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### A BILL FOR PILOTING THE MARY ROSE OUT OF HARWICH

R.H. Farrands

The combination of Maritime England Year, the raising of the Mary Rose and a personal interest in pilotage suggested that a short note on the activities of one, John Woodlas, might be appropriate. The subject of interest is a pilotage bill setting out the services of John Woodlas, Harwich Pilot, in conducting the Mary Rose and the Libbeck. The original bill is contained in the Stowe MS at the British Museum but the Harwich Muniments now resting at the Harwich Guildhall contain a copy transcribed some years ago by Alderman Wever as then Borough Archivist.

It may be remembered that the Mary Rose was built as a 4 masted 600 ton carrack in the years 1509-10 at Portsmouth and named after Henry VIII's favourite sister Mary Tudor, the Tudor Rose. During 1511-13, the Mary Rose became the fleet flagship of Sir Edward Howard and was involved in the defeat of the French Admiral's Grand Luise off Brest in 1512. The Mary Rose's crew consisted of 120 mariners, 251 soldiers, 20 gunners, 2 pilots, 5 trumpeters and 35 servants.

The pilotage bill of John Woodlas refers to the service of taking the Mary Rose out of Harwich across the Naze but having to return due to a change of orders. Subsequently the Mary Rose sailed again, this time leaving by the Slade or Sledway the main approach channel to Harwich. The orders were to rendezvous with Henry VIII returning from France no doubt reviewing his conquests there of the previous year. The next movement was to leave the Downs off the Kent coast and to enter the Thames through the Black Deeps

Channel. After a stay at Blackwall John Woodlas piloted the Mary Rose round to Portsmouth where he left the ship and returned to London. Further pilotage services were rendered in the case of the Libbeck.

The pilotage bill amounted to some 20 marks which was £13.6s.8d. It would be an interesting exercise to obtain the gross and net tonnages together with the ships' draughts and work out the present day costs of such pilotage services.

A footnote by Wolsey advises the Admiralty that they must pay the bill. Wolsey signs himself as T. Lincoln having just been consecrated as Bishop of Lincoln on March 26th. This involved exchanging his previous post as King's Almoner with that of a bishopric but still maintaining his grip on state affairs.

John Woodlas acknowledges receipt of payment on 2nd May 1514.

In 1536 the Mary Rose was rebuilt and her tonnage increased to 700 and as is well known she sank in the Solent on July 19th 1545 in full view of Henry VIII.

### Transcription of wording of pilotage bill of John Woodlas

Please it your good Lordships to understand that I John Woodlas of Harwich has given his attendance upon the conveying of the King's ships as hereafter ensueth.

First the said John conveyed the Maryrose out of Harwich Haven over a danger in the sea called the Naze and incontinent after countermanded to conduct and bring the same ship over again into Harwich haven and within five days was commanded to conduct and convey the same ship out of the said haven through a place in the sea called the Slade to meet with the King's grace coming from Calais ward and so did. And thence incontinent after conveyed her out of the Downs through the Black Deeps into Thames which was in the whole by the space of 3 three weeks and 3 men at his charge with his boat by the same space.

Item the said John Woodlas received the said Maryrose now last at Blackwall and conducted and brought the same within the haven of Portsmouth and then returned himself to London by land.

Item then incontinent was commanded by his Lordships to go unto the North Foreland to give attendance upon the King's ship called the Libbeck and so conveyed the same unto London and by force of weather a storm put her to the camber and there she came to an anchor and as soon as I heard thereof took my boat and went thither and before my coming she made sail and went to Portsmouth which attendance given unto these said last journeys has been since the first beginning of Lent past.

In consideration whereof it may please your same good Lordships to allow unto him his reasonable costs and allowances for the same.

And besides all this I have lost in Bow Irons in the Black Deeps and iron chains which were not possible to be lost by tempest of weather which amounts to the sum of £4.

-----

Fellow Mr Daunce you must pay Woodlas for conveyance of the King's ships as is before expressed through the Black Deeps and other places 20 marks.

T. Lincoln

-----

Received by me John Woodlas of Sir John Daunce Knight by the King's commandment 20 marks sterling for the conveyance of the King's ships through the Black Deeps as is within expressed the second day of May anno sexto R Henry 8th.

per me John Woodlas

I beseech it yo<sup>r</sup> good lordshipes to understande that I have reciev'd of Governor  
some goodly attendances upon the continuance of the Kinge's Shipps at  
Suffolke

ffirst the said lordshipes the mayestie out of Governor's service and  
summe in the for saided the make and maintenance of continuance  
to conduct and buynt the same shipps and regars into Governor's house  
and so on, doo thus was commended to conduct and continue the said  
out of the said house to a place in the for called the place  
to into the for by waye grace cominge from the said ward and so  
and into the said maintenance of the said house out of the service  
to a place in the for called the place and so on, doo thus was  
of my wille and my mind at the house to the said house

And the said lordshipes desired the said man to have left it  
a blacke wale and conduct and buynt the same shipps and regars  
of portsmouth and so on, doo thus was commended to conduct and  
continue the said house out of the service to a place in the for  
called the place and so on, doo thus was

And the said maintenance was commended by yo<sup>r</sup> lordshipes to go into  
the northward to give attendances upon the Kinge's Shipps called  
the libbet and so to a certain place in the for called the place  
and so on, doo thus was commended to conduct and continue the  
said house out of the service to a place in the for called the place  
and so on, doo thus was

In consideration whereof it must please yo<sup>r</sup> good lordshipes to  
allowe the said man his reasonable cost and allowance for the same

And besides all that I have said in the said house in the said house  
and I have desired that the said man should be left by the  
of wille to the said man to the said house

It is to be desired that yo<sup>r</sup> grace should be pleased to  
of the Kinge's Shipps and so on, doo thus was commended to  
conduct and continue the said house out of the service to a  
place in the for called the place and so on, doo thus was

T. Inroth

*Handwritten notes in cursive script, likely a field sketch or preliminary report, mentioning 'The first report on the middle Field site (1) described the discovery and excavation of an Iron Age ditch which appeared to follow the line of a faint crop mark on an aerial photograph taken by Mrs McMaster. The site is of special interest because it is near to the Welwyn-type Iron Age burial vault excavated in 1849.'*

### **IRON AGE DITCHES AT MOUNT BURES - Second Report**

I. McMaster and A.J. Fawn

The first report on the middle Field site (1) described the discovery and excavation of an Iron Age ditch which appeared to follow the line of a faint crop mark on an aerial photograph taken by Mrs McMaster. The site is of special interest because it is near to the Welwyn-type Iron Age burial vault excavated in 1849.

This second report gives further details of the six seasons' work and, in particular, of the last two seasons' activities. Further excavation on the present scale is not envisaged because the site should be stripped over a large area, which is not compatible with its agricultural use and the Group's resources. However, as will be seen later, other methods of investigation may yield some more information without much effort.

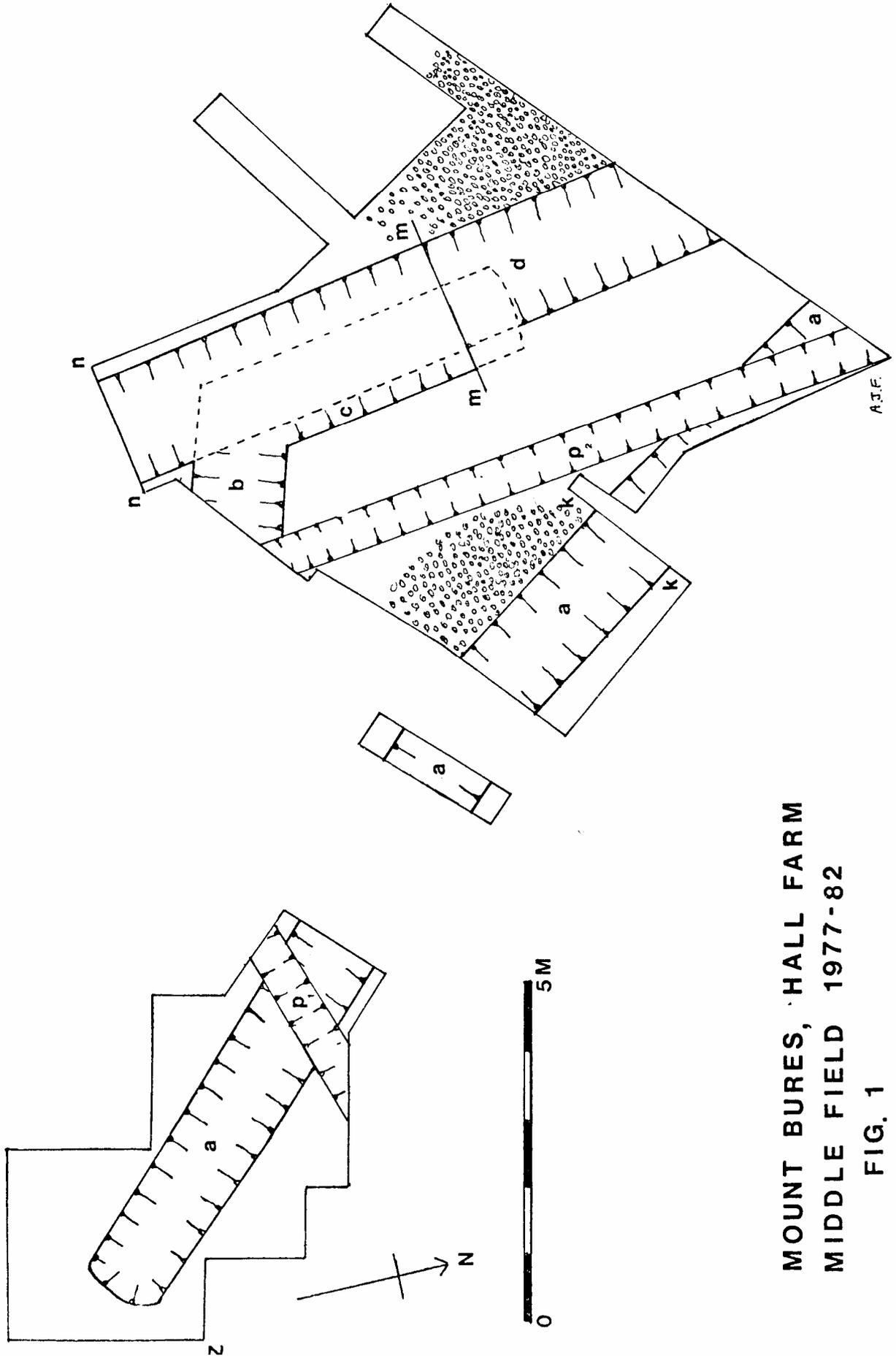
#### Description of the Excavation

Figure 1 shows the plan. The discovery of a ditch near its south-eastern terminus and the tracing of it north-westwards by augering and excavation have already been described. The length excavated was cut by two 19th century field drain ditches  $p_1$  and  $p_2$ . As mentioned in the first report the line of this ditch was thought to continue straight on north-westwards from the faint image on the aerial photograph but, as will be seen later, this supposition must now be considered doubtful.

