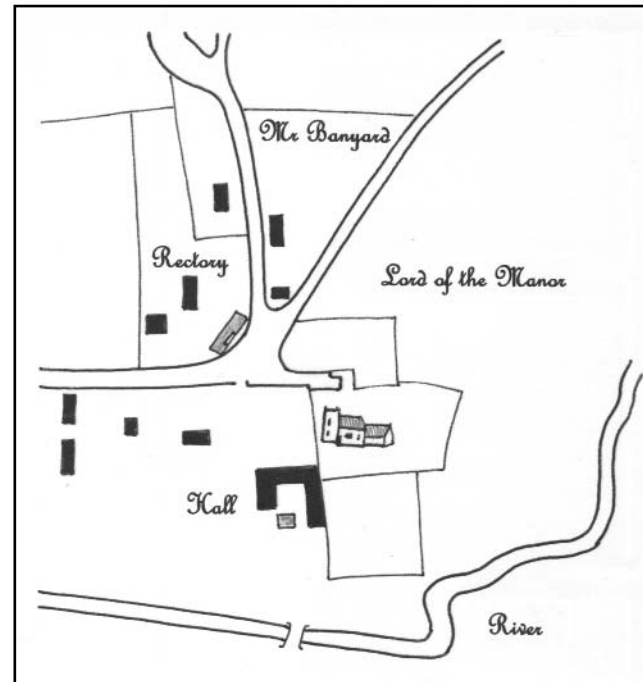


Figure 3. Iso-resistivity map.

form, and an assessment made of what might lie under the surface.

The church-sized hummocky area close to the present church seemed the most appropriate location for a resistivity study. The possibility that this is the church site is enhanced by its relationship to the Old Hall. The upper terrace of the Old Hall garden extends to the far end of the mound and is backed by a high wall separating it from the churchyard. Further to the east, beyond the mound, the boundary wall is much lower and butts on to the high wall. The Bacons may have designed it this way in order to mask the bulk of two churches when viewed from the lower gardens, especially if one were already becoming ruinous.

On 25th September 2007, a survey was carried out over an area 25 by 39 metres, taking in the whole of the hummocky area and a narrow surround. It was conducted by Dr Peter Carnell, using his own tried-and-tested equipment. The grid for the survey was laid out on site by means of tapes, using a base line 25m long set approximately parallel to, and 1m distant from, the east wall of the present chancel. Over one thousand electrical readings were taken at 1m intervals.

In Figure 3 the readings are shown by means of iso-resistivity lines (being lines of equal resistivity). The readings do not relate to the grassed surface of the churchyard or to the topsoil but to the conditions prevalent in the subsoil. The darker areas indicate high resistivity and therefore low levels of moisture. Over much of the survey area these low values are consistent with a subsoil containing some gravel or similar material. The darkest areas are on the mound and here the highest values show that a considerable volume of non-conducting (electrically insulating) material must also be present. To attain such figures more than 80% of the volume would need to be stone, such as flint cobbles or other stone of the kind used for building. It is unlikely to be brick as common bricks are porous and absorb moisture when left in the soil.

Contour survey

It is perhaps inevitable that Figure 3 looks rather like a contour map and so brings to mind the hummocky surface of the survey area. To counteract this, Figure 4 shows the actual contours of the site. This plan was prepared by

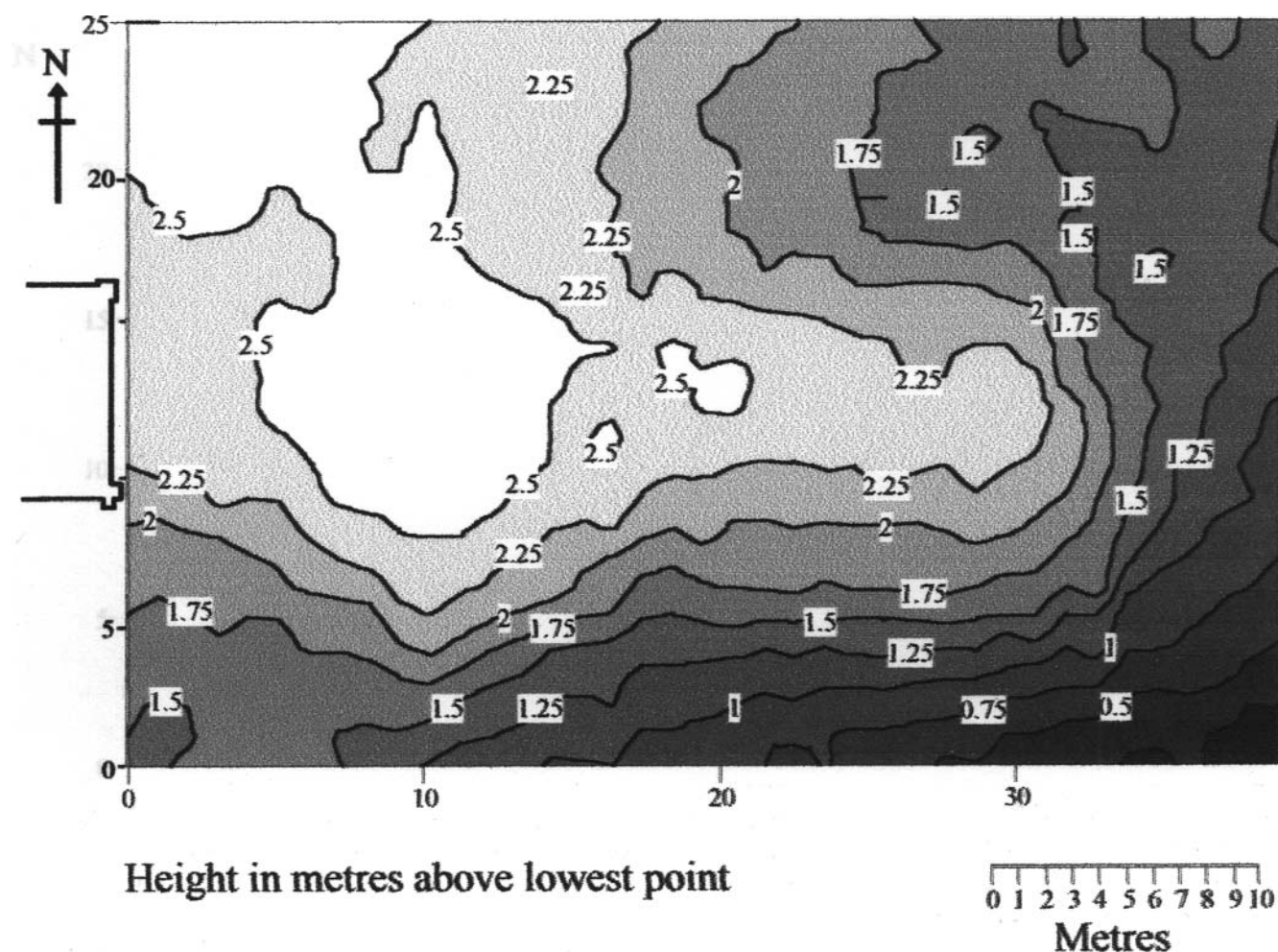


Figure 4. Contour map.

means of a laser device with a levelling facility, the height readings being taken on a measuring staff at 1m intervals over the same grid as the resistivity survey. Once again the survey and analysis was undertaken by Peter Carnell. The flat-topped mound that dominates the survey area lies on ground that slopes from the north-west to the south-east, the north-west corner being higher than any point on the mound. Even so, the mound is clearly defined, with steep sides on the south and east where it stands 1m – 2m above the surrounding area. It is elongated east-west, and is aligned approximately with the existing church.

Headstones

The position of each headstone within the survey area has been plotted by Peter Carnell (Figure 5). Comparison with the contour plans will show which headstones lie on the mound itself. The graves beneath them will have been dug into rubble subsoil, and some flints will have been redistributed as a result. More detailed iso-resistivity maps (not illustrated) show where some burials have taken place, both on and off the mound, which are not marked by headstones.

Interpretation of the surveys

The main feature of Figure 3 is an elongated area of dry soil conditions with particularly high readings at either end, which corresponds largely – but not entirely – with the higher ground that forms the mound. Such features are unlikely to arise from natural conditions: their distribution and boundaries suggest that a building once stood in this area. The structure appears to be in two parts: a rectangular area stretching between the 12 and 34 metre lines on the grid and another area, essentially square, on the south-western corner of the first. Surrounding this central feature is an area of relatively low readings which can be taken as the 'background' moisture conditions. There are some higher (drier) readings on the northern edge of the survey area but no specific pattern can be discerned. It is likely that there are some spreads of flints under the surface, perhaps material from the bank and former wall just beyond the survey area, or else excess material from grave-digging: flints can often be seen beside churchyard walls. There is also a drier area connecting the central feature with the northern periphery.

The central area has some church-like features, significant on a site where a former

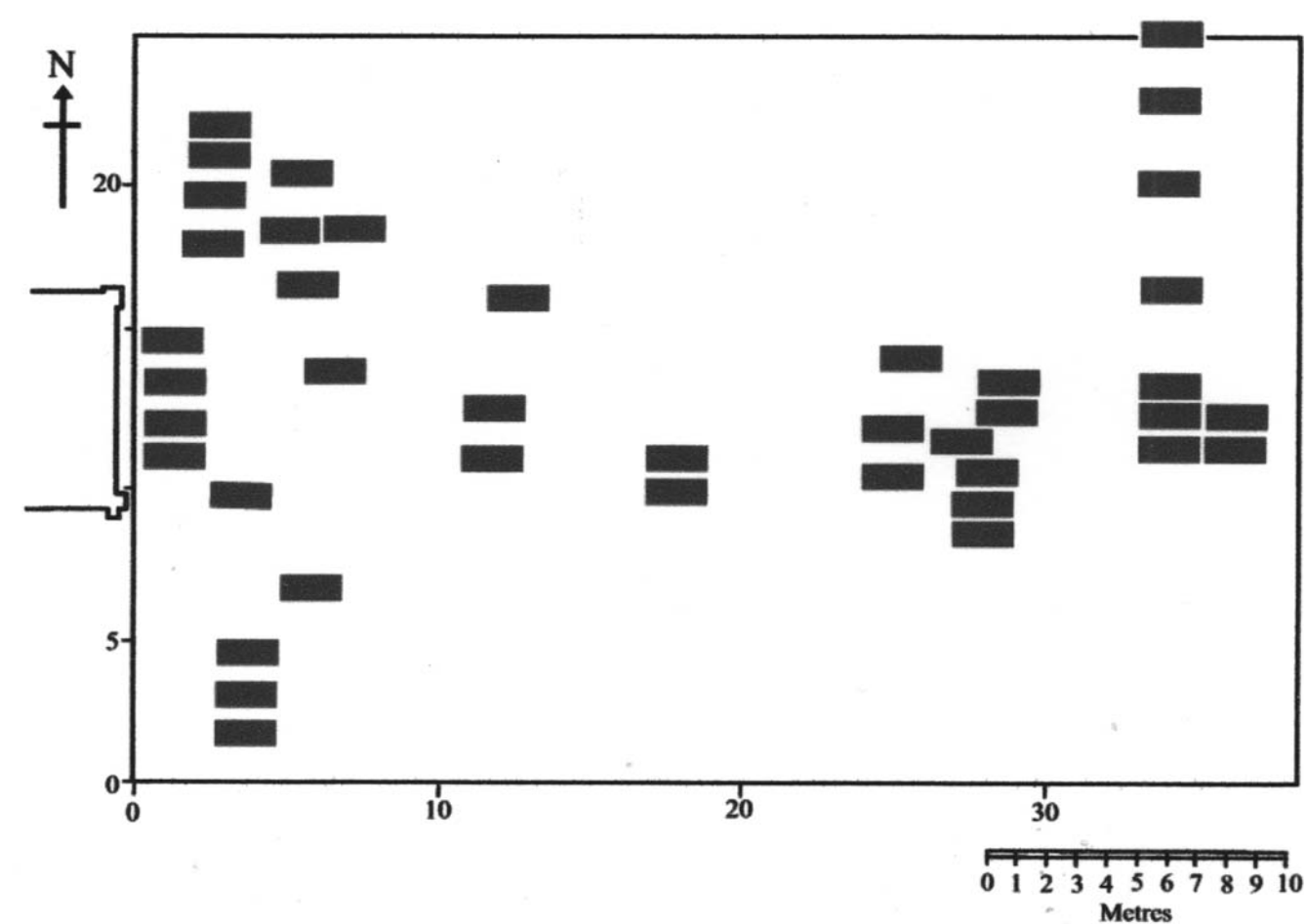


Figure 5. Burials as shown by existing headstones.

church is suspected. The main rectangle is about 24m long, about the same size as the present church, tower excluded, with a 'nave' width of about 8m, slightly smaller than that of the present church. In order to illustrate the comparison Figure 6 (p.30) shows the plan of the existing church superimposed on the iso-resistivity map. If the mound is the site of the former church then the clear rectangle at the north-east corner is likely to be a vestry. The corresponding area on the southern side also shows a rectangular outline. While the curve at the east end is reminiscent of an apse, a better interpretation of the resistivity is that the lower values in the centre could indicate the presence of a window in the eastern wall of a chancel. At the north-west corner a projection might be a porch. The anomalous area of the church is the large rectangular feature attached to the south-west corner of the 'nave'. While this may suggest a tower the outer dimensions are very large for an early medieval example.

Figure 7 (p.31) shows these elements as they may once have existed. Structure A represents the nave and chancel of the postulated church. The two components appear to have been the same width, which may have been the case in the present church before its remodelling in the

15th century. There is no indication from the resistivity readings of where a division between nave and chancel may have been. Structure B is in a similar position to the present vestry, and is of similar size, so it may have performed the same function in a former church. It appears to have had relatively thin walls, also a feature of the current vestry. The nature of structure C is less clear. The resistivity shows a considerable amount of solid material here so it is not possible to distinguish between rubble and foundations. The area could well include rubble from the former chancel and also from the burials which cluster towards the east end of the church. Structure D has the same relationship to the main building as does the present porch, but the feature is unusually long to serve that function and so the resistivity may be showing in addition a hard surface, now buried, outside the porch.

