

EH9 9265

LOCATION: MOUNT BURES, ESSEX.

Field to south west of Bures Mill, with the River Stour forming the northern boundary, and the B1508 the south west boundary. North of Brook House Farm, Centred on NGR TL909333

Background

The 1876 -1887 County Series (Essex) OS map and current editions of OS maps show a curved boundary feature subdividing the area into two fields. This boundary feature, which follows the 20m contour, takes the form of a hedge and ditch. The land to the north is permanent pasture/grazing land. The land to the south (outlined in green in Figures 1 and 2) was in arable use until 2012 but is now fenced pasture/grazing land.

The river that forms the northern boundary has been realigned and engineered to power Bures Mill, which is situated on the other side of the river immediately to the north. The Cambridge Brook runs down the western boundary before joining the Stour to the north west. The B1058 forms the southern boundary.



Figure 1: Ordnance Survey County Series Essex 1876

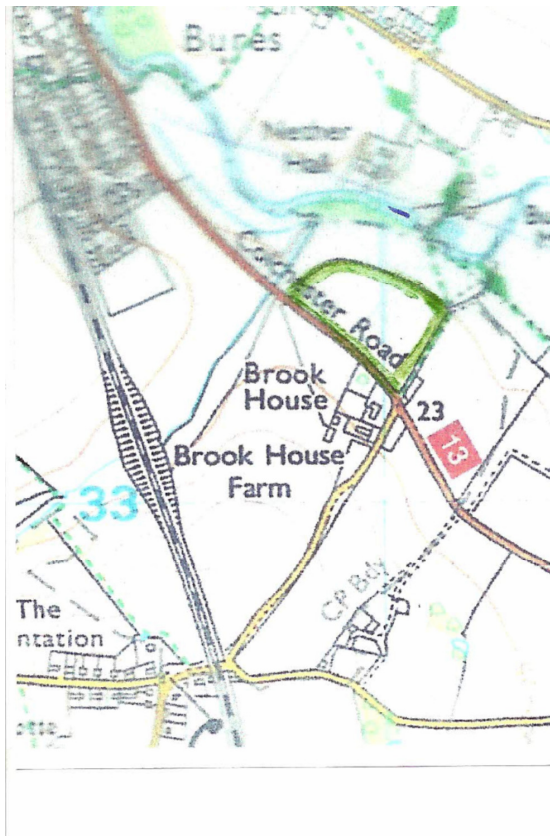


Figure 2: Ordnance Survey Explorer 196

Previous Surveys

As a result of aerial photographs taken between 1960 and 1980 (which are listed in the References and Bibliography section accompanying these reports) the cropmarks in these fields have been recorded on EHER 9265 by Essex County Council (unlockingessex.essexcc.gov.uk); by Historic England (pastscape.org.uk) as Monuments 1339759 and 384760; and, as shown in Figure 3, on the National Mapping Programme (NMP) (Ingle, Strachan, Tyler and Saunders).

No excavations or finds are recorded on SEAX, however an oval outline in the crop and two Neolithic flint finds from this site are referred to in I Mc Master's 'The Year of the Drought' (CAG Bulletin 20; pgs 15 – 19). The Colchester Archaeological Trust carried out a watching brief in 1994 which is recorded in Essex Archaeology and History (Volume 25; pg 253)

Analysis of the cropmarks

(shown in red as 'a' and 'b' on Fig 3)

a: a linear right-angled mark with slightly rounded corners is situated immediately to the south of the ditch in the NE corner of southern field.

It has the appearance of part of a rectangular enclosure, or possibly a building, its southern side which is approximately 35 – 40 metres long, has been bisected by eastern end of the ditch which runs E-W across it.

No marks to the north of the ditch appear in the aerial photos so if the marks to the south are part of an enclosure it is not possible to know its size. This cropmark is on a similar alignment to a ring ditch complex to the south east, and those in Cowlins field. It lies at the end of a straight trackway (running NE SW) which is a continuation of the road from the church and mound at Mount Bures. A number of other features join the trackway where it meets the cropmark including three boundary features and two sections of a public footpath which changes direction at this point. This could indicate that at some time the feature was a focal point of some kind.