The first report also mentioned the finding of a second ditch (b in figure 1) by trenching through and beyond a layer of flints to the south-west of ditch a. Further excavation to the south-west of ditch a, revealed two more ditches, c and d, running parallel and cut into each other. The pottery found in c and d was of the same period as that found in a and b. Ditch b was found not to be parallel to ditch a as stated in the first report and therefore the possibility that they and the flint layer formed part of a trackway system must be rejected. A second layer of flints was found immediately to the south-west of ditch d, but this too did not appear to form part of a trackway. Trenching of both layers showed that they were between 10 and 15cms, thick, just below the modern plough soil, devoid of archaeological material and limited in extent, as shown in Figure 1. It was assumed that they were natural.

Figure 2 shows sections of ditches a, c and d as indicated by kk, mm and nn on Figure 1. Ditch c was visible in section mm but not in nn. Since b and c were of similar depth and there was no sign of b continuing south-west across ditch d, it was assumed that b and c were in fact one ditch with an unusually sharp bend as shown.

The part of ditch d to the north of the baulk which provided section mm was excavated before the part to the south and therefore before the existence of ditch c was known. Ditch d showed in section in the north-west wall of the excavation but there was no sign of c. Neither was c observed in plan during the excavation of the northern part. Therefore either c turned slightly west to join d and the junction was not detected in excavation or, more likely, c rose upwards to the plough level just to the north of mm. In figure 1 this conjectured terminus is indicated by interrupted lines.



**MOUNT BURES, HALL FARM  
MIDDLE FIELD 1977-82  
FIG. 1**

The fill of the ditches was a grey loam at just below plough level becoming sandier and stonier with increasing depth. Considerable attention was paid to section mm and to the horizontal layers of the fills of ditches d and c during excavation in an attempt to determine visually whether c was cut into d or vice versa. The fills were so similar that neither their precedence nor their mutual boundaries could be determined. The two alternative boundaries are, therefore, shown in Figures 1 and 2 as interrupted lines. The width of ditch c, which was not measurable of course, was assumed to be the same as that of b.

A summary of the results of the excavation is that it revealed part of a system of ancient ditches with, as yet, no defined pattern or apparent function. It will now be discussed in relation to the area as a whole and some speculative interpretation offered.

### **Discussion of the Excavation**

As will be seen below, the pottery provides good evidence for the date of the ditches being between 40 BC to 60 AD. It seems unlikely that they were all in use at the same time as the pattern does not suggest any possible common use.

It is not possible to determine the relative dates of ditches a and d without excavating them a few metres further westward to their supposed convergence. Such an excavation might show whether the ditches join or whether they cross each other.

The following argument may be used to determine the relative dates of ditches b, c, and d. The evidence for b and c being one ditch b/c has already been presented and the unusually sharp bend between them remarked upon. A good reason for the sharp bend is that when b/c was dug, d was already in existence showing the diggers where to turn the corner. They then continued to dig c using d as a guide. Ditch d would have been well silted, otherwise it would not have been necessary to dig c. It is possible that there was some other feature parallel to d, such as a bank, hedge or fence to act as an additional guide, but no evidence for this was found.

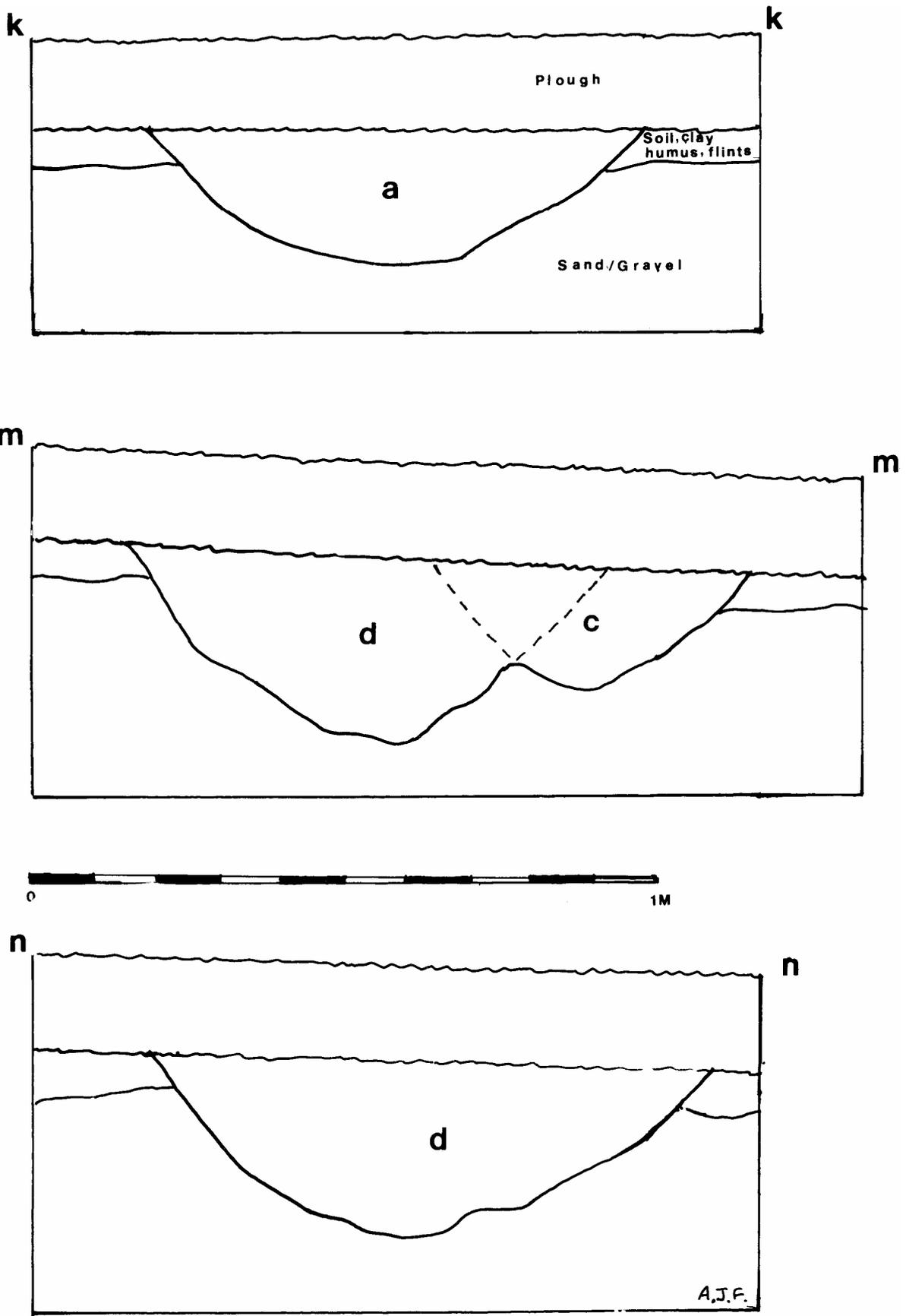
The next point to consider is the purpose of the ditches. They were not deep enough to be effective defences and no evidence for accompanying defensive structures was found. It seems more likely that they were for marking boundaries and/or for drainage.

As stated in the first report and shown in Figure 1, ditch a had an eastern terminus which being on a low area of the site may have tended to flood in wet weather. However, as the lower levels of the ditches were cut into sand and gravel they would have drained fairly easily anyway, a characteristic which was observed during the recent excavation. As soakaways they would not need to have followed any particular direction for drainage flow and therefore the pattern of a and d is more likely to have arisen because they were boundaries.

Ditch b/c may have been for drainage however. Figure 1 shows that if ditch b continued south-eastwards in a straight line it would meet ditch a in the furthest east section of the excavation. No such meeting was found and therefore it must be assumed that b either curved away to the south or had a terminal close to the excavation. If the latter, it could have risen to the surface at the terminal because of the slope of the ground and, therefore, would have drained the area of the silted ditch d. This may have been necessary because the silt would have covered the sandy bottom of d and prevented water from soaking in. Thus it is suggested that b/c was an attempt to cure the flooding that occurred in silted ditch d.