The anomalous area is structure E, a large rectangular feature attached to the south-west corner of the probable nave. Whilst this looks like the foundations of a tower, the outer dimensions (9 m square) are very large for an early medieval example. As that part nearest to the nave, about a quarter of the whole, has the highest resistivity readings, denoting more

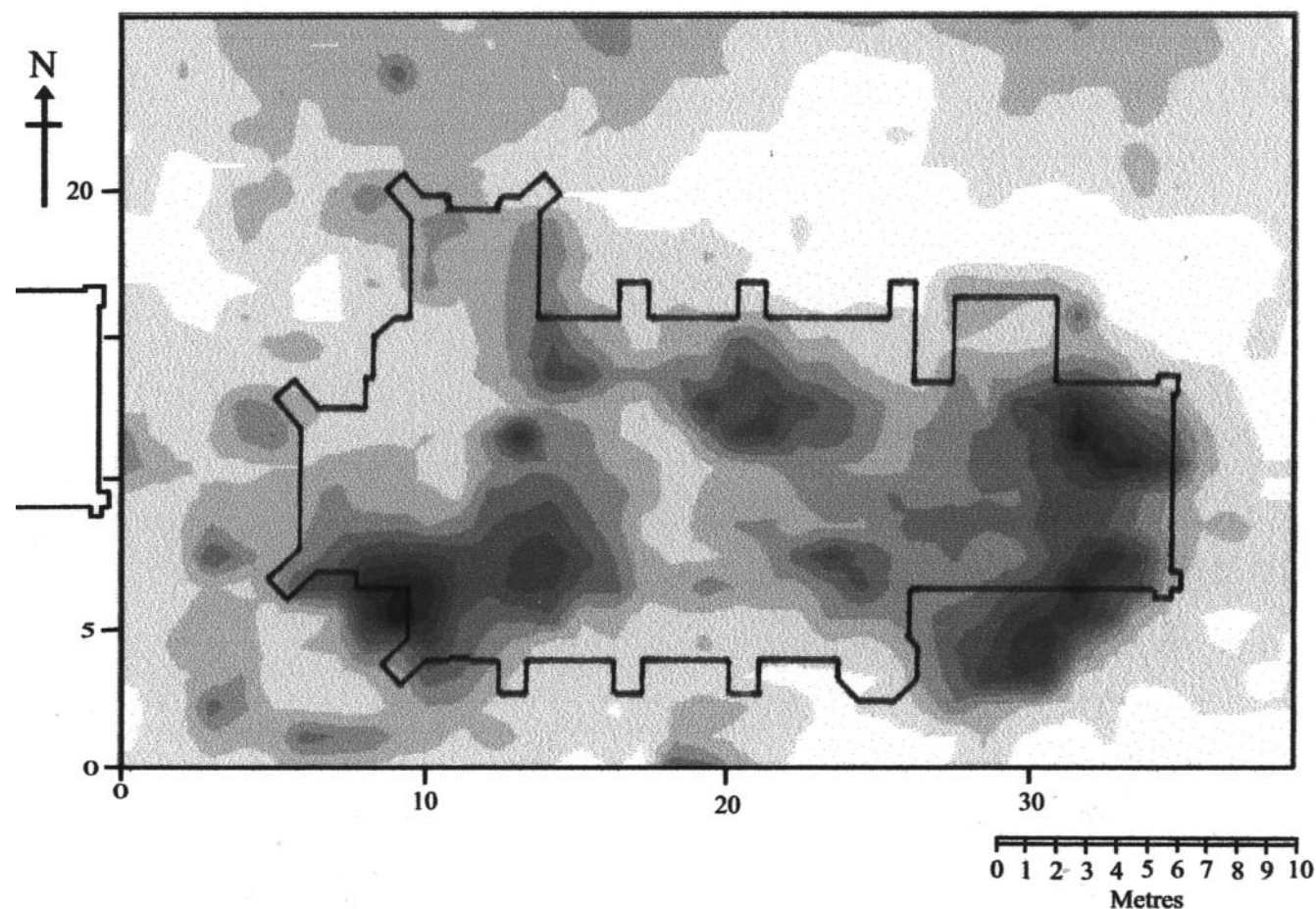


Figure 6. Resistivity and Church comparison.

building material in this location, it might be supposed that the tower was actually much smaller. Nevertheless, the outer rectangular lines would still need to be interpreted as a construction feature rather than some natural pattern. There also appears to be rubble in the south-west corner of the nave that might be fallen masonry from the tower. It is very probable that a church in this position could not be allowed to collapse at random; controlled demolition could ensure that the tower fell harmlessly into the disused nave.

The supposition of a tower against the corner of the church is not unreasonable; towers were often built separately from the rest of the structure and even west towers are not necessarily in line with the nave. At Cley the nave was widened southwards, leaving the earlier tower in line with the present north aisle, and at Salthouse (according to the Church Guide) it looks as if an earlier church stood a little to the north of the present one with the existing (and earlier) tower at its south-west corner. At Stiffkey, a tower offset from the axis of the nave might have been built that way to allow more light into the surviving church. Yet this would be at odds with an illustration published by Ladbrooke in 1843 which shows no east window at all (Figure 8).¹¹

The resistivity results show affinity with the contours of the site, especially at the eastern end where a distinct boundary appears on both. The 'vestry' feature is also apparent on the ground, for some flintwork protrudes where a corner is indicated on the iso-resistivity plan – which might be the source of Bryant's comment about visible remains. The biggest difference is at the western end, where the contours suggesting a western tower do not tally with the more complicated resistivity pattern; in particular the large rectangle in the south-west corner of the resistivity plot is not apparent on the ground surface – it is well down-slope from the mound which carries the rest of the building.

Comment

The resistivity survey has produced a pattern of readings which is consistent with the presence of a medieval stone-built church (other interpretations may be possible but have not been pursued). The orientation, size and shape of the feature, and the material below ground, are all what would be expected, so too its correlation with a mound of the appropriate size and shape. Yet the correlation is not exact, which shows that the resistivity survey is not just picking up the flint content of the mound but also features

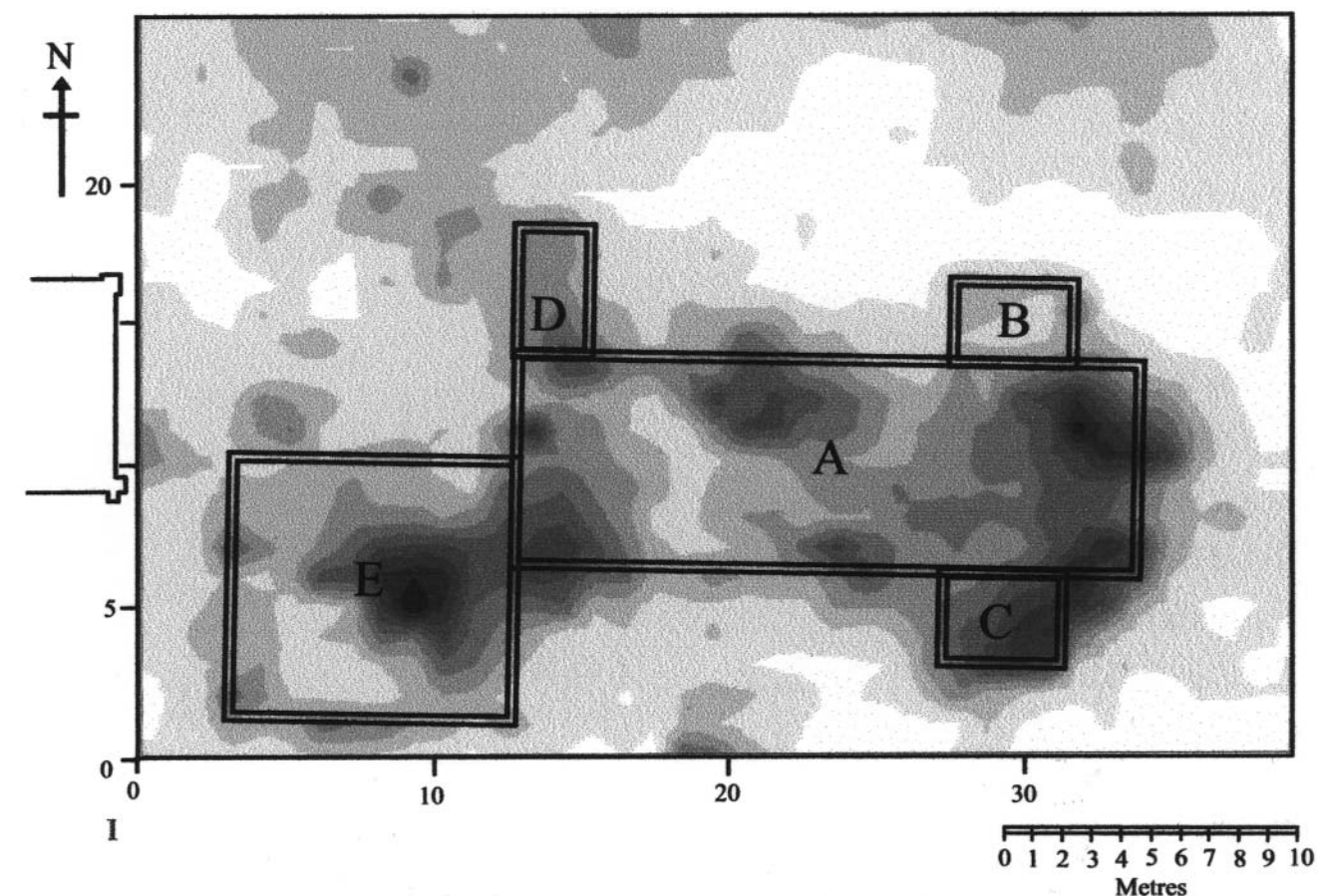


Figure 7. Interpretation Diagram.

beyond it. The size and location of the possible tower is intriguing, and may suggest that the demolished church was not of one build. It is not possible to deduce from the survey which church came first. It might be thought that the demolished church would have been first to be built because of its more central location within the (old) churchyard, but it cannot be taken as proof because churches vary considerably in this respect – some stand quite close to their boundary. On the other hand, the church on the mound is smaller than the surviving one, and may not have been remodelled, in which case it may have been in poorer condition when the two livings were amalgamated.

Church Site: other possibilities

The new graveyard

The new graveyard consecrated in 1933 is not known to have had any previous religious use, yet when graves are dug in the central parts of this area bones from previous burials are often found. One grave-digger with long experience at Stiffkey (and other north Norfolk villages) has confirmed that building materials are also present, and on at least one occasion he has found a feature akin to the base of a wall – too firm to be

broken up. The nature and location of this feature are not known in any detail. It is not just loose bones that have been turned up, sometimes complete skeletons have been discovered at depth and lying east-west. It may be that these finds have given rise to local opinion that this is the site of the church known to have been demolished. The Heritage Environment Record (HER), formerly the Sites & Monuments Record (SMR), held by Norfolk Landscape Archaeology (NLA) at Gressenhall, has no record of any finds in the new graveyard. Nor has there been any record of finds in the old churchyard bar the surface find of part of a Tudor comb of elephant ivory.

In October 2007 two graves (A & B) were opened in the new graveyard (Figure 1) and a 'watching brief' retrieved material of interest from both, including brick and tile fragments, and five pottery sherds. Three of these have been identified by NLA staff as Thetford ware, dating from the 10th or 11th century; all are rim pieces though not large enough to indicate the size of the two bowls and a jar from which they came. The other two pieces are unglazed and could date from anywhere between about 1100 and 1400. There were ten small pieces of tile, six of them medieval roof tiles, two conjoining

pieces having a distinctive yellow fabric. The remainder were floor tiles, probably Flemish, two from the 14th or 15th century, and two with green glaze from the 14th to 16th centuries. A sample piece of brick was also judged to be medieval. In January 2008 another grave (C) produced two more small pieces of late-Saxon pottery, and also one piece of Roman Samian ware, part of a shallow bowl of about 13cm in diameter having a plain rim and a flange round the outside. Samian ware is a very distinctive pottery with a red slip on red fabric, expensive in its day, and mostly made in Gaul, though later in England as well. Some pieces are decorated with scenes in relief, but the Stiffkey piece is plain and comes from Rheinzabern, a prolific production centre on the Rhine in modern Germany. The various plates, bowls and other forms of Samian ware have been classified by their shape, and although the Stiffkey example is not exactly typical it can be assigned to Dragendorff's 'form 38', and dated to the 2nd century AD.

The finds from the three graves also include substantial quantities of cockle shells, and some oyster shells, mostly in the form of pockets at depth, though with a few scattered in the fill together with one or two mussel shells. One piece of lead (approx 2 cm square) is undatable but another tiny piece of coiled lead might be a medieval window tie. From grave A came one small piece of medieval window glass decorated with paint now rusty-red in colour. It appears to show the vertical edge of a shield, but if the depiction inside the frame shows part of a heraldic device then it is untypical.

The remaining finds from the graves consisted of human bones, but little can be said about them because the law prevents the removal of human remains from consecrated ground, even if they were deposited centuries before the date of consecration. In grave A the gravedigger came to an area of soft soil between 4ft and 4ft 6in down and correctly forecast that he would find the major parts of a skeleton lying east-west. In grave B bones of more than one individual were found in the fill above a coffin buried a few years earlier. There were no reports of bones found in grave C, although small ones may have been present.

Burials in recent years have already occupied much of the new graveyard, and bones and building material are believed to have been found in many of them, but probably not in the last couple of rows at both eastern and western ends. This might indicate that there was once a boundary round a burial area smaller than the 1933 addition. However, there is an HER record from 1955 that human remains were found while digging trenches for water mains close to The Knoll, some '75 yards west of Stiffkey

church'. These were examined by Dr Calvin Wells who concluded that they came from one man aged about 25-30, and from a woman of the same age, possibly Anglo-Saxon, while three other bones probably came from three other people (male, female and child). The HER records the suggestion that these may represent burials in an extra-mural part of the medieval churchyard.

The old churchyard

There are no records of any finds from the old churchyard at all, although fragments of bone, brick and tile can sometimes be seen in mole-heaps. However, during 2007 molehills adjacent to the southern side of the church produced many small pieces of glass, much of it very thin, with a pale blue tint, and post-medieval in date. Other fragments could have been painted window glass from the medieval period, and eight pieces were almost certainly so, though no decoration could be discerned. There were also other objects, including a piece of molten lead and a fragment of slate with mortar attached, but only a piece of roof tile could be ascribed to the medieval period.

During July 2007 a depression appeared in the south-west corner of the old churchyard and the soft material within it was probed with an auger, bringing up fragments of decayed wood from a solid object encountered at a depth of between 7ft 6in & 8ft. NLA visited the site and suggested that the slump, however caused, might have taken place within made-up ground adjacent to the southern wall of the churchyard, at which point there is a drop of some 4ft to the upper terrace of the Old Hall garden.

Comment

The meagre finds in the old part of the churchyard do not point to any possible site for the earlier church other than the mound where the geophysical study took place. The new graveyard, however, throws up some interesting points. In the first place, it is clearly a burial ground of some antiquity apparently unknown from documentary sources. Moreover, despite the suggestion that there could be limits to this burial ground within the present new graveyard, there are known to be other burials further to the west. The most likely reason for this is that the early medieval burial ground was larger than the present one and that some reduction took place before the end of the medieval period, possibly after the Black Death of 1349. There is no evidence to suggest that there was ever a third church in addition to St John's and St Mary's. The pottery sherds from only three graves have a wide date range and, despite being so few, suggest that the area around the church has been the site of settlement since early times. In this, Stiffkey would be typical for the late Saxon

church was usually located close to the people it was intended to serve. This does not mean that settlement necessarily extended over any cut-off part of the old burial ground, indeed there seems to be no documentary evidence to support it. The building materials and the reports of wall foundations in the middle of the new churchyard suggest that some unrecorded medieval building may have stood on this spot, but there is nothing to hint that any building as substantial as a church stood there right up to the late 16th century.

The existing church

Plan

Before looking at the documents relating to the two churches it is worth making a few comments about the present church, for the structure may have a bearing on its identity. The church consists of chancel, nave and square western tower, with a vestry on the north side of the chancel and a porch on the north side of the nave. Additional and distinctive features are two turrets, one giving access to the roof behind the north parapet and to the upper room that once existed in the porch, and the other providing access to the roof on the southern side of the nave. For the convenience of the solitary surveyor, all measurements for Figure 9 were made at ground level, with the result that plinths are included in the wall thickness – the tower plinths are thicker than those of the nave, while the chancel has none at all. There are three spiral staircases, one in each tower, the entrance to the south-east turret being directly under the nearest nave window.