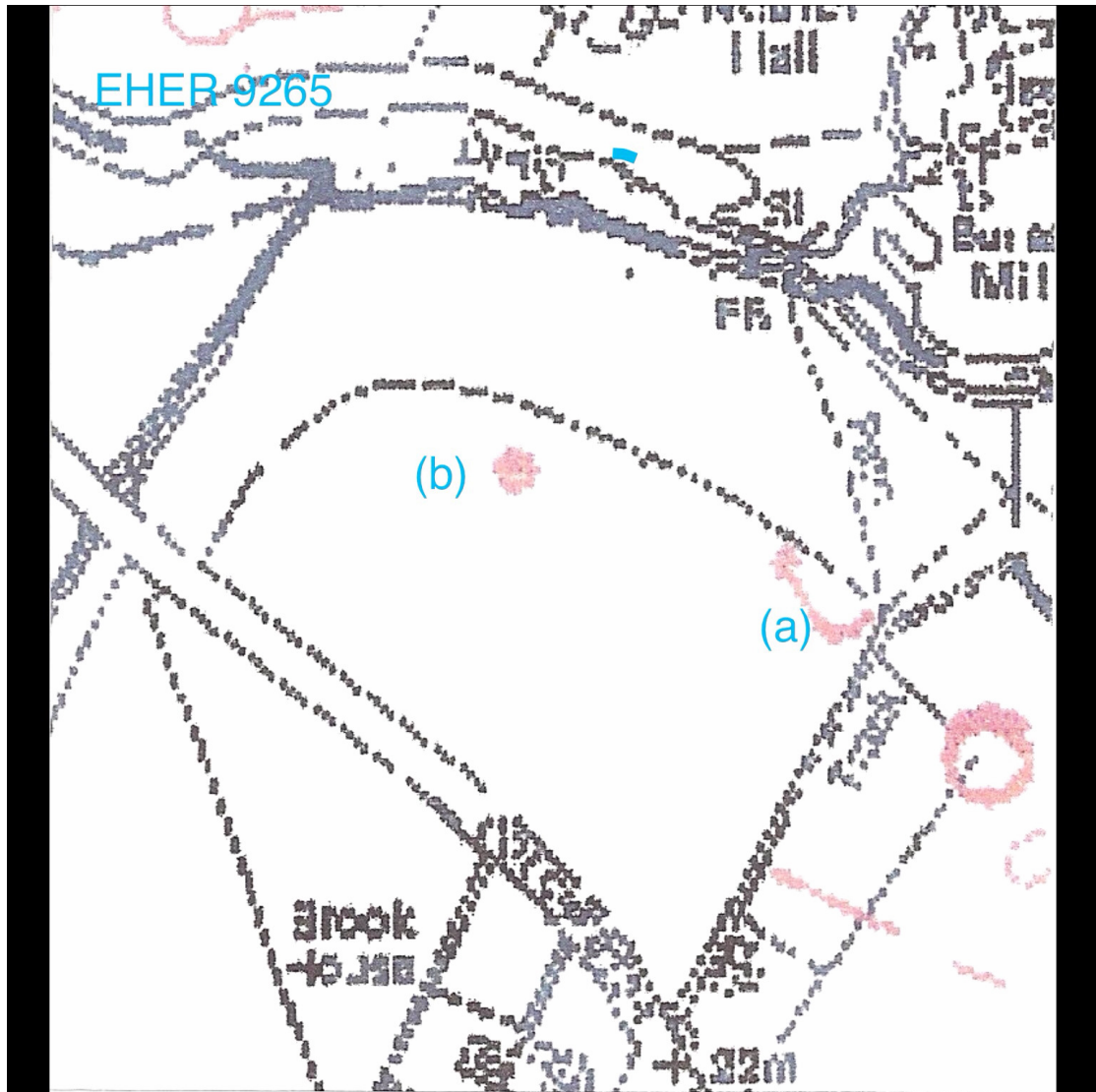


Figure 3 Copyright Historic England and Essex County Council

b) a small ring shaped mark. As shown in the aerial photograph below, the ditch forming the boundary to its north and west appears to respect this circular monument, possibly inferring that it was once visible at ground level.



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Current Status

At the time of writing (January 2017) the land remains as permanent pasture.