The finding of over 400 sherds of pottery, including substantial portions of complete pots, suggests that there was occupation close to the ditches. The greatest concentration was found in b/c and in the southern part of d so that the occupation may have been near this area. No pottery or other evidence of occupation was found on the site other than in the fills of the ditches. It is therefore likely that the occupation surface was above modern plough depth and consequently has been destroyed. In Figure 2 the sections show a mixed layer of flints, clay, soil and humus just below plough depth. It appeared that the layer was a natural horizon formed by accumulation and leaching from the soil above. The two layers of flint mentioned previously were in this horizon.

If this conclusion about the ancient surface is correct, it means that any further excavation in the vicinity will reveal only features lying below the ancient surface such as ditches or pits. However there may be other areas of the field where ancient surface features remain because they are below plough depth, such as near the railway where plough soil may have been carried down and accumulated owing to the slope of the land.



**MOUNT BURES DITCH SECTIONS**  
**Fig 2**

## **Discussion of the Area**

Roach Smith(2) did not give adequate directions for the location of the 1849 excavation presumably because he obtained his information second-hand from the railway contractor, Jackson, and was not present at the site. It is necessary therefore to consider whether an indication of the location can be obtained from any available records and from the 1982 excavation.

Roach Smith stated that "the remains were discovered about a quarter of a mile south-east of the Mount and close to the Stour Valley, Colchester and Sudbury Railway." The employees of the railway contractor were "deepening a ditch and at eighteen inches below the surface they disclosed two brass knobs." (These were the top of the andiron now on display in Colchester Castle Museum). Mr Jackson "continued the excavation as far as the outside of the railway company's boundary fence", and "then obtained permission of Mr William Pettit, the occupier of Mounts Hall Farm, to excavate into his field:" "The excavation itself was triangular, each side being a little more than seven feet in length". "The land on which the antiquities were found is the property of Major-General Bowchier (sic), and is in the occupation of Mr Pettit."

The literal interpretation of this is that the small triangular excavation straddled an existing ditch at the boundary between the railway property and the adjacent farm. The boundary had a fence but there is no mention of an accompanying ditch and the ditch in question need not have run parallel to the fence but may have crossed it.

Several pits have been dug at intervals along the present western railway boundary (there are ditches along both eastern and western boundaries on either side of the embankment in the region of the cattle arch bridge, see Figure 3), in attempts to find the vault location. These were unsuccessful, probably because the present boundaries are not the 1849 boundaries.

The 1845 plan of the proposed railway suggests that, for the construction, the company were interested in a strip of land about 180metres (200 yards perhaps) wide along the length of its route. The railway plan is on a small scale making accurate transposition difficult, but Figure 3 is an attempt to show where the suggested construction boundaries were in relation to the railway as built, and to the field boundaries. It will be seen that the railway was built to the east of the centre line of the strip, perhaps to enable the necessary embankment height for the bridge to be obtained.

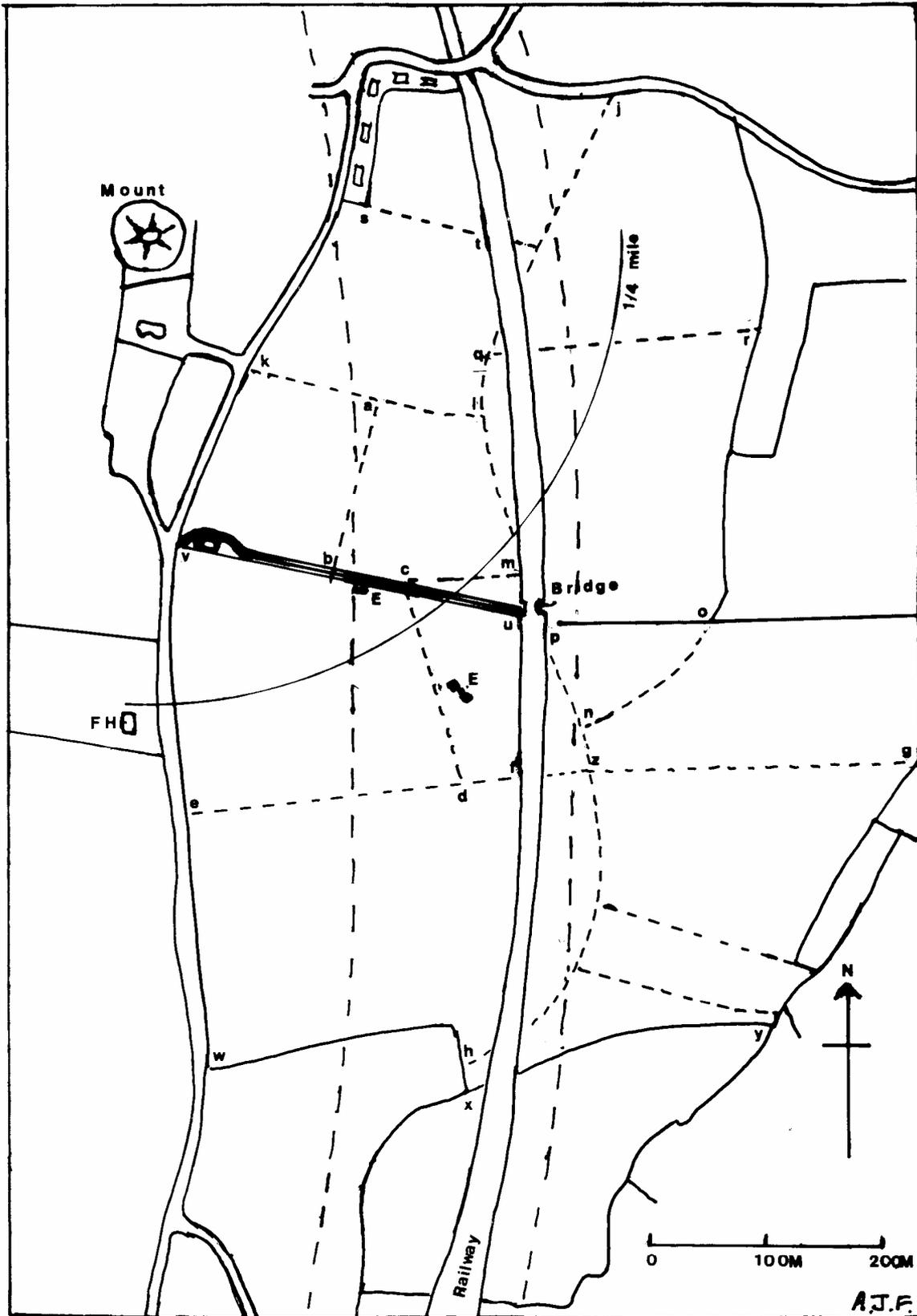
The main interest is to determine where the suggested 1849 railway boundaries met the 1849 field boundaries, since it is at these points that the vault may be found. It is necessary to assume that a field boundary on a map may represent a ditch as well as a fence, hedge or headland and that Roach Smith's ditch followed a boundary and was not for a field drain, for example.

The field boundaries are identified by letters, ab for example, in Figure 3 which is based on the following maps:

- Estate map 1830 redrawn from 1800 version
- Tithe map for Mount Bures 1838
- Railway Plan 1846
- New Tithe Apportionment map 1882
- Ordnance Survey Map 1897 and onwards

The interrupted lines indicate those boundaries which have been removed since 1830, and the solid lines those which remain to the present day.

Reference to the maps shows that ab, cd, and cm had been removed by 1838 and therefore cannot be the boundaries in question. The long length hj disappeared with the building of the railway and thus there would be no point in deepening any ditch associated with it. Boundaries st and no were not crossed by the railway fence and therefore may be ruled out; no is not on the 1882 map and presumably disappeared with the coming of the railway. Boundary op is interesting in that it is not on the railway plan but appears on the 1882 and subsequent maps. It is very likely that it came with the railway since it forms an obvious continuation of the farm track emerging from under the bridge. It exists today only as a headland with no ditch and whether it ever had one is not known.