Measurements

A course conducted in the Glaven Valley by Gerald Randall in 2007 encouraged participants to consider the significance of church dimensions. Those for Stiffkey give rise to an interesting proposition and (in a digression from the theme of this article) the details are as follows. The internal width of the chancel (at the east end) is 5.36m, or 5yds 2ft 7ins. Medieval churches were often built to some basic module, but this dimension does not seem to fit anything in particular – until it is converted to 'royal feet' (r.ft), an ancient measure still in use in England in the 12th century. The conversion (using 325mm to the royal foot, and one twelfth of that as a royal inch) yields exactly 16 r.ft 6 r.ins which is one rod, pole or perch – or one quarter of a chain. The length of the chancel, along the south wall, is greater by 11 r.ft and is therefore equivalent to the width plus two thirds. The length of the nave was measured at 14.45m, being 44 r.ft 5.5 r.ins. This is equivalent to 2 rods and 11 r.ft – with 5.5 r.ins left over, which

detracts somewhat from the possible module. On the other hand, the depth of the tower is 3.5m, or 10 r.ft 9 r.ins – just 3 r.ins short of the 11 r.ft which appears in other areas of the church. So the total internal length of the chancel, nave and tower comes to 5 rods, by the royal measure, with just 2.5r.ins left over – perhaps attributable to measuring error. To add weight to the possibility of the rod being the standard measurement throughout, the tower width is 2.7m, or 8 r.ft 3.5 r.ins – which (bar the half inch) is exactly half a rod. It can hardly be coincidence that this is also the internal width of the porch – though it may be accidental that the outer diameter of the south-east turret (a measurement taken from the plan) is also half a rod. On the other hand, it is surely intentional that the width of the nave at the east end, 27 r.ft 6 r.ins, is exactly equal to the length of the chancel.

The proposition, therefore, is that all the major dimensions of the church – no matter what their date of construction – are based on the medieval rod, whether whole, in half or in thirds. Yet the royal foot, in common use during the 11th and 12th centuries, was generally obsolete by the end of the 13th century, although it is not clear when the modern yard, and its divisions, came into use – it first appears in an enactment which can be dated only to the period 1266-1303.¹² So it seems a little odd that the whole of Stiffkey church can be related to the older measure; was there a physical rod surviving in the parish or with local builders? Perhaps it is more likely that later rebuilding used the dimensions of earlier work without necessarily knowing what they represented.

Description

While no detailed study has been made of the structure of the present church, some comments may be of interest, and one particular feature has a bearing on its identity. The earliest features of the chancel are the buttresses at its eastern end: the north-eastern corner has a clasping buttress, rectangular in outline, which could date from the later 12th century, while the south-eastern corner has a pair of angle buttresses which could be at least as old. It is not clear why the two corners should be different in design; they might be of different dates, or perhaps the slightly heavier buttressing on the south-east is a reflection of the greater slope in that direction. Inside the chancel is a piscina of the early 13th century, on the north wall is an Easter sepulchre of similar date, and the north window may also have 13th century stonework. The indications, therefore, are that the chancel has not been rebuilt, or extended, since its construction sometime around 1200, unless the walls are earlier and the internal features inserted slightly later.



Figure 8. Robert Ladbrooke's print of Stiffkey church from the south east.

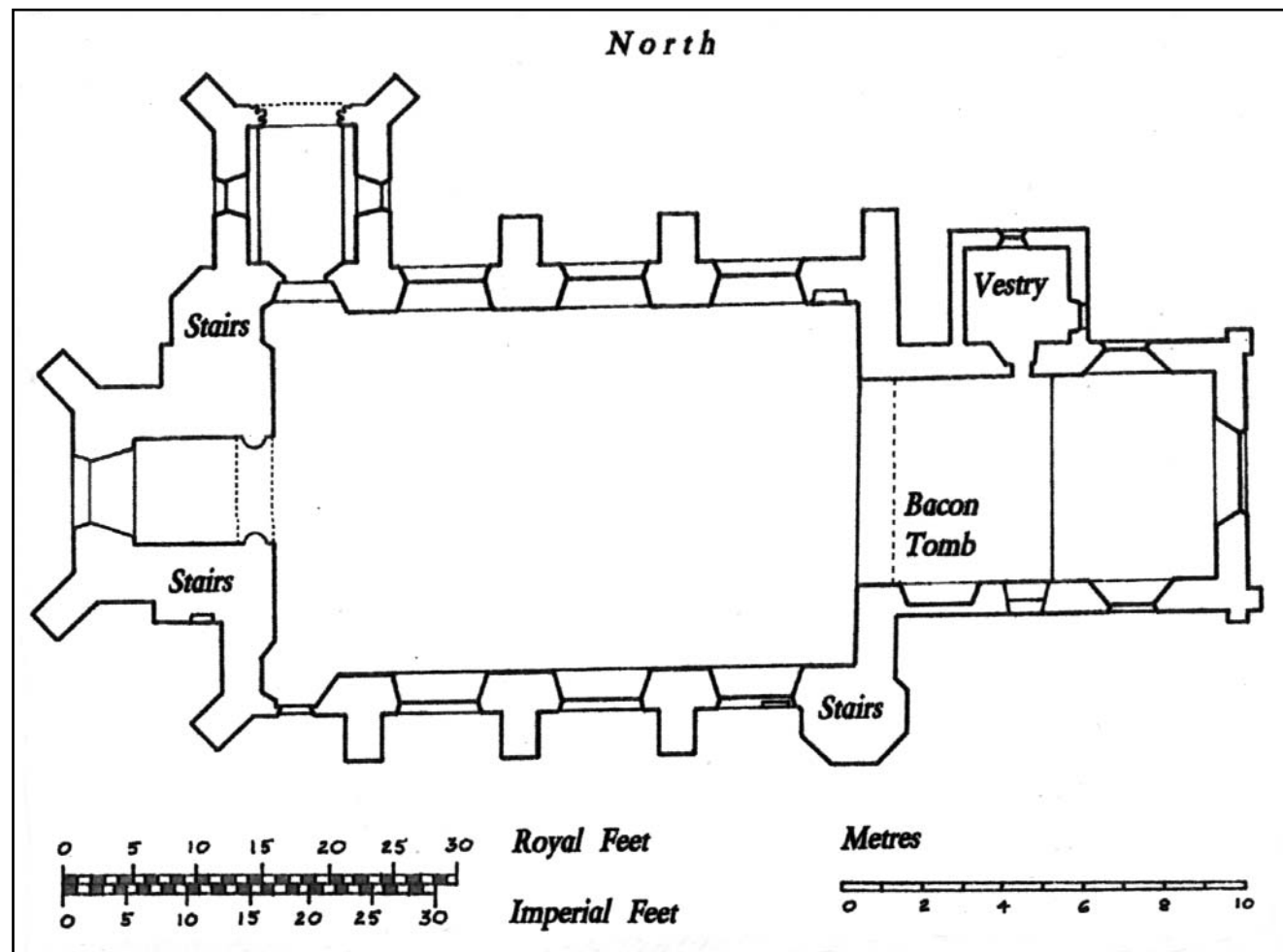


Figure 9. Plan of the church.



Figure 10. Photograph of Stiffkey church from the south east, 2008.

Whatever the form of the early medieval nave, it appears to have been remodelled in the 15th century. The two turrets, parapets and porch all date from this period, and the nave may have been widened at the same time. Of particular relevance is the dating of the porch which carries in its spandrels two shields – likely to be of families having strong connections with the church as patrons, rectors or benefactors. The style of the porch is at one with the north wall of the nave. Where the western wall of the porch adjoins the church one of the stones comprising the plinth is worked into the shape of a right angle so that it forms part of both walls – evidence of contemporary construction. The tower, too, is in the Perpendicular style, although the very tall tower arch appears to date from around 1300. There may be evidence of some former structure attached to the southern side of the tower: a corbel juts out at some 15ft above ground level. One irregularity apparent on the plan is that the north and south windows of the nave are not directly opposite each other – there is an offset of about 30cm.

In Ladbrooke's illustration (Figure 9) the most noticeable feature is the height of the chancel walls and the flat pitch of the roof, altered in 1848 when the walls were reduced and the roof pitch increased; vertical lines of

stonework in the east wall of the nave appear to mark the join between the nave and the higher chancel walls (Figure 10). At the same time, perhaps, the two large square windows on the southern side of the chancel were replaced by one small window in 13th century style – north and south windows now match. Comparing the Ladbrooke print with the church plan shows that the western-most of the former windows is now the location of the memorial to Nathaniel Bacon. It is most unlikely that the memorial is in its original position, for over half the thickness of the chancel wall would have had to have been removed in order to accommodate it, and the rectangular plinth of the memorial does not fit neatly into the trapezium shape of the present alcove. Unless memorial and window co-existed, the memorial must have been moved here from its original position soon after c.1840. Other features of interest inside the church include a large alcove in the south-west corner of the nave and a small one in the north-east, and in the south turret is a blocked-up doorway high up at mid-window level which would have led into the south-east corner of the nave. No doubt it provided access to the rood loft – in which case the loft spanned the nave rather than the chancel (as does the remarkable rood screen at Ranworth).

Dedications – which church?

There is no easy way of presenting a discussion on whether the present church was originally St John's or St Mary's. If the case for each is addressed separately there would be much duplication of the evidence, but with different conclusions; if the evidence is laid out first, the case for each church becomes fragmented. This section therefore takes a more pragmatic line, following to some extent the arguments as they developed from the documents that were seen.

Publications to date

There appear to be no publications which address in any detail the dedication question – perhaps a reminder that the issue, though of interest, is of no great importance. Bryant is in no doubt that the present church is dedicated to St Mary – ignoring the fact that the current dedication is actually to St John – but he gives no source or evidence for his assumption that St John's was demolished. He mentions only two brasses in the church (of St Mary), one dated 1603 and the other 1630, and so omits any reference to the brass of Margaret Braunche, dated 1491, which is in the church now. He does, however, refer to her will in which she desired to be buried in the chancel of St John's, evidence that St John's was still standing at that date.

It may seem odd that he knows of Margaret Braunche's intention to be buried in St John's but makes no mention of her brass now to be found there. Did he not know of the brass, or was he trying to suppress the evidence? Clearly the former, because the brass was discovered (or retrieved, strictly speaking) only in 1934 when the chancel was being restored and a nineteenth-century chancel step was removed. This supports the case for the church being the original St John's, but does not prove it – the brass could have been brought out of the ruins of one church to be placed in the other. This appears to have been done in Blakeney where the brass to John Calthorpe, who wished to be buried in the Friary church, can now be seen in the parish church.

It may be that Bryant relied for his information on the article written by Mrs Herbert Jones. Her account of Stiffkey begins with reference to the two churches and continues ... one of which fell apparently into disuse about the year 1559, when the church of St Mary alone remained. In her comments on the manorial history of Stiffkey she refers to the Irmingland manor devolving on three daughters, one of whom married a Daubeney. She notes that the arms of Irmingland and Daubeney appear on separate shields, in stone, in the spandrels of the entrance arch to the fifteenth-century porch. As

described by Farrer, the Irmingland arms are: on a fesse between six billets three martlets, and Daubeney: five lozenges in fesse in chief two martlets respecting each other.¹³ These are indeed the arms to be seen on the porch and they are so well integrated into the design of the façade that they are unlikely to have been inserted after its construction (Figure 11). Nevertheless, it is physically possible that either or both shields could be direct replacements for earlier arms of different families. (The gable above the shields was rebuilt when a room above the porch was removed and the roof lowered.)

The porch is acknowledged to belong to the 15th century. Both porch and nave belong to the Perpendicular style of building, which was prevalent from around 1350 to about 1530, taking in the whole of the 15th century. The Listed Building description prepared in 1959 suggests that the most likely time of construction was the early 1400s.

Having noted the Irmingland-Daubeney connection, Mrs Jones does not draw the obvious conclusion that the church might well be St John's as the Irminglands were patrons there from the early 1300s and had no known connection with St Mary's. The advowson of St John's was attached to the principal manor held by the Turteville and Irmingland families who presented rectors alternately. John Irmingland was rector there from 1408 right through to 1458 – his will was proved in that year. The Irmingland connection ceased in 1483 when the three Irmingland heiresses sold to John Wynter. One of the three, Anne, was already married to Thomas Daubeney, but it is not clear which Daubeney would have been commemorated on the porch in the early 1400s. The Irmingland and Daubeney families were connected elsewhere at that time: Robert Daubeney was rector of Sharrington in the 1430s and his brother William was married to Cecilia, co-heir of Richard Irmingland of North Burlingham.

Manors

At this point it is worth making a brief comment on the Stiffkey manors because it will provide background on the advowsons which went with them. The following summary is derived from various authors, despite their lack of complete agreement. The principal Domesday estate, held by Rainold, passed to the Earls of Clare who let it to the de Stivekey family & eventually it came to their two last cousins, William Turteville and William Hevingham. They divided the manor between them and agreed to present alternately to the church of St John. It was Geoffrey de Stivekey who in 1271 was granted an annual fair to be held on the vigil, feast and morrow of St John the Baptist (24th June). To this manor



Figure 11. North porch of the church showing the Irmingland and Daubeney shields.

was added East Hall and Curlew's before the whole passed to the Wynters, to Sir William Farmer, to John Banyard in 1556 and then to Sir Nicholas Bacon in 1571. The smaller Domesday estate, held by Godric directly from the king, was granted to William de Valentia, Earl of Pembroke, in 1248 and with it came the advowson of St Mary's. This manor passed through the Boleyns and a branch of the Calthorpes, and then to Banyard and Bacon. Although Sir Nicholas acquired the two principal manors, with the two churches, he was never to own the manor of Netherhall & Stoves which remained in Calthorpe ownership until the 17th century.

Wills

The only evidence Mrs Jones advances for the survival of St Mary's is that wills made after 1558 do not mention St John's. She refers to several previous wills which mention both churches, concluding with Raffe Greve who, in October 1558, described himself as of Stiffkey otherwise called Stiffkey St John and Alan Ketylston who, in November, also refers to Stiffkey St John. In contrast, the wills of Thomas Framingham and William Greve (1559), and William Sommere and William More (1561), have references only to St Mary.

The four St Mary wills in two years listed by Mrs Jones form too short a sequence to prove

that St John's church no longer existed – and they don't, because Mrs Jones omits to mention a St John will which breaks the sequence. Thomas Ketilstone, who made his will in January 1561, described himself as a resident of Stiffkey St Mary but still made bequests to both churches. And with the union of the two churches in 1563 the only church in use was to be known as St John and St Mary so anyone making a will thereafter did not need to specify a dedication.

It is worth looking in more detail at Stiffkey wills.¹⁴ Of some 36 wills made between 1530 and 1580 all but one (a rector!) mention the local church in some way, and until 1561 always by dedication (again with just one exception). After 1545 no-one asked to be buried in the churchyard of St John, whereas between 1545 and 1561 eight testators wanted to be buried in St Mary's. If the surviving wills represent the burial practice of the time then St John's had lost its popularity – why? Was the churchyard so full that burials were being diverted to St Mary's – or was the St John's part of the village losing population? Or was the church really going out of use?

As an aside, the wills show quite dramatically the ebb and flow of the Reformation. All eleven wills in Henry VIII's reign show a bequest to the high altar of one or both churches – but in the reign of Edward VI (1547-1553) none of

the seven did so. In Mary's reign some catholic practices return, and three of the six wills contain bequests to the high altar. Such bequests cease when Elizabeth comes to the throne. Though few in number the wills still reflect the religious conflicts of the times.

Parish registers

In 1538 there were two churches, two rectors and, during the 1540s at least, two curates (although rector and curate could be the same person). Were there also two churchyards, adjacent to each other, or was there just one, as now? And if only one, how was it possible to bury some residents in St John's churchyard and others in St Mary's? More particularly, 1538 was the year when parish registers were introduced – did Stiffkey have one register or two, and what registers, if any, survive from the period between 1538 and 1563?

Many of the earliest registers do not survive, if only because new books had to be kept from 1558 onwards and often the previous entries were copied into them. In Stiffkey the first register does have entries from 1548 but it is not the original register – as writing on the cover makes clear:¹⁴

The Register

St John and Mary

Daye of October in Anno

Childe parson and curate

Copied oute by Richard Mo

Of Januarie in Anno Domini 158

Copied and written oute the

September in Anno Domini 1598 by

Halman of Wells iuxta Mare in the

Norff

Per me William Halman

In a manner worthy of a mystery novel the ends of all the longer lines of text are missing – some omissions can be inferred, others only guessed. In 1598 an instruction was issued that clergy should keep registers in parchment books and that all existing paper records should be transcribed into them. This was the function being carried out by William Halman. There was no such requirement in the 1580s during the incumbency of John Percival. (It may be that the register was copied out in 1586 because from then until 1597 only baptisms are recorded – no marriages or burials.) Robert Childe was parson and curate of St John's from 1531 to c.1554 so it was during his time that parish registers were initiated, but the union of the benefices did not take place, at least formally, until 1563. That Robert Childe is mentioned may suggest that the register belongs to St John, or it may be that he was the only resident rector – he was certainly more prominent in witnessing wills than his

counterparts at St Mary. If the register entries from 1548 to the union in 1563 are from both churches, why not name both rectors on the cover?

One way forward is to look at the actual entries in the register. The figures below summarize events recorded for the period 1548-63 and for the following 16 years, retaining March 25th as the start of each new year (then the current practice):

	1548-63	1564-79
No. marriages	23	24
No. baptisms	33	122
No. burials	23	57

It is intriguing that the pattern of entries appears to change significantly after 1563, but not in a regular way: the number of marriages recorded stays the same, the number of burials more than doubles, but the number of baptisms increases almost fourfold. Or again, in the 16 years up to 1563, the total entries per year never reached double figures, whereas they did so in 7 of the next 8 years (before some low figures in the mid 1570s).

It is a pity that the figures may not be reliable, for (in a stable population) baptisms ought to be many times the number of marriages, and burials should approach the number of baptisms. Of course, the numbers are bound to be erratic in small villages: Stiffkey's population may not have been more than 300 at the time, in which case the marriages, baptisms and burials of the later period would be the more plausible. One obvious conclusion is that the entries for the period up to 1563 are taken from one register only, serving part of the village, while the later ones are for the whole village.

If that is so, do the names listed in the earlier years show whether the register was for St John's or St Mary's? In those first 16 years only three names can be collated with wills (ignoring the possibility of two people with the same name) – and all three testators were resident in Stiffkey St John. However, none of them actually mentioned St John's churchyard: two of them asked to be buried where it shall please god and the third where it shall please my executors. This total of three seems a remarkably small number of the twentyone wills receiving probate in that period, so it could be significant that seventeen of the wills relate to St Mary's. Eight of those testators specifically wanted to be buried in St Mary's – yet not one of them appears in the register now extant. Perhaps that is because the pre-1563 entries relate only to St John's church.

The Bacon Papers

The case for the retention of St John's seems to be strengthened by the Bacon Papers (the published correspondence of Nathaniel Bacon of Stiffkey Old Hall).¹⁶ These Papers record the union of St John and St Mary in 1563 in the following terms:

At the petition of John Banyard & William Brownsmith, respectively patron & rector of St Mary (& of St John), and of the parishioners of St Mary, & taking into consideration that the income of St Mary does not exceed £5 13s 4d a year and could not support an incumbent and that it stands in the same churchyard as St John, John Bishop of Norwich annexes the parish church of St Mary to St John, the church to be called St John and Mary. St John is to be the mother church and £10 is to be paid by John Banyard for the rectory of St Mary and the houses belonging to it, and £20 to be paid by the patron & parishioners of St John.

This seems to be clear evidence that St Mary is the poorer church, that the living cannot support an incumbent, and that St John is to be the main church with the St Mary dedication added to it. Whatever might happen to the rectories and glebe there is no suggestion that it is St Mary's church which is to be retained.

The Bacon Papers contain other references to the churches. In March 1559 William Brownsmith was instituted to St Mary's and three months later became rector of St John's as well. The following year he sold the parsonage house of St John together with the glebe and the pastures, which implies that he had no need of the parsonage – perhaps he was already installed at St Mary's rectory. The retention of St Mary's parsonage is confirmed by the terrier for c.1613 which is headed Terrier of the glebelands of the church of St Mary.¹⁷ The total area of house and land is given as 21 acres 3 rods. Taken in isolation, this document might seem proof that the surviving church was St Mary's, as do similar terriers of 1633 and 1677. Despite the reference to the church of St Mary these terriers need to be read together with the Bacon Papers which show that St John's land was sold – which is consistent with St Mary's glebe being retained. It does not follow that it must also have been St Mary's church which was retained. The next terrier in the sequence, for 1706, describes a mansion house and land totalling 21 acres 2 rods, under the heading St Mary and St John. Later terriers, however (eg 1845 and 1933) record 66 acres of glebe.

Church inventories 1368 and 1552

There are several records which confirm that St Mary's had always been the poorer church. Two

ecclesiastical valuations were made in the 1200s.¹⁸ The Norwich Taxation of 1254 shows that St John was valued at 26 marks (£17.6s.8d) and that St Mary's valuation was 10 marks (£6.13s 4d). Similarly the Taxation of Pope Nicholas in 1291 shows that St John was valued at 20 marks (£13.6s.8d) while St Mary's remained at 10 marks (£6.13s.4d). These latter values are the same as those which appear in church inventories taken in 1368.

Notwithstanding that the value of St John's declined between 1254 and 1291, it is still the case that the value of St Mary's was less in 1563 than it had been nearly 300 years before in 1254 – not a good basis for retaining St Mary's rather than St John's.

The church inventories for 1368 are extensive but that for St John is clearly the longer.¹⁹ Where the churches have items in common St John has more of them: eight surplices compared with three, for example, four chalices compared with two, and two portable crosses compared with one. Moreover St John has several items that St Mary does not, such as three censers, a lantern, a handbell and a banner. In quality, too, St John had the advantage: two of its chalices were gilded, so too the pyx, unlike any of St Mary's possessions. In summary, therefore, there is no doubt that St John had not only the greater income but also the greater number and quality of vestments and ornaments.

Despite the pre-eminence of St John, it is of interest that the inventory for St Mary, in common with many others, had some additional items made as gifts after the survey of 1368. These included a number of vestments provided by the parishioners, a silver chalice from John Bonham (to add to the two already listed), and more vestments from the guild of St Mary. No such gifts are recorded for St John. If this should indicate a trend which continued then it is by no means certain that St John would still have been more wealthy than St Mary, judged by its possessions, in 1563 when the livings were combined. This is a tenuous argument but there is some support for it from those wills made between 1531 and 1561. These are listed in the Table, in which 'church' means money left for the 'reparation' of the church. Adding up the totals in this perhaps unrepresentative sample shows that three times as much money has been pledged to St Mary as to St John. After 1561 gifts to the church in (surviving) wills cease – the urge to donate to charity is expressed instead in bequests to keep in good repair the Stiffkey bridge.

Yet not too much should be made of this because many people must have given money to the church during their lifetime, especially perhaps those who could afford to fund building

programmes. Substantial bequests might also come from outside the parish. In any case the 1540s and 1550s were a time of great religious upheaval. In 1547 chantries were suppressed and orders made for the destruction (or defacement) of statues, the limewashing of paintings and the smashing of stained glass, a process only temporarily reversed during the short reign of Queen Mary. So it is difficult to know how the two churches really compared at the time of their union in 1563.

Neither Bryant nor Mrs Jones refers to the national inventory of church goods made in 1552. The entry for St Mary is signed by Edmund Neve, who was rector there from 1542 to 1557. The items consisted of a silver gilt chalice valued at £2 7s 9d, six vestments, two latten candlesticks, a copper cross, three bells weighing by estimation 8cwt, 6cwt and 5cwt, three bell clappers and two hand bells.²⁰ The inventory for St John was signed not by the rector Robert Child (close to the end of his incumbency) but by the patron John Banyard. The items were a chalice valued at £1 19s, three vestments, and one bell estimated to weigh 2 cwt. This list is shorter than that for St Mary, but the most important feature is that in the published record the words Church in ruins are appended after the heading Stiffkey St John.

The 1552 inventories listed by H B Walters are potentially important evidence for the demolition of the original St John's church. But could the church (either church) really have been in ruins at the time of the inventory? When were these words written and by whom? If contemporary with the inventory itself (1552) and literally true, then the implication is that two rectors were appointed to serve a ruined church (St John's), Thomas Howe in 1554 and Andrew Cole in 1558, before William Brownsmith took both livings in 1559. In fact, the original document in The National Archives (formerly the Public Record Office) carries no such annotation, so Church in ruins might even have been added by Walters as an indication that, in his opinion, it was this church that was later demolished. So, once again, what appears to be a good argument supporting the retention of St Mary's is not what it seems.

Even the fact that the inventory for St John is shorter than that for St Mary cannot be taken as evidence that St Mary must have been the richer church, for even prominent churches could have modest inventories. This is not necessarily proof of poverty – it could be an indication that politically aware churchwardens had disposed of property before it could be confiscated by the crown, or had merely 'forgotten' to include some of their valuables. According to Eamon Duffy ... *many Norfolk returns are manifestly 'cooked', large and rich parishes returning*

*lists as sparse as impoverished hamlets. Some parishes possessing precious medieval lecterns omitted them from their inventories and so still have them.*²¹

The church bell

Edward VI's intention was that each parish should retain for use in their services a chalice, sufficient altar linen and surplices, and one bell. Other church goods were to be sold and the proceeds used for the good of the local community, while the 'excess' bells were to be retained for the crown. In practice, Edward's death effectively put an end to this intention, and quite a number of churches in Norfolk have retained at least one medieval bell.²² So is the bell in Stiffkey church of medieval date? If so, then the weight of the bell could be a telling factor in the identity of the church. If the bell is of only 2 cwt – and especially if there is no framework for two others – then the church is more likely to be St John's. If the bell is at least 5 cwt then the church could be St Mary's.

A visit to the tower shows that the approximate measurements of the bell are:

Height	30 inches
Diameter at the base	35 inches
Central circumference	62 inches

It hangs now in a new framework resting on two opposite window sills. This is not likely to be the original arrangement, and indeed there are four large putlog holes in a higher position, either side of the two windows. Could beams inserted there have carried three bells of the size of those in St Mary's inventory? The answer to this is 'no' for in 1964 the church architect reported to the Whitechapel Bell Foundry that a local builder had formed pockets high up in the tower walls at the level of the springing of the belfry windows.²³ He suggested that the beams be fixed 6 ft lower at the level of the belfry sills – which is where they now are. The Bell Foundry had been asked to advise on the work needed in the belfry, and part of their short report reads as follows: ... *The fittings, ie the head stock, bearings, wheel and clapper are exceedingly old and beyond repair. The bell frame is a very early oak structure ... It is supported by six beams which stand on offsets in north and south walls ...* It is not clear from this report how many bells the framework was designed to carry, but the Foundry has confirmed (in a letter to the author) that their interpretation of the 1963 report is that the bell hung in an ancient and dangerous frame for one bell only ...

Around the circumference of the present bell, at the top, is the cast inscription Sancte Paule ora pro nobis (St Paul pray for us). The 'dedication' to St Paul is the only one of its kind in the county.²⁴ Was this bell intended for – or taken from – a church dedicated to St Paul? Such

churches are rare in Norfolk, no more than four are known: in Norwich, Thuxton, Oulton (now St Peter and St Paul), and the ruined chapel in North Pickenham.²⁵

The Stiffkey inscription is of great interest for another reason: the lettering is of fine quality and is clearly medieval, one of only 20 or so examples in the county. Paul Cattermole, who has made a detailed study of all Norfolk church bells, suggests that the Stiffkey bell may have been cast by Simon Severe, a bellfounder who worked in the Southrepps area in the second quarter of the fifteenth century – he died in 1454. This date is compatible with the fabric of much of the church, showing that the bell could have been hung there at the time of major reconstruction.

The other important feature of the bell is its size: a 35 inch bell is clearly much heavier than 2 cwt and is probably little short of 8 cwt. This means that the bell could be the largest of the three bells listed for St Mary; it is certainly not the small one in St John's. Yet bells can be moved and it would have been possible to have replaced the small bell in St John's with one of those from St Mary's, especially if it was St John's which was to be retained and St Mary's demolished – the bells would have been one of the first items to have been removed. Yet this raises the question of why St John's should have had such a small bell in the first place, for St Mary's three bells, nominally at least, totalled 19 cwt compared with the 2 cwt in St John's, representing a much larger financial outlay for the poorer of the two medieval churches. Moreover, it is surprising that the present tower, if it is the original St John's, should have carried such a small bell, one that might have been hung in a bellcote.

A ruynated church

In her article Mrs Jones refers to a 'ruynated' church in Stiffkey of unknown date. Her source will have been an article by Tymms whose text is as follows:²⁶

In the said towne wer two Churches in tymes past, one of them whollie ruynated and profaned. M. Nathaniel Bacon is lord and patron thereof; the other church is verie sufficientlie repaired and maintayned by the parishners, with all ornaments belonging to the same.

In a previous article Tymms had quoted the heading on the original document:

A certificate of the ruines and decayes of the severall Churches and Chancells, within tharchdeaconry of Norff ... which be now so ruinated and decayed, made the last day of July, AD 1602 ...

This source therefore gives no indication of which church was 'ruynated'.

The certificate of ruines and decayes com-

plied in 1602 seems to provide clear evidence that one of Stiffkey's churches was no longer in usable condition by that date. Since the union of the benefices had taken place some 40 years earlier it would not be surprising if some dilapidation had set in, aided no doubt by the removal of stone and other usable materials.

A possible issue to be borne in mind is the distinction between the living and the church building, for a living can remain after the church has gone. To take a modern example, in 1888 Bayfield church was an ivy-covered ruin where, according to Kelly's Directory, the living had been held since 1862 by a non-resident clergyman, while the spiritual duties were performed by a curate appointed in 1875 and living in Wiveton. Tithes were still payable, though commuted to an annual rent. It is unlikely that this has relevance to Stiffkey in 1563, for the Bacon Papers make it clear that St Mary's stands in the same churchyard as St John, and that its income could not support an incumbent. There is no hint of a church already in ruins.

Which church ?

The view that the present church, dedicated to St John, is actually the church originally dedicated to St Mary is not an implausible one. Those authors who have been persuaded of the case have presented evidence which at first sight seems to be significant. However, all of it can be challenged if not actually discounted. Bryant makes no case whatever. Mrs Jones bases her case on just four wills that do not mention St John's – but she omits one that does. Tymms says that one church was ruined in 1602 but does not say which. Inventories of church goods compiled in 1552 show two churches furnished with all the essential items – though both lists are comparatively short. The words church in ruins apparently attributed to St John's inventory provide almost the only documentary basis for suggesting that St John's was demolished – yet those words are not on the original. The early church terriers refer to the 'glebelands of the church of St Mary' but this does not prove the retention of St Mary's church. Perhaps the best evidence for suggesting that the present church is St Mary's is that the bell tallies with St Mary's inventory of 1552 rather than St John's – but bells can be moved.