Boundaries: field ----- or ———  
: railway construction ————  
Excavations E

**MOUNT BURES**  
**Fig 3**

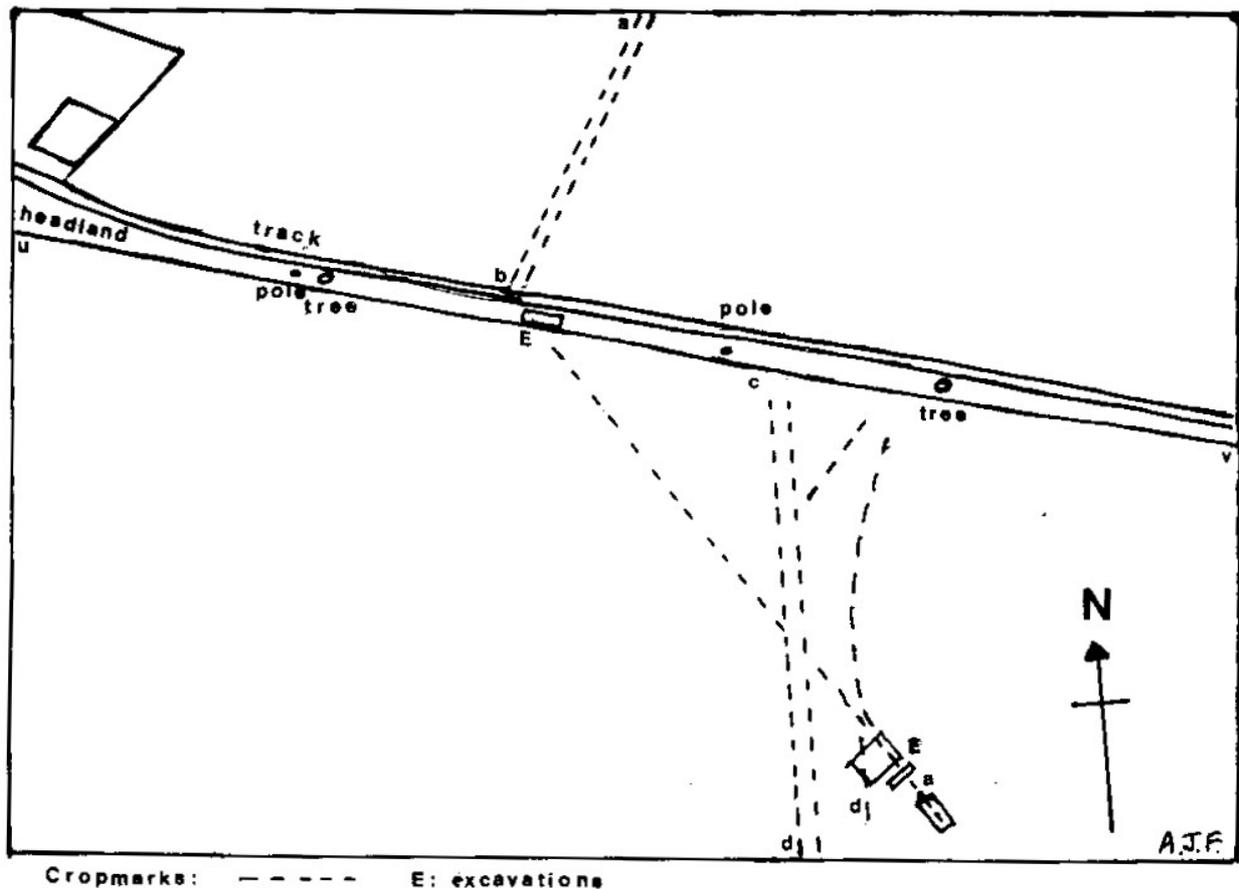
The preferred order of eligibility for the remaining boundaries as satisfying the requirements of being about a quarter of a mile south-east of the mount in 1849 (a quarter mile radius is drawn on the figure) and crossed by the railway fence is:

- uv Along the present farm track
- op Assuming it had a ditch
- ef Removed 1946-50
- fz Before railway, continuation of fg. Removed 1950
- zg Appeared after railway, joined to fz. Removed 1950
- kl Probably removed with coming of railway
- qr Probably removed with coming of railway
- wh
- xy

Of these kl is much less than a quarter mile from the Mount and wh and xy are considerably more; qr is right for distance but more east than south-east.

Since the uv crossing was identifiable, accessible and not now in the middle of crops as most of the crossings are, an excavation was carried out, as proposed in the first report, straddling the boundary ditch at the point where it was met by the supposed extrapolation of ditch a. In the excavated trench, 2 metres by six metres, no sign of ditch a, the vault, the railway boundary or any other feature was found.

This lack of result may have been due to the trench being too short or not in the right place. The vault may still be in the vicinity but a reconsideration of the aerial photograph suggests that ditch a may be found elsewhere on the headland.



**MOUNT BURES**

**From photograph**

**Fig 4**

On the photograph the faint image was interpreted as being straight, possibly a trackway ditch. The excavation showed that ditch a was neither straight (see Figure 1) nor a trackway ditch and therefore another print of the photograph with more contrast was examined to see whether it would give better support for the results of the excavation.

The tentative conclusions are shown in Figure 4 which is a tracing from the photograph and, because the latter was not taken vertically, is not a scale plan but an illustration.

In addition to the existing ditch in the headland uv, the cropmarks of the removed boundaries ab and cd (not to be confused with ancient ditches a and d) are visible as double parallel lines, one for the ditch and one for the hedge. The previously supposed line for ditch a is shown running between the two excavations E.

The new interpretation is that, after meeting ditch d which is just discernible on the photograph, ditch a turns to the north and meets the headland further to the east than was thought previously. An excavation at the headland at this point would be feasible but unnecessary labour might be saved by augering first to confirm the course of a. Such an excavation would not be expected to reveal the vault which is presumed to be at the railway boundary.

The short straight cropmark just to the west of ditch a near the headland may indicate an ancient feature or just a field drain.

The revised curve line for ditch a may suggest an enclosure, perhaps for the cemetery which therefore may lie to the east of the railway rather than to the west. However, ditch d has yet to be explained and speculation should end at this point to await further concrete evidence.

### **The Pottery**

The forms are similar to those round at Sheepen which terminated c60 AD. They could be pre-conquest, perhaps as early as 40 BC according to one opinion. Construction of parts of five vessels was possible enabling them to be drawn by Mr Erith as shown in Figure 5. His descriptions are given below. The wavy line decoration on vessel 3 is unusual.

1. Black carinated bowl with bulge between cordons on shoulder. Camulodunum form 218. Cam. Plate LXXV.
2. Base of larger bowl of form 218 in same native ware as above. Three perforations in the base. See Cam. 218 Ab on Plate LXXVII.
3. Cooking pot in brown-pink ware and black coat. Variant of Cam-form 260. See Cam. Plate LXXXIII No 260b. Everted rim. Two bands of decoration round the girth, each with three series of continuous wavy lines, deeply scored and irregular.
4. Native bowl of pale red-brown ware, with bulge between cordons. Rather angular carination on profile, as in Cam. Fig. 54 No 32 (page 260). Also plate LXXVII form 218Ab. The base has a small foot-rim as well as at least three perforations, as in some Camulodunum examples of this form (page 259).
5. Rim of wide bowl with round body. Sandy grey fabric with tarry black surface. Cam. form 221.

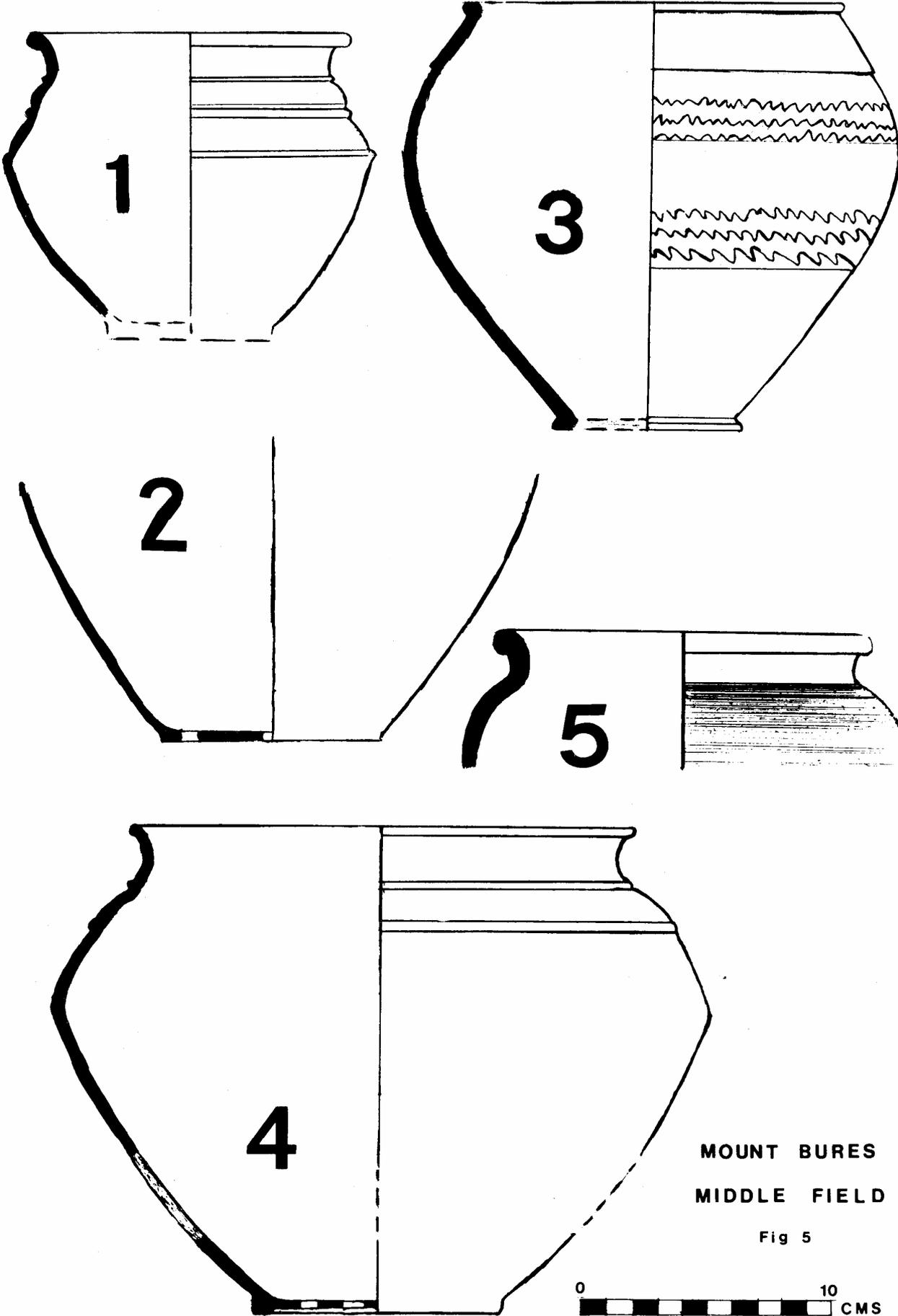
In Camulodunum (3) the forms are classified on the chronological table on pages 277-81. Form 218, the most common form at Camulodunum with each of the six periods copiously represented, cannot give us a close date. Form 260, however, is mostly found in Periods III and IV (AD 43-61).

### **Location of the excavations**

The main excavation may be found from the triangle XYZ where:

- X is the south-west corner of the railway bridge abutment.
- Y is a point on the railway fence south of X.
- Z is the north-east corner of the excavation shown on Figure 1.