On the other hand, the Bacon Papers confirm the known fact that St Mary's had always been more poorly endowed than St John's and that both churches were standing at the time the livings were unified. Furthermore, the Bishop of Norwich had ordered that St John's was to be the senior church with St Mary annexed to it. The present church carries the arms of the Irmingland family, for long the

patrons of St John's, and these arms appear to have been there since the 1400s. The early entries in the surviving parish register contain a record of burials of people known to be resident in St John's parish, but do not include any of the larger number of people who wanted to be buried in St Mary's.

Despite the evidence of the surviving bell, the balance of probability is that St John's was retained. The argument for the retention of St Mary's needs to be much more securely based if it is to take precedence and become the accepted view.

Acknowledgements

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Appendix. Stiffkey Wills: bequests to churches

Robert Greve	1531	1s 3s 4d	high altar church	St John St John
John Ketilston	1536	1s 8d 10d 3s 4d 1s 1s	high altar high altar church guild guild	St Mary St John St Mary St Mary St John
Robert Pawe	1540	6s 8d 3s 4d 6s ?	high altar high altar church	St Mary St John St Mary
Elizabeth Mundy	1541	4d	high altar	St John
John Sparhawke	1542	6d	high altar	St John
Thomas Nicholls	1543	8d	high altar	St Mary
William Walleth	1544	1s 8d 8d 6s 8d	high altar church high altar mass book	St Mary St Mary St John St Mary
Anabell Leech	1545	6d	high altar	St John
William Greve	1545	10s 3s 4d 20s 3s 4d	high altar high altar church church	St Mary St John St Mary St John
Ellys Greve	1546	1s 8d 2d	high altar high altar	St Mary St John
Edm Framingham	1549	1s 3s 4d	curate church	St Mary St Mary
Margaret Ketilston	1552	1s 4d	curate church	St Mary St Mary
John Framingham	1552	6s 8d 6s 8d	parson parson	St John St Mary
Agnes Glover	1557	1s 5s 5s	parson high altar church	St John St Mary St Mary
Raffe Greve	1558	1s 8d	high altar high altar	St John St Mary
William Greve	1559	1s 8d	church	St Mary
Thomas Framingham	1559	6s 8d	church	St Mary
Thomas Kettleston	1561	1s 6s 8d 8d 1s 8d	curate church church church	St Mary St Mary St John St John

The Iconography of Peace: the Retable in the Chapel of St Thomas à Becket, Blakeney

Neil Batcock

It is often remarked by curators that the average time a member of the public spends in front of each picture in an art gallery is 2.5 seconds. People do not look properly, at least in part because they have not been taught how to look. It is also because, in today's world, visual images flash from one to another at great speed on our various screens. We often do not have the patience to take time over our looking. Images in churches are important, not just because they may tell a story, but because they should make us be still: to observe, analyse and meditate. But today we can be too busy to be still even in church. When I gave a talk on the stained glass in Blakeney church in July 2007, I was amazed at how many people, very familiar with the church, had hardly glanced at the stories being told in its glass. This article is therefore about another familiar work of art in St Nicholas's church: the retable behind the altar in the chapel of St Thomas of Canterbury, in the north aisle.

The altar and retable were installed in 1923 in response to a desire to create a 'Martyrs' Chapel' to commemorate the fallen of the First World War. The list of the fallen can be found on the north wall of the chapel, and the altar and retable are installed against the east wall. On the retable, there is a central panel containing a statue of St Thomas Becket, wearing bishop's mitre and holding a crozier. He is flanked, lower down, by two figures wearing armour. To the right, it is easy to identify St George, thrusting a spear into the dragon. To the left, the figure is of a woman in armour, bearing the fleur-de-lys on her shield: undoubtedly Joan of Arc, patron saint of France, echoing George, the patron saint of England. These two figures would seem to be appropriate on three counts: they are soldier saints, they died as martyrs, and they represent the allies of the western front, France and England.

However, their appearance is arguably controversial. It is very rare to find an image of St

Joan in this country. After all, she was burned at Rouen by the English, at a time when France and England were the most deadly enemies. She was burned, moreover, as a heretic. Perhaps there is a message here: times have changed, we no longer burn heretics, and we are now very much more friendly with the French (unless you read *The Sun* newspaper, that is).

There is also a great deal of moral ambiguity with the image of St George. Under the Plantagenet kings, George replaced the venerable and saintly English king who had been our patron saint hitherto, Edward the Confessor. Edward was not deemed a sufficiently martial figure to represent a country and dynasty whose main delight seemed to be the conquest of neighbouring peoples in Scotland, Ireland, Wales and France. The crusades had provided an alternative: George, the soldier and martyr, an appropriate patron saint for militaristic England. George was a popular choice, despite so little being known about him. Unlike Edward the Confessor, he definitely was not English, but came from the Near East. The only two other things known about him are that he was a soldier, and was martyred by the Roman Emperor Diocletian at the beginning of the 4th century. We do not know why he was martyred, but it seems likely that his death follows a pattern of soldier-martyrs of the period. Having become Christians, they refused to fight. There is the greatest probability that George became a saint not through military prowess, but because he laid down his sword. No doubt the Plantagenet kings were unaware that they had chosen a saint who stood for peace rather than war. It is a lovely irony.

It is quite likely that those who chose the images for this Blakeney retable were also unaware of this irony. Except The principal image of the retable is the central figure of St Thomas. That is no surprise, since there had always been an altar dedicated to him in this part of the church. But his story is significant:



Photograph of the retable installed in the north aisle in 1923 as a 'martyrs' chapel' memorial to commemorate the dead of the first World War. The central figure is that of St Thomas à Becket, the dedicatee of the chapel, flanked by St George and St Joan representing England and France allied in the war, and drawing a discreet veil over the fact that it was the English who martyred the Maid of Orleans. Photo: Richard Kelham

an unarmed cleric, hacked down by soldiers of the Plantagenet king, Henry II. In the stained glass behind the retable, his martyrdom is clearly depicted. It is the horror of armed men destroying the life of someone who had eschewed the sword. The outcome of the story is also depicted: Henry having to do penance for causing innocent blood to be shed. Armed aggression is no solution.

Having thus looked closely at the iconography of the retable and its related glazed panels, we begin to sense the meaning of the whole piece. There remains a certain ambiguity, but I think we are pushed more firmly in one direction by the smallest carved panel of the retable. It is sometimes hard to see it, since it is often obscured by a wooden cross.

It is the panel below St Thomas, and it depicts a well-known theme. Mary is shown with her child on a donkey, led by Joseph. It is the flight to Egypt, when the holy family take their child to safety from the clutches of a tyrannical king. It is about escape from the massacre of the innocents. It is about the plight of refugees, those often forgotten victims of war.

The retable is, therefore, a plea for peace. It is about the victims of war and violence. It is full of ironies: a soldier saint who refused to fight; the patron saint of an allied nation, yet killed by the English in an earlier conflict.

And there is one further irony. The sculptor who carved the figures of Thomas, George and Joan (also the adjacent statue of Christ) was one Ferdinand Stuflessner, who set up his business as woodcarver in the Austrian Tyrol back in the 1870s. His town was then called St Ulrich. If, however, you look at his inscription on the base of any of these statues, you will find his town called S Ulricho, Italy. One consequence of World War I was that Austria lost the southern part of the Tyrol to Italy. The Stuflessner family still make carved figures for churches to this day. They remain in Italy, but still speak German. Fortunately, and I write this without irony, we are all Europeans now.

Detail photographs of (top) the figure of St Thomas and (below) the panel depicting Mary and her child upon a donkey led by Joseph. "It is the flight to Egypt, when the holy family take their child to safety from the clutches of a tyrannical king. It is about escape from the massacre of the innocents. It is about the plight of refugees, those less-lamented victims of war."



Comparing and Contrasting the Communities of Kelling and Weybourne in the 19th and 20th centuries.

Brenda Worton

Synopsis: this paper is based on a dissertation submitted as part of the requirements for the Master of Arts degree in Local and Regional History at the University of East Anglia. A study is made of population, occupations, and instruments of change to support a theory that Kelling and Weybourne are examples of 'close' and 'open' villages respectively.

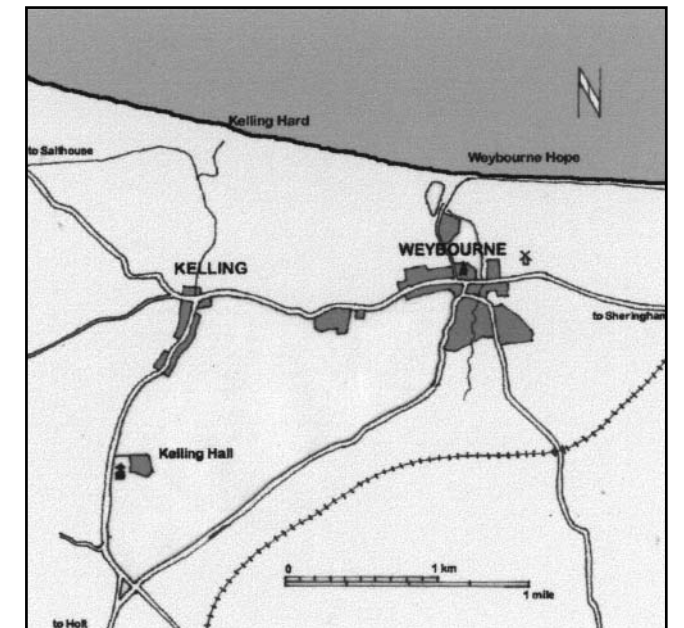
Introduction

The adjacent villages of Kelling and Weybourne are situated on the North Norfolk coast. The centres of both now lie about half a mile from the shingle beach and seashore. Here Kelling Hard is a level shore with shallow water and therefore is not particularly suitable for shipping, whilst Weybourne Hope has a very steep shingle beach due to prevailing on-shore currents which sweep over and erode the beach, maintaining near-shore deep water for fishing, boat loading, or even invasion, the ongoing threat of which was to play a significant role in the history of the village.

Inland, the land rises to nearly 70m at the Holt-Cromer Ridge, the terminal moraine of the last Ice Age which deposited light sand, gravel or boulder clay.

In Weybourne, the focus of the village is still centred around the parish church which is part of the Augustinian Priory of about 1200 which had used an earlier Saxon foundation, the ruins of which remain behind the present parish church. This contrasts with Kelling where the church is now isolated at what used to be the centre of the village, the junction of the old road from Blakeney to Cromer across the heath and the one from Kelling Hard to Holt. The Holt road was diverted to its present location in 1809, probably to enhance the aspect of the new hall then in the process of being built. The rest of Kelling village gradually gravitated north, nearer the coast road, at the other end of the main street.

Although Kelling and Weybourne share many features of location, geomorphology and pre-history, by the end of the sixteenth century,



factors had already begun to emerge which would at a later date cause divergence. This paper will examine the similarities and differences between the two communities in the 19th and 20th centuries, and examine the proposition that the two communities may be considered as examples of a 'close' and an 'open' parish.

Population

In a study of any community, it is essential to ascertain and analyse changes in the populations for the period under investigation. Upsurges are often indicative of a growth in prosperity, whilst a fall in numbers might point to decline. A non-changing population over sev-

eral years could be interpreted as a sign of either stability or stagnation. A popular misconception however, is that prior to the 20th century, the majority of the population was so deeply rooted in one place that there was very little movement, even from adjacent parishes.

As with many communities, before the first national census, there is little information available for the population sizes of Kelling and Weybourne. The Compton Return of 1676 was an ecclesiastical census, instigated by Henry Compton who was Bishop of London and Provincial Dean.¹ With this return, figures were also included for an earlier 1603 census of Communicants, at which time the total for both Kelling and Weybourne was reported to be 100 adults, which does seem to be too coincidental to be true. In the later return for 1676, the figures of 64 communicants for Kelling, and 124 for Weybourne (including one non-conformist), are more plausible. A customary addition of 40 per cent for the omitted children produces total populations of 90 for Kelling and 174 for Weybourne.

Census Data

A governmental census of England and Wales has been held every 10 years since 1801. The early ones were concerned mainly with numbers

and names were not recorded until 1841. That was the first census which included accurate information on the age of inhabitants, their relationship with others in the household, their occupations and place of birth.²

Unfortunately, statistics from the first national census of 1801 are not available for Kelling and Weybourne, but from 1811 onwards, the decennial returns can be used as fairly accurate indicators of the population of each parish.³ It is interesting that despite Kelling having the benefit of a larger acreage of land, much of which was heath however, Weybourne always had the larger population.

As can be seen from the table, the population for Weybourne is identical in 1811 and 1821, but then rises steadily, peaking in 1851. The decline that followed was particularly marked and by 1881, the total dropped to its lowest figure since the 1811 return. However, the recovery achieved by 1891, was maintained ten years later. In Kelling, there was a steady increase in population from 1811, peaking in 1841, but then there was an immediate decline which reached its lowest point in 1861. From that year until 1891 there was recovery, followed by a further decline as shown for the figures for 1901. An interesting observation is that in Weybourne where the population was consis-

Date	Kelling			Weybourne		
Population 1811 - 1901						
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
1811	63	69	132	117	113	230
1821			163			230
1831	109	104	213	140	133	273
1841	136	105	241	139	147	286
1851	111	99	210	133	163	301
1861	89	74	163	141	142	283
1871	97	96	193	139	146	285
1881	109	102	211	111	118	229
1891	122	103	225	134	153	287
1901	110	99	209	139	147	286
Population 2006						
2006	96	103	199	284	243	518
Compton Census 1676 (adults)						
1603			100			100
	+40% for children=		140	+40% for children=		140
1676			64			124
	+40% for children=		90	+40% for children=		174

Figure 1. Kelling and Weybourne population

tently higher, from 1841 to 1901, the number of females exceeded that of males. In Kelling however, for the same period, the reverse was true.

The pattern of population changes in the two parishes parallels the national trends for this period in rural areas. Whereas the population in the towns of England usually continued to grow from census to census, in villages there was often some decline until 1871, followed by growth in the next thirty years. A simple explanation for a rise of population in a place at a particular time is that the number of births exceeds the number of deaths but the effects of immigration to and emigration from the village must also be considered.

Baptisms, Marriages and Burials

For the pre-census period, parish records, where they exist, are an invaluable demographic source, especially as civil registration of births, marriages and deaths was not introduced until 1837 and not enforced until 1875. The few surviving 18th century entries for Weybourne are not matched by any for Kelling. This comparative study therefore, is of necessity confined to the period beginning in 1813, for which there is a full complement of baptism, marriage and burial registers.⁴ The ratio of baptisms to burials sometimes illuminates population figures. For example, in 1811 and 1821, the population totals for Weybourne remained steady at 230 inhabitants. Burial statistics for the parish are not available for 1811, but this stability is supported by the fact that in the parish register entries for 1821, there were equal numbers of baptisms and burials. In Kelling, for the same

period, there was a rise in population which could be the result of 60 per cent more baptisms in the years 1820 and 1821.

The population totals in 1861 for both parishes show a drop from the previous census. The low figure for Weybourne might be explained by the 36 burial entries as opposed to only 25 baptisms. For Kelling however, despite the 22 per cent fall in population, there was a 50 per cent rise in baptisms over burials, so there must have been another reason for the low census figure.

It is also important to bear in mind that whilst all burials would have been registered, not all parents would have had their children baptised at the parish church as it was the custom to baptise the first born in the wife's natal village if possible. However, even taking into account their many imperfections, it cannot be doubted that parish registers do provide a valid indicator of population trends.