XY = 67 metres, XZ = 83 metres and YZ = 40 metres.



The headland excavation may be found athwart the ditch uv at a distance of 143 metres from X.

### **Erratum**

The scale on the diagram accompanying the first report is incorrect and reference should be made to Figure 3 in this report instead.

### **Acknowledgements**

We are grateful to Mr W. McMaster for his forbearance while we dug in his crops during the last six years. Mr P. Crummy and Mr P. Sealey kindly gave us their valued opinion on the pottery. We are especially grateful to Mr F. Erith for assembling, drawing and describing the pots. Finally we wish to thank those members of the Group who patiently excavated with us and helped in other ways.

### **References**

- 1) McMaster I and Fawn A.J. Late Iron Age Ditch at Mount Bures - First Report. CAG Bulletin 24 (1981) 26
- 2) Roach Smith C. Roman Remains found at Mount Bures near Colchester. Collectanea Antiqua 2(1852) 25
- 3) Hawker C.F.C. and Hull. M.R. Camulodunum (1947) OUP 56 & 277-81.

## **FIELD-WALKING 1982**

### **1) Colchester Ranges Conservation**

Group members working on archaeological aspects of the Ranges conservation have walked over known cropmark sites on about 10 occasions; covering perhaps half the cropmarks which are known and reporting back to the Ranges Conservation Committee at its bi-annual meetings. No new archaeological sites have so far been revealed.

### **2) Roman River Valley Conservation Zone**

Group members involved with the Roman River Valley project have also been active. Firstly, through the good offices of Mr. A.A. Doorne, it was reported that sherds of tile of possible Roman origin were turning up in the plough. With the kind permission of the farmer, Mr C. Rowe, the site situated to the south of the Nature Reserve was visited. Although still under stubble, large quantities of Romano-British roofing tile were seen, as well as a small quantity of brick tesserae. To date the field has not been ploughed because of waterlogged conditions, but intensive field-walking will follow once this has been done. The Group would like to record the assistance of the resident Warden of Fingringhoe Wick Nature Reserve, Mr. L. Forsyth.

### **3) Dinah Beckett reports** her own observations as follows:

In an attempt to follow a Roman road south from the important Gosbeck's site towards the port of Heybridge, a slight bend would be sufficient to cross the Roman River and follow in a straight line to Garlands Farm, via roads and footpaths. Following this projected line still further it cuts across arable land which has recently revealed evidence of an extensive Roman settlement.

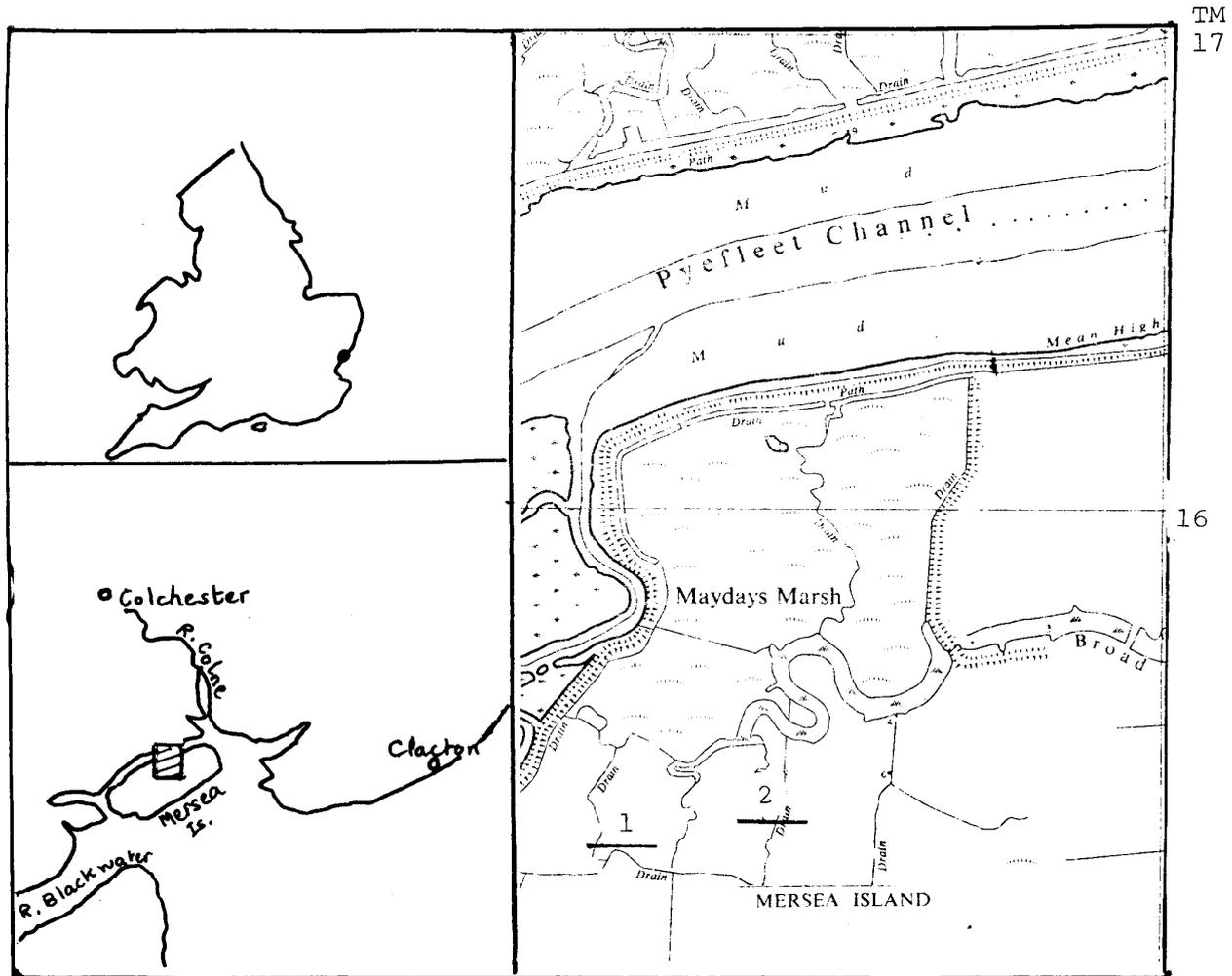
This evidence consists of large quantities of scattered roof tile, combed flue tile of a hypocaust and a number of pottery sherds, all spread over about 20 acres. On closer inspection it appears to be the site of a Roman villa, comprising several ancillary buildings in addition to the house itself. Each individual building area has produced pottery sherds varying from coarse grey ware to plain samian and colour coated. In one particular area numerous red tesserae evinced a tessellated pavement, though now much displaced and damaged by ploughing. It is said that the same site has revealed sherds of medieval glazed pottery and a bronze Byzantine coin of the 10th century.

From the general nature of the archaeological remains one might expect this to have been a Roman villa of some substance, well placed in a south facing position, on the periphery of Colchester with commanding views over the marshes to the Mersea creeks and the sea. It is hoped that some systematic field-walking can be undertaken on this site shortly.

**THE EXAMINATION OF THE REMAINS OF TWO SMALL RED HILLS  
AT MAYDAYS FARM, EAST MERSEA**

Kath Evans

Traces of two small Red Hills were known to be on land reclaimed from marsh about 1971 at the eastern end of Mersea Island (OS TMO1 15450315 and TM.O1 15460340, see map). The farm had become the property of the present owner, Mr J. Sunnucks, and he had seen briquetage and sherds of Iron Age pottery and invited Mrs de Brisay to examine the hills after harvest in 1981.



**RED HILLS AT EAST MERSEA  
LOCATION MAP**

The examination began in August; Mrs de Brisay's objective was to examine what remained of the hills in order to record them and to make comparisons of artefacts and techniques of salt-making with evidence from sites already-excavated (1-7). A trench to remove plough soil was taken out by JCB over what seemed to be the centre of each hill, where the soil was most strongly coloured with the characteristic pinkish, granular material of Red Hills.

**Trench 1** OS TM 15450315

The overall length excavated was 10m. Within the trench the pinkish burnt earth was obvious, but there were only small pieces (3-4cms) of briquetage. Only a few inches down trowelling became difficult as

the ground was hard and dry with much impacted clay which came away in plates. No artefacts whatsoever were seen and it was soon apparent that most of the hill had been removed in the reclamation and perhaps also partly eroded by sea prior to it.

The chief feature of interest was a ditch (c. 1.5m wide) at the western end of the trench. Here pebbles were about 5cms below the plough line, below them a clean yellow clay and, at the lowest level, (0.85m) sandy wet silt. This was interpreted as the creek which would have fed the Red Hill, itself fed by Broadfleet (see map). As seen at other Red Hill sites the actual working area was at the head of a creek, or creeklet, which would have fed the evaporation tanks at flood tides. However, no evaporation tanks were seen. Just under the plough soil, and partly removed by the JCB, were the remains of what Mrs de Brisay thought might have been two hearths, but no confirmation of this suggestion was possible.

Since it was not possible, on the ground, to identify where any creeks might have lain before reclamation, it was remarkable that one should have been exposed just one metre along the trench. This creek ties in well with maps made before reclamation when it acted as a drain; the site of the hill is lower than the field to the south of it and is at the highest end of the reclaimed field.

### **Trench 2** OS TM15460340

The overall length of the trench was 10m but due to lack of time it was only cursorily examined. The infill was similar to that in Trench 1 and no artefacts were revealed. No creek was identified nor was the modern drain, shown on the map, located.

It seems that what now remains of these two Red Hills is just the lowest levels; their upper parts must have been spread over the marsh in levelling it at reclamation. Some artefacts may come to the surface over the years, though they are most unlikely to be stratified.