Using the 'seven year moving averages' method of calculating totals of baptisms and burials in order to reduce the influence of short-term changes, it has been possible to plot graphs which not only show the results but also general trends over of a span of 80 years. These graphs illustrate clearly the demographical similarities of the two parishes, taking into account the consistently higher numbers in Weybourne. There is only one period when burials exceeded baptisms, in the decade from 1860 to 1870 when there was possibly a period of hardship in both villages. The consequent drop in population did not show recovery until 20 years later.

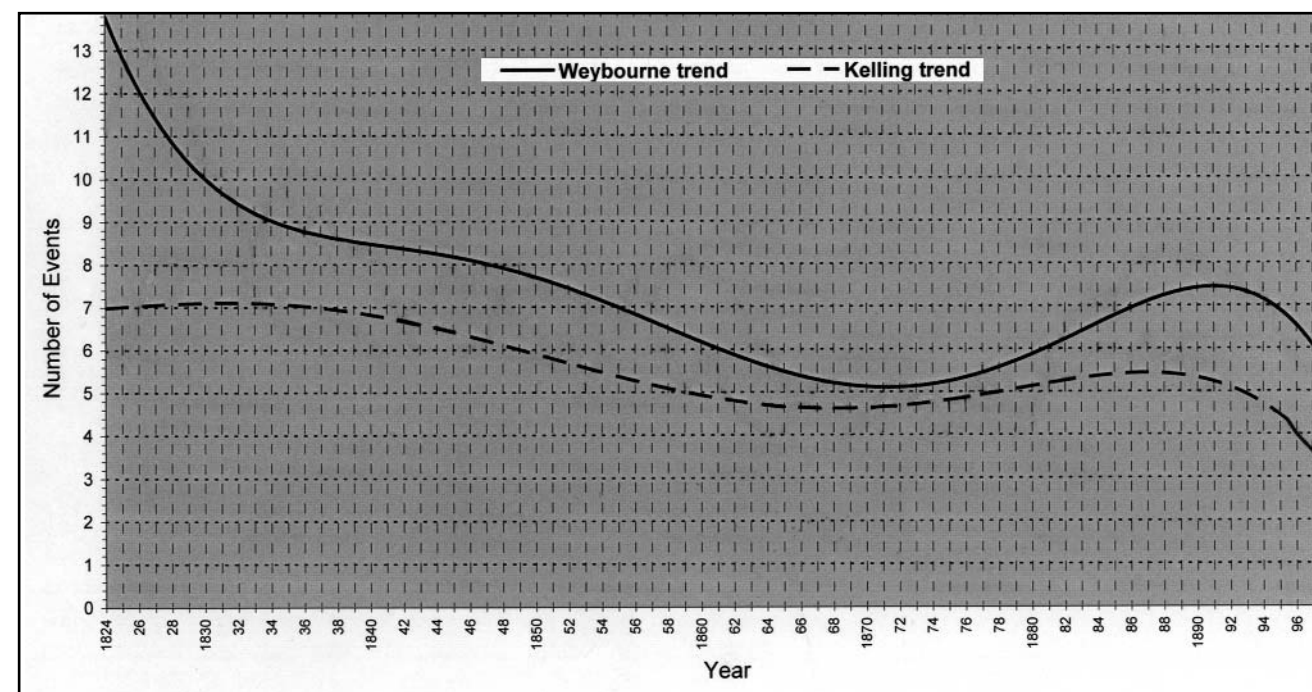


Figure 2. Baptisms in Weybourne and Kelling: 7 year moving averages

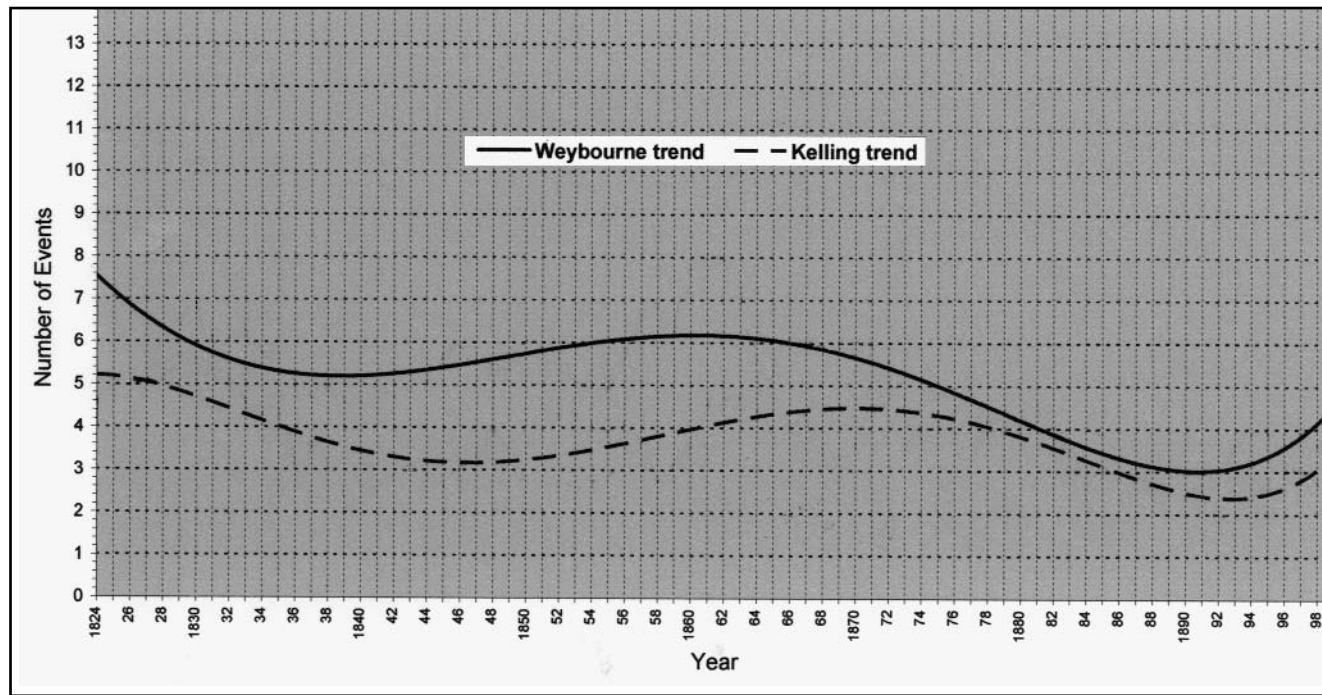


Figure 3. Burials in Weybourne and Kelling: 7 year moving averages

Age of Death

The 'age of death' statistics taken from the burial registers for Kelling and Weybourne for the period 1820 to 1860 have been examined. In order to discount the differences in the sizes of population in the two villages the number of deaths in each age group has been related to the total number of deaths recorded in the forty year period. These figures suggest a comparable way of life for the inhabitants of the two villages. Nevertheless, there are some differences.

The percentage of deaths of children up to 10 years old was higher in Kelling (33.8%) than in Weybourne (30.4%), but for those in their teenage years, the reverse is true, Kelling recording 7.3% and Weybourne 9.5%. The figures for people aged 41 to 60 show similar percentages (7.5 & 8.8), whilst in Kelling 22.6% of the recorded deaths are for people who lived beyond 70 years of age compared with 21% in Weybourne.

For the period 1861 to 1901, there are further differences. Children dying under the age of 11 years represent 33.8% of recorded deaths in Kelling and 30.4% in Weybourne. The percentage of deaths of infants under one year old were about a third higher in Kelling (20.8 to 13.1).

For females of child-bearing age, this was a time of great vulnerability. For those people in the 20 to 40 age group, Kelling had a better survival rate than its neighbouring parish in the first forty year period but this was reversed in the latter part of the century.

A good proportion of those who were fortunate enough to survive the rigours of earlier life lived to a good age. 36 per cent of the deaths

recorded in Weybourne and 28% of those in Kelling in the last four decades of the 19th century were of people over the age of seventy.

Distribution of Surnames

Population figures suggest a certain amount of stability in both parishes in the 19th century. An analysis of surnames in the census returns from 1841 to 1901 was used to discover how many families were rooted in their village for at least 60 years. In the 1841 census for Kelling, there were 28 different surnames. From this list, 10 names did not appear in any subsequent return, but there were also 10 families still living in the parish in 1901, representing 36 per cent of the total. There were two Pell households and three each of Nurse and Duffield while Woodhouses had spread to six.

A similar analysis for Weybourne is distorted by the varying number of coastguards appointed to their posts for a limited period of service. However, if these are omitted from calculations, there were 42 surnames in 1841 and of these 19 did not appear again in any subsequent return. The 11 names still listed in 1901 represent 25 per cent of those appearing in the 1841 census. Of these, four families still occur just once but there were two households of Woods, Grouts and Dodys, three of Woodhouse and four of Otty while Nurses had six and Digbys eight.

Without further investigation it is not possible to assess the effects on these figures of the British tradition of wives taking their husbands' names but the results of this exercise seem to indicate that there was less mobility in Kelling than in Weybourne during this period. As the

two parishes are adjacent and so similar, it might be assumed that there had been considerable movement between the two. However, the 1851 census reveals that 56 per cent of the Kelling residents were born in that parish. Whilst the majority of the rest were from elsewhere in Norfolk, only two per cent of these declared Weybourne as their place of birth. In the census for the same year for Weybourne, 58 per cent were born in the parish, 33 per cent were from elsewhere in Norfolk, and only 0.7 per cent were from Kelling.

With the improvement of roads and transport during the following 50 years, an assumption might be justified that these two villages would have grown closer, both physically and socially, especially as since 1875, there had been a board school at Kelling which also served Weybourne and Salthouse. In the 1901 census, there was some suggestion that in Kelling at least, this was just beginning to happen. The number of residents born in that parish had fallen to 39 per cent, and of the rest 5 per cent had been born in Weybourne. However, in the census for that village, the percentage of people born in Kelling was almost the same low figure as 50 years earlier.

Perhaps it would be unwise to provide a concrete explanation for the apparent lack of interaction between the two parishes. Without further evidence, it is probably sufficient to reach a general conclusion that apart from marriage, or alternative employment, there was little necessity for the ordinary working man to leave his home to go and live in the next village which was within easy walking distance.

Agriculture

In a predominantly agricultural area like Kelling and Weybourne, the vast majority of the employed in this period laboured on the land. Before the national census, documentary evidence about this workforce is difficult to find. Earlier land surveys and tax assessments included details of only those who could afford to own or rent land. The limited information about the men and their families in the parish registers is only a fleeting glimpse into the lives of those who formed the majority of the parish populace. This is particularly true of men and women who always lived within the law and also managed to keep out of the workhouse.

Generally, farm servants who were paid by the year were in a better position than the labourers who could be hired by the week, or even for the day. The servants were usually young unmarried men who were boarded by the employer and often became part of the household. However, this method of maintaining a workforce was expensive and by the 19th century, as farmers' wives adopted the desire for more

privacy and personal space in the house, there were fewer servants and more non-residential labourers.

The living conditions of the labourers can only be a cause for speculation as the surviving flint and brick cottages in the villages are more likely to have been the homes of the wealthier residents. Nevertheless, using information for the second half of the 19th century, it is possible to discover the number of people occupying a single unit. The average household size in Kelling and Weybourne was about six to seven persons which was not particularly high for the period. However, there were also houses with ten or more occupants.

The plight of agricultural labourers and their actions against injustice have been well documented and recorded elsewhere. There are no records that either Kelling or Weybourne was greatly affected by the riots which erupted in Norfolk in 1816 and 1830. It is not possible to give a definite reason for the non-involvement of the villagers, especially as there were outbreaks in places as close as Briston and Holt.⁵ Perhaps the relatively isolated location of the parishes at that time cushioned them from too much outside influence. It is also possible that the farm workers were not so discontented with their lot that they were willing to risk upsetting the degree of stability they already enjoyed.

By the beginning of the 20th century, in both parishes there was a decline in the number of agricultural labourers. In Weybourne, this was partly offset by an increase of other related but more specialised jobs, such as teamsmen and gardeners. Horsemen in particular were regarded as more skilled than the general farm worker. There were already signs that a wider range of occupations was beginning to appear in that village, providing more openings in manufacturing, service and domestic occupations. This development was not happening to the same extent in Kelling, and the drop in the number of labourers might have been due to men taking employment, whether through choice or necessity, on the construction of the new railway.

Literacy

The differing range of occupations in the two villages might well have been ordained by the literacy levels of their inhabitants. Before the opening of the board school at Kelling, there are no formal records of the provision of education. However, it is possible to use the marriage registers to estimate the extent of literacy in both parishes. In the period 1811 to 1831, the number of Kelling males who were able to sign their names was 34 per cent of the total, as opposed to 39 per cent of the females. For the same period in Weybourne, figures are higher at 44 per cent of males and 43 per cent of females. In the

(K = Kelling, W = Weybourne)

Date Occupation	1851		1861		1871		1881		1891		1901	
	K	W	K	W	K	W	K	W	K	W	K	W
Agriculture												
Agricultural labourer	51	44	43	31	39	37	45	48	55	40	28	27
Cattle dealer		1										
Horse dealer												1
Cattleman											2	1
Farmer	7	8	4	4	3	2	2	4	4	3	5	2
Farm steward	1	2	3	2	1	3	2				1	
Gamekeeper		2	1	2		2	1			1		2
Horse teamsman				3								7
Market gardener									1		1	
Mole catcher	1				1		1		1			
Ploughman/teamster				5								
Rat catcher		1	1									
Shepherd	3	1	2		2	1	1	1	2	2	2	
Warrener	1									1		
Building/Construction												
Bricklayer				1						3	2	3
Carpenter/joiner	2	2	1	4	1	2		2	1	2	3	3
Contractor												1
Thatcher		1										
Domestic												
Coachman								1				2
Gardener	4		1	2	2	1	2	2	1	2	1	8
Groom		1	2		1	1				2		2
Servant	3			1		1				1		
Fishing												
Fish dealer							1					1
Fish dryer							1					
Fisherman		16		12		5		2		3	1	1
Independent Means/Land Owner/ Proprietor												
		1		1		3		3		4		2

Figure 5. Census returns: male occupations (A)

second period, 1842 to 1902, there were 48 per cent of Kelling males, and 61 per cent of females. The figures for Weybourne were considerably higher at 76 per cent of males, and 88 per cent of females. It is to be expected that the figures for the later period would have been much higher than those for the earlier years as children from both villages had been attending the same school. However, this fact does not explain the marked differences in the levels of literacy in the two parishes.

Millers

Amongst the various occupations in any community, one of the most important was without doubt that of the miller whose trade was often at the hub of economic activity. There was a post-mill built in Kelling by Edmund Nurse in about 1820, but earlier mills must have existed in the village, even though there is little evidence. The Nurse family, including six children and other relatives, emigrated to Australia in 1849, but the mill continued to be owned and worked by other members of the family, at least until the 1901

(K = Kelling, W = Weybourne)

Date Occupation	1851		1861		1871		1881		1891		1901	
	K	W	K	W	K	W	K	W	K	W	K	W
Manufacture/Service												
Baker								2		1		
Blacksmith		3		2						2		1
Brewer/maltster		2		1			1	2	2			
Brewer's drayman		1					2					
Cellarman	1											
Coalman				1					1			3
General dealer							1	1				
Innkeeper		1		2			1		2			1
Merchant's clerk											1	
Miller	2	4	2	1	1	1	2	1	2	3	1	3
Poultry dealer												2
Shoemaker	1			1		2		2		2	1	1
Shopkeeper (butcher/grocer)	1	1	1			1	1	1	1	4		3
Tailor	1	1		1								
Wheelwright							1					
Public/professional												
Army				1								1
Clergy	1			1			1	1		1	1	4
Coastguard		6		3			4		3		5	4
Parish clerk				1								
Sailor								1				
Schoolmaster								1		1		1
Solicitor's clerk												1
Transport												
Carter/waggoner		4		6		1	1		1		2	2
Railway labourer										1		6
Seaman				1								1
Miscellaneous												
General labourer	1									1	1	1
Gravel pit worker								1				1
Roadman												1

Figure 6. Census returns: male occupations (B)

census.⁶ In the Kelly's Directory for 1908 however, there is no mill listed, and Esther Nurse, wife of the deceased miller, is described only as a farmer.

The watermill at Weybourne has had a long and involved history of ownership, but it seems certain that there has been a mill on the present site since the 17th century. The mill was still in use when purchased by Samuel Nott from the Bolding family in 1900. The new owner removed the wheel and installed a turbine, but by the 1930s, the building was being used only as a

private residence, and all that remains today is the mill leet. The windmill in Weybourne has a much later history as this five-storey tower with a house attached was built in 1850. The mill ceased to operate in 1916 and four years later it underwent restoration that involved removing all the machinery except the wind shaft. At the same time, the post from a long defunct postmill was incorporated into the mill house. The structure has been a private residence for many years.

(K = Kelling, W = Weybourne)

Date Occupation	1851		1861		1871		1881		1891		1901	
	K	W	K	W	K	W	K	W	K	W	K	W
Agriculture												
Dairymaid	1		3	5								
Farmer												1
Fieldworker	1	5	3	5								
Wildfowler				1								
Domestic												
Caretaker												1
Charwoman	1		1	1		1						2
Companion						1						
Cook	1		2	1		1	1		1	2	2	3
Governess							1					1
Housekeeper	1		1	1	1	1	2		1	1	2	
Laundress	1	1					2				1	1
Nurse/midwife	1	2	2	2		2				1		
Nursemaid					1	1						
Servant	6	7	8	7	6	7	2	12	5	18	6	9
Manufacturing/service												
Baker								1				
Dressmaker	1	6	3	2		2	1	5		5	2	6
Innkeeper								1				
Shoe binder		1										
Shop keeper					1		1		1	1		1
Independent means	1	2		2	1	5		1		2	4	6
Schoolteacher			1	1		1	1		1	1		2

Figure 7. Census returns: female occupations**Maritime Occupations**

The proximity to the sea has always played an important part in the lives of both parishes, especially Weybourne where conditions are particularly suitable for launching boats. The 1851 census lists 16 fishermen, but this number had been reduced to 12 by 1861, and to 5 ten years later. From then on, there must have been a steady decline as in 1901, just one man remained in this occupation. The hard at Kelling was not a good place for boats and the 1901 census is the only one to record a fisherman and a fish dealer. Both men were retired Weybourne residents who appear to have moved to Kelling for family reasons.

There are many plausible reasons for the decline of the Weybourne fishing industry. As with other locations along the coast, such as Cley and Salthouse, natural events could have been responsible for changes that affected the

local populations of fish and shellfish. The latter had been the livelihood of Weybourne fishermen. A more likely explanation was the competition from Lower Sheringham which had begun to develop as a fishing harbour long before the town became a holiday resort.⁷ The railway with its centrally situated station, built in 1887, was invaluable for transporting the catch of the day, whereas in Weybourne opposition to the railway meant the station was not built until 1900, and even then at a location about one and a half miles from Weybourne Hope.

This part of the coast with its intermittent invasion threats, fishing and merchant shipping was considered important enough to have its own coastguard station, built on the shingle beach, with a boat kept under the look-out. In the period 1851 to 1901, the census returns record three to six men living there with their families. Fitting into village life could have been

Kelling 1881 - 1841

Total Marriages	38
Number of males signed	13
Number of females signed	15
Percentage literate: Male	34%
Female	39%

Weybourne 1811 - 1841

Total marriages	75
Number of males signed	33
Number of females signed	32
Percent literate: Male	44%
Female	43%

Kelling 1842 - 1902

Total Marriages	71
Number of males signed	34
Number of females signed	43
Percent literate: Male	48%
Female	61%

Weybourne 1842 - 1902

Total Marriages	80
Number of males signed	61
Number of females signed	71
Percent literate: Male	76%
Female	88%

Overall Literacy 1811 - 1902

Kelling	Male: 43%	Female: 53%	Weybourne	Male: 60%	Female: 68%
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Figure 8. Literacy rates adduced from ability to sign the marriage register.

a problem for them as not only was their appointment on a temporary basis, they were also 'foreigners' from far-away places such as Portsmouth and Cornwall. Eventually, the encroaching sea meant the beach cottages were too dangerous for occupation, and in about 1913, a new station, now used as holiday cottages, was built high on the cliffs.

Due to the dangers faced by shipping, the coastguards were on constant alert for wrecks which unfortunately had become a feature of local life in the 18th and later centuries. In her diary of 1789, Mary Hardy, the wife of William, a Letheringsett farmer, records going to see various wrecks: 'November 1. Mr Hardy and I (plus two others) rode to Weyborn in our carriage to see ships stranded on the coast. Some extremely wrecked, others thrown onto the shore, not so much damaged.' William returned the next day to Weybourne to purchase a wreck for just over £9.⁸

One coastal activity, which involved both Kelling and Weybourne, was smuggling. The proximity of the coastguard station did not seem to be a deterrent to this common activity which was thought to have wide support in both villages. By the 19th century, smuggling had developed into a well-organised but dangerous

crime in which participants were often wounded. On one occasion on the 20th February 1833, the Weybourne Riding Officer was patrolling with his boatman close to Kelling beach when they came across a party of smugglers. They were able to alert the chief officer, Lieutenant Howes, who joined in the pursuit of a band of about 100 men and over 20 horses and carts. In the furore that followed, some of the men panicked and fled, but several were wounded. There is no indication in this account of how many men were from the two parishes, but there must also have been many others from elsewhere.⁹

Women's Work

An analysis of female employment for the same period reveals that after 1861, no field workers were recorded in either parish and even the dairy maids had disappeared. Perhaps some of these women found employment in the increasing opportunities in domestic service. In 1891, there were three times as many female servants in Weybourne as Kelling, working in the homes of farmers and shopkeepers, as well as for those of independent means. Another interesting observation is the increase in the number of dressmakers in Weybourne which seems to sug-



Photograph of Weybourne Street, probably taken in the 1870s by W J J Bolding, a pioneer photographer who lived in Weybourne. Photos courtesy of Richard Jefferson.

gest a village society in which there were enough women who could afford to pay others to make clothes for them and their families. Perhaps this new pattern of employment, although then still very much at its embryonic stage, might be indicative of the way the two parishes might evolve in the early 20th century.

Instruments of Change

Railways

It was more or less inevitable that a railway should eventually be proposed for the North Norfolk coastal region.¹⁰ When the idea was first mooted in 1880, there was opposition from the local landowners. Mr Henry Upcher of Sheringham Park was not in favour of the railway as he felt it would not be of any benefit to Sheringham. More importantly, the scheduled line was planned to cut through the prettiest part of his estate and spoil the sea view.

However, once the Squire discovered that the railway would not after all be seen from the house, and that he would gain financially from the sale of his land, Mr Upcher withdrew his

objections. William Bolding did not seem particularly interested in the profit to be gained from the sale of his land and possibly did not relish the thought of attracting too many visitors or turning the village into an embryonic holiday resort. As the Boldings were so content with their home and situation, they were not likely to support any scheme that would disrupt the parish.

The railway line, which was eventually opened in 1887, was part of the Eastern and Midland connection between Sheringham and Melton Constable. The railway station which was built a mile from the centre of Weybourne in 1900 no doubt improved communication but did not turn the village into a seaside town. The original plan to construct a branch line from just south of Kelling to the western side of Blakeney harbour was abandoned in 1888. This was also the fate of a rather tentatively proposed tramway which would run from Dead Man's Hill, just west of Sheringham, passing through Weybourne, Salthouse and Cley before terminating at Blakeney.

There was one company however, which saw



Another image from the Bolding collection, a wonderfully atmospheric shot depicting a post mill and cottages. There was an article on the man and his work in the Glaven Historian 6

the developing towns of Sheringham and Cromer as models for a futuristic Weybourne. The outcome was a five-storied black and white building, constructed on the opposite side of the road from Weybourne station.¹¹ Although it was an impressive edifice, the Springs Hotel never attracted sufficient custom to make the business viable. After failing as a superior hotel therefore, the Springs faced a chequered future as a holiday park, a private club, and eventually a home for handicapped persons. During the First World War, the building was requisitioned as a military hospital. In 1939 however, it was decided that not only was the construction unstable, having been built on a sandy site, but it was also a conspicuous landmark for incoming enemy aircraft, and the building was demolished.

The company responsible for the Springs Hotel was the North Norfolk Hotels and Catering Company and one of the directors was Sir William Crundall, a speculative entrepreneur who had more than a hotel in mind for Weybourne. There is a document in existence, dated circa 1905, which shows an illustrated

plan for two rows of about twenty individually designed detached houses to be built just beyond the hotel.¹² If this scheme had materialised, Weybourne might have had an Edwardian housing estate on its outskirts. Perhaps Crundall's company faced opposition from prominent residents, or decided there was insufficient finance for such an ambitious project.

Unlike Weybourne, the arrival of the railway had little effect on Kelling as the line did not pass close enough to make possible the building of a station to serve the village. It is recorded in the Kelling Vestry Minute Book for 1887 that it was resolved that payment received from the sale of land for the railway should be invested in British Consols, the interest accruing being distributed annually in coals to the inhabitants having 'rights on the Fuel Allotment'. By the time of the the 1901 census, the construction and maintenance of the line had brought alternative employment to working on the land for at least six Kelling men.

Two World Wars

The First World War affected the two parishes in

different ways. It seems incredible that there is no mention of the outbreak of war in the Kelling School log book for 1914. In fact, the only entry referring to the hostilities is for the 25th February 1916 when during one morning the Ambulance Section of the 29th Division Battalion arrived at the school. The Headmaster was told that his school had been selected as a 'Dressing Station' and all the children had to be sent home. The Master's reaction was to send a telegram to the Secretary of the Education Committee in which he acquainted him with what had happened. This must have had the desired affect as by 3rd March the Ambulance Section had vacated the school and all returned to normal.¹³

Many families in both villages were to suffer personal loss as some of their menfolk went away to fight for their country and did not return. At Weybourne, the reality of war was brought even closer as once again there was fear of invasion threatening the north Norfolk coast. Weybourne Hope was still considered the most likely place for the arrival of enemy ships and the area became a front-line defence zone with the billeting of troops and the building of pill-boxes, trenches and gun emplacements along the cliffs and inland. Small camps were established on Beach Road, some men were stationed in local houses and Rosedale Farm became the local military hospital. At this time, Mr Lane, a Director of Shell Oil was resident at Weybourne Hall and he played his part by providing a YMCA for the troops. He also kept villagers informed of the War's progress by attaching to his gatepost telegrams he had received from London. After the War, Mr Lane moved away and the Hall became a Hotel. Weybourne reverted to being a much quieter place.¹⁴

Unfortunately, for many residents, by 1939 the troops had returned in force as the village had been chosen by the War Office as the site for a heavy anti-aircraft gun practice camp, situated at the foot of Muckleburgh Hill. On the positive side, a certain amount of prosperity was brought to local businesses and during the war years good relationships developed between the occupants of the camp and the local people. However, this attitude of tolerance and goodwill was bound to deteriorate during peace-time. As the Camp was not closed until March 1959, Weybourne was destined to become a military village for many more years and was therefore a much less tranquil place than the adjacent Kelling.

'Open' and 'Close' Parishes

Definitions

The question now to be considered is whether or not there are adequate grounds for using the

terms 'open' and 'close' to describe the two parishes. Not surprisingly, an investigation has revealed that historians writing on the subject have tended to disagree on the distinguishing criteria to be used. However, in her book, 'English Local History – An Introduction', Kate Tiller suggests the following criteria:¹⁵

Open	Close
Large populations	Small populations
Rapid population increases	Slow population increases
Many small proprietors	Large estates
High poor rates	Low Poor Rates
Rural industries and craftsmen	Few industries or crafts
Shops and public houses plentiful	Few shops or pubs
Housing poor but plentiful	Housing in short supply
Non-conformity common	Strong Anglican control

Another author, Brian Holderness,¹⁶ placed great emphasis on the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834 and settlement patterns in the development of the characteristics of certain parishes, but Sarah Banks has refuted this interpretation as being exaggerated and misconceived.¹⁷ However, in an investigation of a cluster of parishes in 19th century Oxfordshire, Byung Khun Song successfully applied the affects of the Poor Law to distinguish two types of parish.¹⁸

In their endeavours to define 'open' and 'close' parishes, many historians seem to have confined their studies to the 19th century. Yet as the divergence between Kelling and Weybourne did not end with the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834, this must throw doubt on the theory that poor rates alone were responsible for creating 'open' and 'close' parishes. Furthermore many small villages were already displaying signs by 1834 of being 'open' or 'close'. Light might be shed on this problem by looking at how Kelling and Weybourne developed in the 20th century, and it is even worthwhile taking a look at the present-day communities.

Applying the most important distinguishing feature of land-ownership to the two parishes, Kelling has always been considered a manorial parish as there has been a lord resident in the Hall since the middle of the 17th century. The latest Lord of the Manor, the Deterding family, has occupied this role for over a hundred years, and still apparently owns most of the parish.

In Weybourne however, there has not been a manor house or a resident lord since medieval times. When Lord Walpole acquired the manor

in the 16th century, he remained an absentee lord. Unlike Kelling therefore, by the 19th century there were opportunities for ambitious Weybourne residents to purchase land as it became available. The Bolding family did so and whilst they adopted a proprietorial role in village affairs, they did not have the same restricting hold a resident lord might have commanded.

The size of populations is another distinguishing factor. There is no evidence that the lord at Kelling deliberately curtailed the number of inhabitants, although a lack of land for affordable housing may have had a strong effect. However, from 1821 there was a decline in the Kelling population, whilst Weybourne's population peaked in 1851 and continued to remain steady, despite a surge of epidemics in the early 1880s. Since the last published census of 1901, there has been a remarkable contrast in the population figures for the two parishes. Looking ahead to the latest figures available for comparison, in 2006 Kelling showed a fall of almost five per cent, whilst Weybourne had a gain of 45 per cent.¹⁹ Two of the main reasons for these statistics were probably the lack of affordable housing and employment opportunities in Kelling, unlike its neighbouring parish.

Throughout the 20th century Kelling remained firmly entrenched in the previous era. In contrast, Weybourne continued to expand, with an estate of local authority housing built in the years following the Second World War. As more land became available for building, private developments appeared in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The latest figures available for comparison, those for 2006, show that Kelling's population fell by almost five per cent through the twentieth century whilst Weybourne had a gain of 45 per cent.¹⁹ Two of the main reasons for these statistics were probably the lack of affordable housing and employment opportunities in Kelling, unlike its neighbouring parish. It is interesting that the school at Kelling is now populated mainly by Weybourne children with a small number from Salthouse and elsewhere. There are presently no Kelling children on the register.