This was Kay de Brisay's last Red Hill. She put away her Red Hill equipment only a few days before her death. It is a pleasure to make this brief account on her behalf and to take the opportunity to acknowledge her expertise and recall the excitement we have shared in working on Red Hills in the past.

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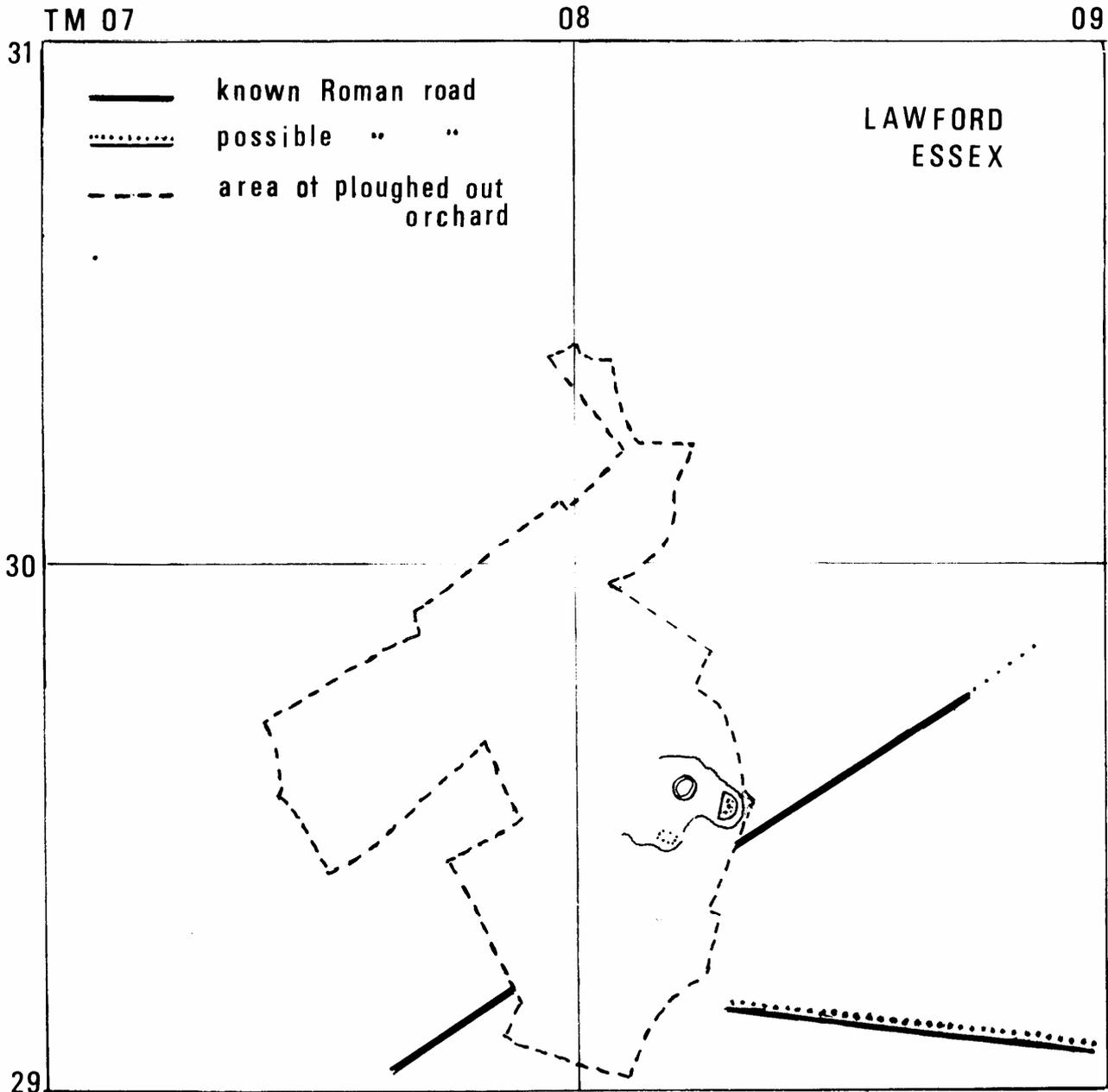
- 1) de Brisay K.W. A Red Hill at Tollesbury - a final report CAG Bulletin 22(1979)2-8
- 2) " " A Red Hill at Tollesbury; its background and excavation CAG Bulletin 21(1978) 5-10
- 3) " " The Red Hill at Peldon. CAG Bulletin 20(1977) 13
- 4) " " The excavation of a Red Hill at Peldon. CAG Bulletin 17 (1974) 25-42
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**1982 CROPMARKS**

Ida McMaster

**Essex**

Conditions producing cropmarks have not been good over the last two years, nevertheless, a few new sites appeared briefly in 1982. One of these is situated on the Lawford/Ardleigh boundary, an area which has been more regularly overflown than any other during the last two decades. (see Lawford map)



The reason for previous negative results is that the area, now laid down to cereals, has for many years been covered by commercial orchard. Consequently the two large ringworks showing in the 1982 cereal crop must have substantially deep ditches in order to have survived tree root disturbance - this situation has been observed only once before in a ploughed out orchard TM 077312 (1).

One of the rings is double concentric and has a diameter in excess of 50 metres. The other, of similar size, is D shaped and contains what appear to be about eight circular features which are placed so as to conform to the outer D shape. The modern field boundary can be seen skirting the D shape, thereby indicating a certain antiquity in that some vestiges of the ring-work must have remained when the field boundary was initially delineated. (see Lawford map). The inner features are likely to be burials or perhaps

hut circles. Both large ring-works, and also a small rectangular enclosure nearby, appear to be part of the same complex for they have a faint outer linear ditch surrounding them. The field to the north-east is covered with a variety of small ancient field enclosures, some of which are seen to pass beneath a present hedge-line into the field to the south. Plainly the centre of a prolific prehistoric landscape lies around here and in the adjoining areas. The multi-period Ardleigh, Elm Park site lies 2 kilometres to the south-west; the Lawford henge and adjacent tumuli and Neolithic enclosures at Grange Farm are 1 kilometre to the north; while to the south, the same distance away, lies the Little Bromley henge with its many similar features (2). Passing through the same ploughed orchard area is also the Mistley/ Colchester Roman road, to ether with its possible junction road branching to the east (3, 4). This latter, represented by an existing straight stretch of road, has been seen to continue as a cropmark at both ends, the western end apparently disappearing beneath the erstwhile orchard.

Scattered in the vicinity are additional less significant cropmarks which will, in time, no doubt, take their place in the complicated jigsaw of this ancient landscape.

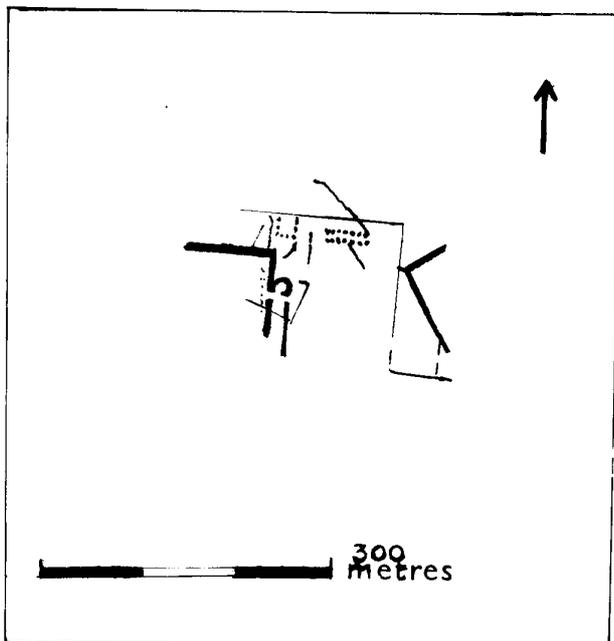
### Suffolk

The Shotley Peninsular (see overall map).

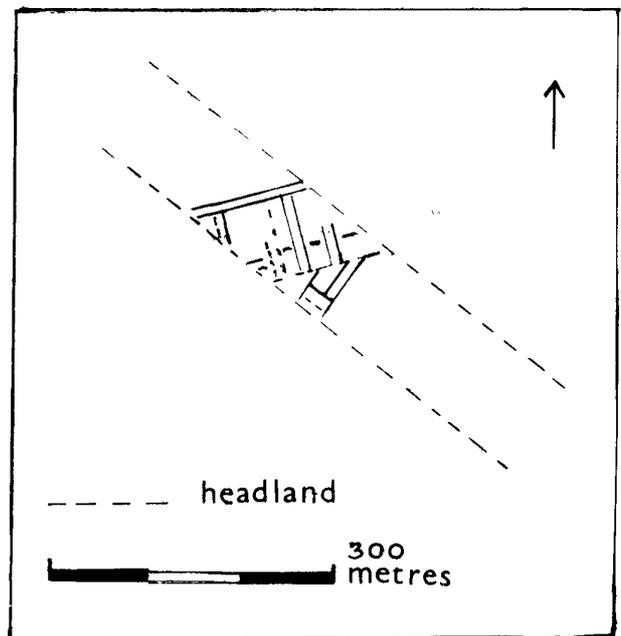
Two areas of interest were visible within the Ipswich Airport circuit, a circumstance obviously presenting difficulty and one which prohibits the circular orbits necessary to find the best camera view point.

The first was the already recorded angular outline of a typical Roman enclosure at Wherstead (TM 1640)(5). It has within it a clear eight bayed post hole building, another square post hole feature and an oval, ? guard structure at the entrance to a large double ditched inner enclosure. Only one corner of this site is visible, the remainder is lost beneath the adjoining woodland (see Wherstead map). Find spots of Roman coins and pottery are recorded on either side of this site. Field-walking is essential here.