The failure of Kelling to develop is also reflected in the dearth of services provided for its inhabitants in the 20th century. Gradually, the shop, public house and Methodist Chapel all closed, leaving only the church and Reading Room. Some farms and outbuildings have been converted into residences or holiday cottages and those seeking a quiet retirement still regard Kelling as an ideal country retreat. Weybourne, whilst avoiding becoming a major holiday resort, has maintained the facilities required for a lively residential village.

It has not been possible in this study to apply some of the criteria for distinguishing

between 'open' and 'close' parishes. For example, some landlords 'closed' their villages to new settlers to prevent the possibility of increasing the burden on the rest of the community. Similarly, there is no support in this case for the theory that living conditions and moral behaviour tended to be inferior in an 'open' parish. Nevertheless, despite the paucity of data there is still sufficient evidence to justify classifying Weybourne and Kelling as respectively 'open' and 'close'.

Kelling, with its resident land-owning lord, static population and lack of property development, has every sign of being a 'close' parish. It seems likely that over the centuries, the lord and rector were comfortable in their situations and so were not particularly interested in change or development disrupting their domain. Maintaining the essential balance between undue progression and stagnation seemed to become a priority which still survives in the present community. Weybourne's diverse land ownership, with housing and services necessary for its expanding population and increasing number of visitors, are surely features of an 'open' parish.

Conclusion

A comparative study of these two communities has revealed two distinctly different villages, made even more intriguing by their adjacent location on the North Norfolk coast. Even though Weybourne consistently had a higher population than Kelling throughout the 19th century, there was little demographic difference between the two parishes until the beginning of the 20th century. Outside influences affected both villages but there were indications that the villages were becoming less similar as time progressed.

Kelly's Directory for 1908 suggests that Kelling had reached a static state of development whereas Weybourne had a wider range of occupations and commercial businesses. In the later years of the 19th century, there had been a spate of house building in Weybourne. Some of this might have been to restore derelict properties, but William Bolding was also responsible for erecting cottages for the workers on his land and at the family brewery. Any building taking place in Kelling was on a much smaller scale, probably just replacing individual houses as deemed necessary. This contrasting pattern of quiescence and progression continued throughout the 20th century, with Kelling showing little growth, compared with the gently expanding Weybourne.

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Abbreviations

NRO: Norfolk Record Office.

NRS: Norfolk Records Society.

Back Pages



Wall Panels - an update: Salthouse Church

In an earlier issue of *The Glaven Historian*¹ the question was posed whether there were any carved wall panels in local churches similar to those found in Cockthorpe Church. There the wall panels fill the space between the top of the wall and the roof rafters, and appeared to be attached to vertical posts or 'ashlar pieces'. The interesting feature at Cockthorpe is that the wall panels are composed of a series of square elements each carved into a variety of complex foils. Indeed the range of shapes leaves an 'abiding impression ...that they were created by a carpenter, even an apprentice, using the opportunity to explore and exhibit his skills and ideas'.

Recently a similar frieze of panels has been found in Salthouse Church on both the north and south sides of the nave. They are probably contemporaneous with those at Cockthorpe and the date of 1503 for completion of the Church² suggests they date from the late 15th century or very early 16th.

In Salthouse, however, all the individual elements of the frieze are similar, consisting of a complex quatrefoil with a shield in a central position (see photograph). They are in remarkably fine condition, although there are signs that they have been repaired in the past. There is no visible evidence that they were ever painted, but the presence of white marks in nail holes and in areas where there is damage suggests that the frieze was at some stage lime-washed and subsequently cleaned.

1. Peake, J Carved Roof Panels at All Saints, Cockthorpe. *The Glaven Historian* No. 9 2006
2. Pevsner, N and Wilson, J Norfolk 1: Norwich and North-East. In *The Buildings of England*. 2nd edition 1997

John Peake

Carved wall panel in the roof of Salthouse church. Photo: John Peake.

More from the School Registers

The Registers of Gresham's School, Holt, were kept rather indifferently in the earlier years from 1555, indeed if at all during some periods. Their history was briefly outlined in the *Glaven Historian* No.9, when a list of names was published for the boys attending from Cley. Nonetheless, despite their limitations, the published Registers provide an invaluable insight into the higher education of the sons of local families and are an additional source of information for family historians¹.

Since that time, the final resting place of Thomas Porter Jackson has been located in a most unlikely location and the information passed to the History Centre. An eagle-eyed holidaymaker spotted the gravestone in the churchyard of Old Town Church, St. Mary's, on the Scilly Isles where the inscription reads as follows:

*This stone is erected by
A bereaved and unhappy mother
To the memory of her son
Captain Thoss Jackson
Of Cley, Norfolk
He died of cholera, off this Port
July 15th 1849
In the 32nd year of his life.*

Perhaps one of our readers will now be able to provide the name of the vessel and the fate of the rest of the crew!

The following selection of names lists the boys attending Gresham School from Blakeney, between the years 1628 and 1900. The same format is used with the year of entry in bold followed by the year of birth in brackets (if known), name of parent(s) and an occupation of the

father when recorded. The further education and or career of the student follows in italics.

1628 John Springall (1618) son of Robert Springall, Gent of Blakeney. Caius Coll. B.A. 1637.

1633 Russell, John (1622) son of Robert Russell, Woollen Draper of Blakeney. Caius Coll, Gray's Inn 1640.

1669 Springall, Thomas (1656) son of John Springall, Gent of Blakeney. Caius Coll. BA 1678. Rector of Strumpshaw and Bradeston 1681-1718.

1675 Springold, Richard (1663) son of John Springold, Gent of Blakeney. Caius Coll. BA 1686. Curate of Wells. Vicar of Holkham. M. Mary Clarke of Lynn. M.I. at St Mary, Lynn.

1698 Springold, John (1688) son of John Springold Gent of Blakeney. Caius Coll. BA 1708. Curate of Sheringham 1716. Rector of Wiveton 1717-1758. Vicar of Langham 1727-1758.

1810 Johnson, John (1801) son of John and Ann Johnson of Blakeney. For the Sea, left 1813

1811 Johnson, Joshua (1801) son of John and Ann Johnson of Blakeney, Malster. Left 1813

1812 Newton, Richard (1805) son of Robert and Ann Newton of Blakeney. Left 1824 (see later).

1812 Thompson, James (1804) son of John and Sarah Thompsom, Mariner. Left 1812.

1812 Thompson, William (1802) son of John and Sarah Thompson, Mariner. Left 1812.

1823 Vince, Robert (1815) son of Robert and Susanna Vince. Left 1825.

1824 Bowles, John (1811) son of John and Mary Bowles. Left 1825.

1824 Wells, Daniel (1813) son of Mathew and Ann Wells. Left 1827.

1826 Wells, George (1818) son of Matthew and Ann Wells. Left 1832.

1829 Smith, Henry (1821) son of Henry Smith. Left 1831.

1830 Hurrell, John Edward son of John and Rachel Hurrell. Left 1833.

1831 Custance, Thomas William (1821) son of

Doyle and Mary Ann Custance. Left 1831.

1832 Clitheroe, James (1821) son of John and Sarah Clitheroe. Left 1834.

1856 Ellis, Charles Buck (1845) son of Henry and Mary Ellis. Left 1857.

1868 Pye, Frank (1855) son of John and Sarah Pye, Innkeeper. Draper's Assistant. Left 1872.

1876 Pond, Arthur son of William and Sarah Pond, Ironmonger. Left 1877.

1878 Basham, William Archibald son of Luke Basham, Saddler of Holt and Maria Pleasance Starling of Blakeney. Civil Srvant, OBE. Left 1884.

1879 Pond, Morgan Markby (1866) son of William and Sarah Pond, Ironmonger. Left 1880.

1900 Hodges, Frederick Charles (1886) son of F Hodges. Left 1903.

Richard Newton was a pupil at Gresham School for 12 years, a "distinguished Classical and Hebrew scholar" according to Walton N Dew when he compiled *The Monumental Inscriptions in The Hundred of Holt*, (edited by W Rye and published 1885). Richard Newton's subsequent career can be followed through the census from 1841 till 1871, first as a schoolmaster living in Westgate Street, Blakeney where there are six pupils boarding with him and his wife, then on to New Street, Holt where he continues to be described as schoolmaster.

Richard Newton was buried in the Churchyard of Holt without a burial stone, according to his own desire. Again this is information provided by Walton Newton Dew whose own middle name reveals the connection and why he is party to this information. Richard Newton was the brother of Walton's maternal grandmother and it was she who raised Walton Dew when he was orphaned by the untimely deaths of his parents.

1. Linnell, C L S and Douglas, A B *History and Register of Gresham's School 1555-1955*, 1955

Pamela Peake

Quaint Old Cley Customs

Anyone looking at the operations of the officers of Cley Customs House may marvel at some of the quaint titles they were given. What for instance did a Landwaiter do, apart from bringing the Comptroller his lunchtime gin-and-tonic? Or a Tide Surveyor? Fortunately the panjandrums at head office were in the habit of sending periodic letters of instruction in addition to the usual correspondence about seizures and rewards, and these were faithfully recorded in the letters books kept at the Customs House and now viewable at the National Archive. Here is a typical sample, received at Clay [sic] on the 21st July 1764.¹ It is not a full job description so much as a remonstrance to carry out one's duties in a particular way – their way. An interesting document none-the-less.

Gentlemen

Having informed ourselves as the manner in which the business of this port has been carried on We find it necessary to leave the following instructions for the future guidance of yourselves and other officers therein, which are to be enter'd in your Book of Orders & punctually obey'd, untill the Commissioners see cause to change or annull the same, and that you are to give copys of so much thereof to the other Officers, as respectively relate to them. We are Gentlemen your most

Humble Servants

H Gibbs

I Shering

There followed instructions for the Collector & Comptroller:

1 That you are from henceforward to keep Cash Books agreeable to the form hereto annexed, and books of such Stranded Goods as are sold Duty Free for payment of Salvage. The Collector as Customer[?] is likewise to keep a Book of Entrys of Ships & Vessels taking in goods for Foreign Parts & as Collector a Book of the Orders & Directions sent to the Officers on the Coast.

2 That all orders & opinions of what kind soever received by you from the Board, be constantly enterd as they are received, & that it may appear that the Commissioners Orders have been duly communicated to the respective Officers to whom they relate you are to note in the margin of the said book the Time when & to whom Copies thereof have been deliverd.

For the Land Surveyor and Deputy Searcher (Daniel Clarke, since 1755) and Landwaiters (Matthew Long and James Jewell, both of whom also signed as Coastwaiters):

3 That in order to prevent the Crown from being put to an unnecessary expence attending the Shipping of Corn or Grain for Exportation, as well as for the prevention of Frauds, between this place & the Pitt you are not to measure any Corn or Grain entitled to a Bounty into any Boat or Lighter, but all such Corn or Grain must for the future be measured at the Ship or Vessel taking the same for Parts beyond the Seas, and that with respect to malt you are to take care and see the same duly measured & actually shipt Noting in your Books the time when measured and when shipt & likewise the time of signing the Debentures.

For the Coastwaiters:

4 That you are constantly to attend the Landing of all Goods brought Coastwise & likewise to reweigh all Tobacco & Snuff & regauge all Brandy, Rum, Geneva, Wine & other Liquors and also carefully examine the different packagees thereof & see whether they correspond with the Suffrance granted for Landing the same and those accompanying the Cockett which are to be annexd thereto, and you are to Enter the Suffrance for Landing into proper Books, which will be deliverd to you for that purpose by the Collector & Comptroller.

For the Tidesurveyor (the ubiquitous Matt Long again):

5 That upon rumaging any Ship or Vessell coming from Foreign parts, you to seize and secure in His Majesties Ware House all prohibited Goods Rum, Brandy, Geneva, or Wine except a reasonable quantity to the Captain for the use of the Ships Company during the time they are unloading her cargo, & agreeable to the Commissioners repeated Orders. You are to leave no more stores than will amount to Twenty Shilling [increased to forty shillings from 1770] in Customs and Excise as clearing stores to the masters of such ships or vessells, and you are for the future to certifie in the Tidesmans Book the particular Stores left on board for the ships use, together with the Number and Quality of the ships or vessells Sails, which is to be signed by you and the Tidesman who kept the Ships Book and who is to be present with the Tidesurveyor in rumaging the Captains Cabbins & every other part of the ship or vessell & a copy thereof is to be sent to the Collector & Comptroller for their approval or disallowance.

6 That you keep a Boarding Book of the arrival & sailing of all ships & vessells to and from this Port in the form hereto annex'd, & also a Book of the absent Tidesmen, & the cause thereof, and that at the time any Tidesman are placed on Board any ship or vessel you are to set the

Watch, & give it in strict Charge to them not to fail relieving each other every Four Hours that in case any Fraud should be committed it may be known to whose neglect the same is to be imputed, taking care to note in your said Book which of the Tidesmen took the first watch.

Quite what constituted a 'reasonable quantity' for the Captain's hooch is a matter of conjecture. What is sure is that underlings were to be kept under the cosh and woebetide any Tidesman who was caught letting something "slip by". The instruction to the Coal Meters was as follows:

7 That the present practice of Suffering Coals and Cynders to be unshipped into Lighters at the Pitt, & not measuring them till they be brought to the Key [sic] (where they sometimes remain unmeasured several days) being liable to frauds and abuses to the prejudice of the Revenue & it being a Custom not to tally anny od Bushels under a quarter you are not to suffer for the time to come any Coals or Cynders to be put out of any vessel before the same has been actually measured by you taking care to score every Bushel of Coals or Basket of Cynders into your Books as they are put over the side & Tally at Nine. & the Tidesurveyor is frequently to visit them when at work, & to note such visits in their Books, putting the initial letters of his Name thereto, & in case any of them make use of Chalk, paper or Tally Boards he is to acquaint the Collector & Comptroller therewith who will take proper measures for the service.

This clause, which was eventually recinded in 1768, was signed by the Coal Meters Francis Starling, John Hipkins, Richard Girdlestone and Thomas Otty, in a good steady hand, and in a very shaky hand (implying that signing their names might have been close to the limit of their literacy) by Robert Pilch and Robert Brown, though to be fair to Pilch old age may have been a factor as he was first sworn-in as a Customs Officer at Cley in April 1732, when he signed with an X.

John Hipkins had been sworn-in in 1762, at which time he was 40 years old. In common with all other Coal Meters he had to find securities of £200. Otty and Starling had been promoted to Coal Meters in 1759, while Richard Girdlestone was promoted to Deputy Searcher in 1765. Other staff of whom we know something at this time include Thomas Wortley, Comptroller from at least 1752 to his death in 1768, and Peter Coble who was Collector from at least 1753.

While the Customs Officers seem to have been working under what seems to us today as a rather harsh regime, there was apparently a

carrot as well as the stick. Rewards were payable for goods successfully confiscated – this often encouraged an overzealous approach to supposed infringement that then had to be revoked later, and the goods returned to the disgruntled Captain. There was also a commission payable on coal traffic: when in 1768 Luke Vernon succeeded Thomas Wortley as Comptroller of the Coal Duties his salary was £35 per annum plus coal poundage.²

Other hints of pay scales offered by the Customs records include the £40 a year payable to John Fearnby when he was appointed 'Sitter in the Boat and to act as Tidesurveyor and Landwaiter in the place of John Boyles, deceased', in October 1759. Then there was the extra allowance for his horse received by Daniel Clarke.

This is just a taste of the juicy information available in the Customs records.

- 1 National Archives ref Cust96/155
- 2 National Archives ref Cust96/156

Richard Kelham

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