The second area of interest lies to the east of Woolverstone (see overall map), closely bordering the river Orwell(TM 1938), and again, almost certainly a Roman outline(see Woolverstone map). The site was fleetingly photographed on a landing circuit.

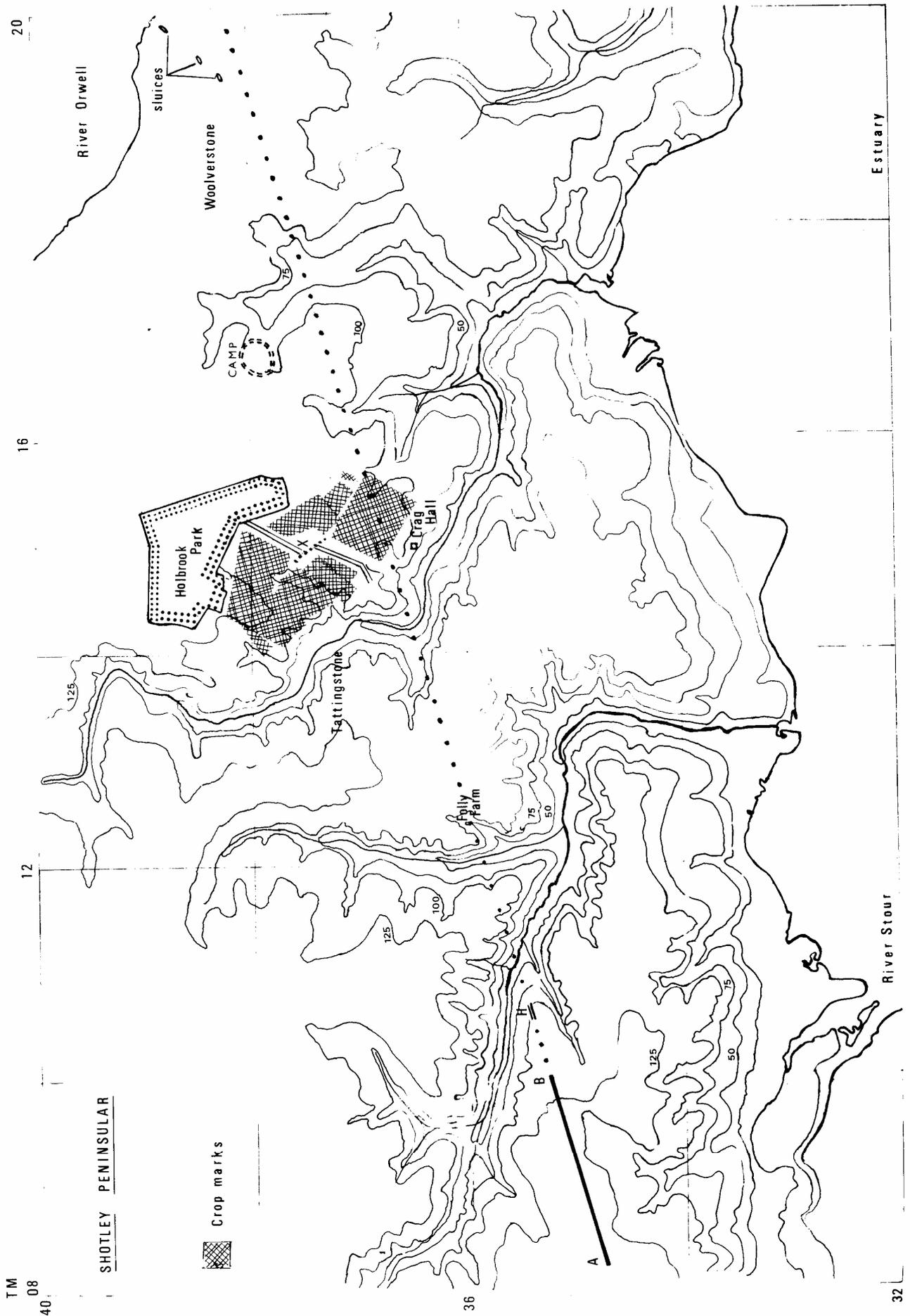


WHERSTEAD



WOOLVERSTONE

Place-name elements of Woolverstone suggest Wulfhere's tun, that is the Saxon Wulfhere's farm or holding. If this were so, one wonders how the final 'e' came to be added making the word end in stone and not ston. The same query would apply to Tattingstone(see overall map). In the stone form both have a useful Roman sound; alternatively, a 'wolve' or 'wholve' was a medieval drain, usually made of wood. Could a 'wolve' made of stone be sufficiently unusual for 'stone' to become part of the place-name? Another possible explanation might be the fact that the foreshore at Woolverstone is known as the Stone; though this would not help to explain Tattingstone.



TM  
08  
40

SHOTLEY PENINSULAR

Crop marks

For some years a watch has been kept on the tenuous evidence for the presence of a Roman road to the south-west of the peninsular. At East Bergholt an existing straight stretch of road, A - B on overall map, leads towards the known site of the 12<sup>th</sup> century Augustinian Dodnash Priory. The course of this road is old and is shown on maps of 1730 and 1783 (6, 7), and Parliamentary enclosures have been laid out along it, with the result that it is now somewhat straightened. From the air, however, the total alignment is unmistakable and it clearly continues to the northeast by a hedge-line (see H on overall map). Here the land adjoining it on both sides is called Stony Lands on the 1730 map. A conjectural projection in the same direction takes the road directly to 'Folly' Farm (TM 12353600), see overall map. The name 'Folly' street, lane or farm occurs with some frequency along the course of Roman roads, the name perhaps having a connection with the verb to follow; probably the early people using the word were not aware of the true nature of the stony track or embankment they were describing. Folly farm is unlikely to be connected with a Victorian Folly; the house has interior beams which place it well before the fashion for such structures. It lies within a deep hollow and any unusual features of the landscape would be immediately apparent on the surrounding undulating horizons. Further on, the projected line would reach the vast maze of crop marks, shaded on overall map, at Tattingstone (8, 9, 10, 11 and 12). Amongst these features which stretch from Holbrook Park to Crag Hall near the new reservoir, are several which appear Roman. Emerging from beneath Holbrook Park are the cropmarks of a parallel ditched road or track (8) which soon disappears into the ancient enclosure area, or perhaps joins an existing road for a few yards at X on overall map. This road would have, in effect, skirted some of the enclosures, as would the second pair of parallel ditches which appear to continue this minor road system towards the south-west. To the north, beyond Holbrook Park, this minor road system would lead straight to the typical Roman site at Wherstead.

Clearly around Tattingstone there is a vital area for study both on the ground and from the air. Any major road here might be expected to veer towards the isolated Shotley Point coastline. On the other hand, it is interesting to note that the termination of the projected road from East Bergholt would be at a point very close to the newly visible cropmark, already mentioned, near Woolverstone. This cropmark appears as typically Roman and even, perhaps, the corner of a Roman villa (see Woolverstone map). The site was seen in July, in a three month old sugar beet crop, which is unusual. The land is recently ploughed-up parkland, is on light soil and was originally part of the Woolverstone Hall estate. The Hall was built by William Berners in 1776 (he built Berners Street, London); it had several rectangular sluices or fish ponds lying to the east within the parkland. There are now three of these lying in a steep cleft starting on the 75m contour and successively on the 50m and 25m contours. Only the sluice on the 50m contour is shown on the Tithe map and it then consisted of four parallel east-west positioned ponds (13). Presumably the upper and lower sluices have been constructed since that date, although the 1783 map appears to show the upper, middle and lower sluices in position. These drain type features have presumably proved useful to many owners, the lowest one now serves as a convenient sheep dip.

The cropmark of the new site is not far from the upper sluice at the head of the curious cleft. Will ancient stone be found at the base of any of the various structures? A NMR print (TM 1937/1/ 375) shows additional interesting cropmarks in the fields adjoining to the south-east. The church of St Michael, close by across the park, has no apparent Roman material in its structure.

It should be noted that the cropmarks on the maps of Woolverstone and Wherstead were plotted from only a few prints and are, therefore, open to correction as conditions of investigation allow.

### **References:**

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- 2) Erith F.H. The Lawford Neolithic Complex. CAG Bulletin 14(1971) 39-40
- 3) Farrands R.H. Evidence for a Roman Road linking Mistley with Colchester. CAG Bulletin 18(1975) 5
- 4) McMaster I. Notes on two possible Roman Roads & Cropmarks, 1975. CAG Bulletin 19(1976) 15
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- 7) Brazier W. 1730 Map of East Bergholt. Suffolk Record Office
- 8) McMaster I. Cropmark Sites Selected & Plotted. CAG Bulletin 18(1975) 18
- 9) Farrands R.H. & McMaster I. Cropmarks CAG Bulletin 19(1976) 22
- 10) McMaster I. & Farrands R.H. Cropmarks in the Year of the Drought CAG Bulletin 20(1977) 19
- 11) Farrands R.H. 1980 Cropmarks. CAG Bulletin 24(1981) 24
- 12) McMaster I. & Farrands R.H. 1977 Cropmarks. CAG Bulletin 21(1978) 26
- 13) Tithe Map of Woolverstone, Suffolk Record Office - FDA 298/A/16

### Kay de BRISAY MEMORIAL FUND

At the Group's AGM in October 1981, shortly after the death of our highly regarded Secretary, Kay de Brisay, members expressed a wish to commemorate her contribution to archaeology. Two possible ways of doing this were suggested, firstly raising money to provide a system of amplification in the Castle Lecture Room (something Kay had long wished for) and, secondly, at Mr David Clarke's suggestion, producing a small book on the Red Hills of Essex. Accordingly a Sub-Committee was formed, the latter project decided upon and a letter (reproduced below) explaining it, was sent, as far as possible, to all members, 'Salt' enthusiasts and others who knew of Kay's work.

The response to the fund at December, 1982 is £820. The sub-Committee is most grateful to all contributors and takes this opportunity to thank them for their generosity. The Fund is still open if there are others who wish to contribute.

Mark Davies is editing the booklet and once it is sufficiently far advanced we shall have an idea of the cost of publication; we can then plan how to make up any deficiency between it and the donations collected. We expect the book to be completed in about a year or a year and a half.

December, 1981

### KAY de BRISAY MEMORIAL FUND

Mrs Kay de Brisay FSA, who Died 5<sup>th</sup> September, 1981 was founder of Colchester Archaeological Group in 1958 and its Honorary Secretary from its inception until her death. Her contribution to archaeology was outstanding, particularly her work, so close to her heart, on the ancient industry of salt making. She published a number of articles on the subject and arranged a most successful International Conference at the University of Essex in 1974; the proceedings of which, known as the Salt Report, have been the standard work on the subject since.

As a tribute to Mrs de Brisay members of this Group, in co-operation with the Colchester and Essex Museum, plan to publish an illustrated booklet on the Red Hills of Essex. These Iron Age and Roman salt making sites are particularly characteristic of the Essex coastal country. They were of consuming interest to Mrs de Brisay and the proposed book, for which there is an obvious need, will provide a fitting acknowledgement of her work. The estimated cost of production and publication will be in the region of £1,000, though if more money were available a higher standard of production might be achieved.

I write, therefore, on behalf of the Group, to ask whether you would like to contribute towards the cost of such a publication to honour the work and the memory of Mrs de Brisay. Your contribution, however small, should be sent to:

Mr D Tripp MC, FCA, Treasurer,  
Kay de Brisay Memorial Fund,  
69 Lexden Road, Colchester.

Cheques should be made payable to the Kay de Brisay Fund. You may know of others who would like to contribute and if so could you please bring this letter to their notice.

Should the sale of copies mean any eventual profit, the Group would return the money to the Fund and use it to support other worthwhile archaeological activities.

We hope this project will appeal to those who knew and admired Kay de Brisay's work and we shall be most grateful if you are able to make a donation towards it. We will keep donors informed of developments either personally or through the local press.

Thank you for your help,

Yours sincerely,

Group Chairman

#### Sub-Committee for publication

D. T-D. Clarke MA, FMA.	Group Vice-Chairman
Ida McMaster	Group Secretary
A.J. Fawn B.Sc.	Group Treasurer
D.P. Tripp MC, FCA,	Fund Treasurer
G.M.R. Davies MA, AMA,	Editor
Hazel West	

### **SUMMER PROGRAMME 1982**

Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> June:

This trip was arranged by Dick Farrands and members travelled in their own cars rather than by coach. A windy, rather chilly, picnic was taken at Wrabness Point. We then moved on to Ramsey Windmill where the owner, Mr R. Organ, kindly showed us round and gave a brief history of the mill, the only post mill left in Essex. Mr Organ will be giving the Monday evening lecture on 21<sup>st</sup> February 1983 on windmills and watermills in Essex. After seeing the mill we drove to the site of the Roman villa at Little Oakley. Dick Farrands briefly described his excavations there and then took us to see a display of his finds from the site, which were set out in a nearby barn.

Despite discouraging weather, it was a most interesting and enjoyable afternoon and we are all grateful to Dick Farrands for arranging it.

Monday 28<sup>th</sup> June:

Under the guidance of Mr David Clarke, we visited three particularly interesting local churches; they were St Leonard at the Hythe, St Andrew, Greenstead, and St Anne and St Lawrence, Elmstead.

Monday 12<sup>th</sup> July Jubilee Party:

As it is 25 years since the Group was formed our summer party was a special occasion. It was held in the home of Mr and Mrs Doncaster, The Cottage, Abberton and this was most appropriate as Tony Doncaster is one of the two remaining original members of the Group (Harry Palmer is the other). Ida McMaster organised a particularly delicious menu and the Doncaster's charming home and garden was a delightful setting for the occasion. Mrs Doncaster had arranged a display of Kay de Brisay's work in her memory. Sixty five members and friends attended to enjoy this memorable occasion.

We thank all those who contributed to the success of the evening.

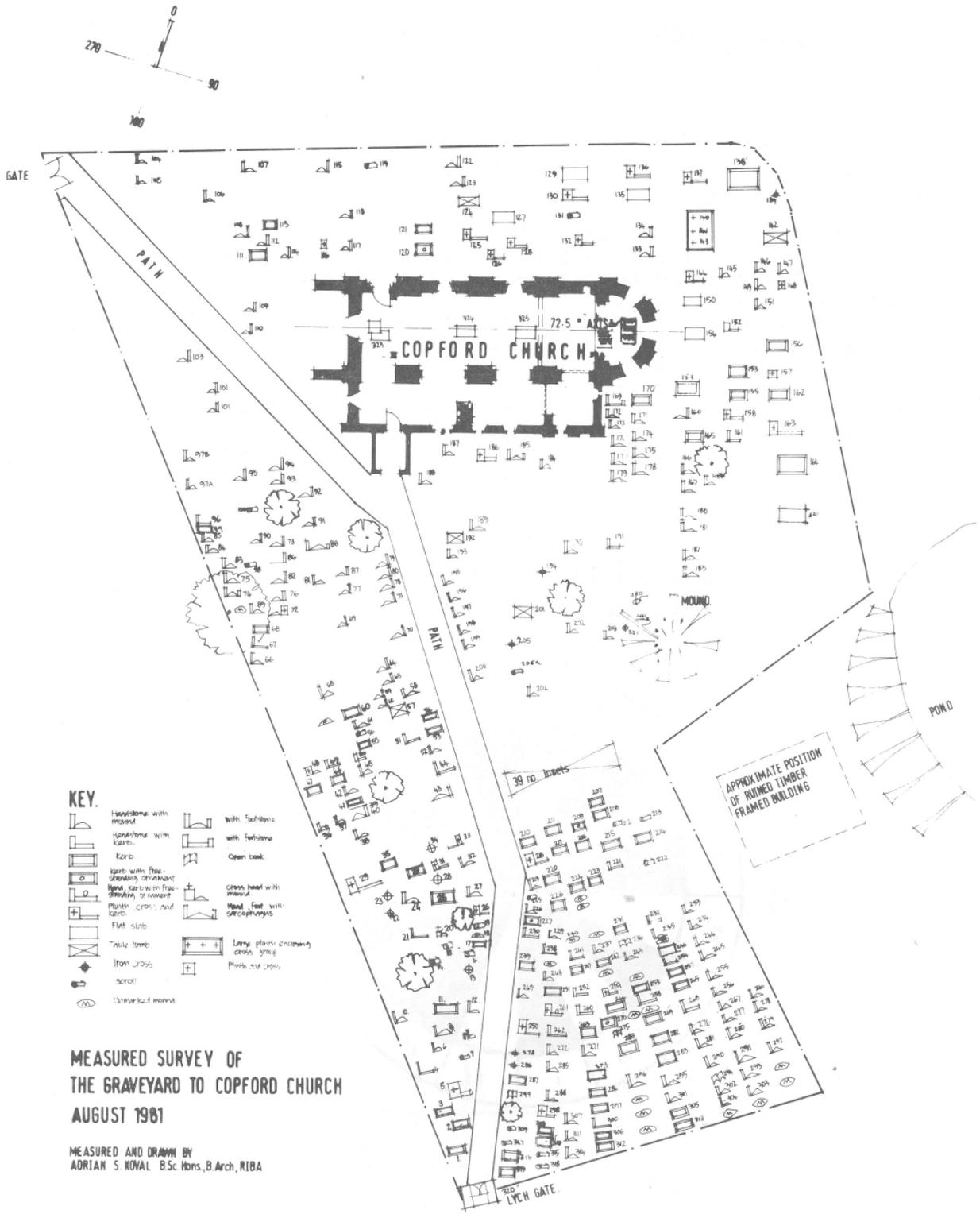
### **CHURCH-YARD SURVEYS IN THE COLCHESTER DISTRICT**

Kath Evans and Hazel West

In the last Bulletin. Davies and de Brisay(1) wrote of the need to record church-yard memorials, explaining that the Colchester and Essex Museum, with assistance from interested bodies, had initiated a programme of recording. At that time the Group had recorded the church-yards of St Michael, Berechurch, and St Mary, Easthorpe.

We now report the completion of the recording of the churchyard of St Michael and All Angels, Copford; the ground plan of the church-yard is shown below. The operation (there were more than 350 graves) was directed by the late Mrs. de Brisay, though it has had to be completed since her death. We should like to acknowledge the help of all those who recorded, measured and photographed.

1) Davies G.M.R. & de Brisay K. Church-yard surveys in the Colchester District. CAG Bulletin 24(1981) 6-9



**KEY.**

- |  |  |  |                                    |
|--|--|--|------------------------------------|
|  | Headstone with mound                   |  | With footstone                     |
|  | Headstone with kerb                    |  | With footstone                     |
|  | Kerb                                   |  | Open tank                          |
|  | Kerb with flat-standing ornament       |  | Cross head with mound              |
|  | Head, kerb with flat-standing ornament |  | Head feet with seraphim            |
|  | Plinth, cross, and kerb                |  | Large plinth enclosing cross group |
|  | Flat slab                              |  | Plinth and cross                   |
|  | Table tomb                             |  |                                    |
|  | Iron cross                             |  |                                    |
|  | Scarf                                  |  |                                    |
|  | Unmarked mound                         |  |                                    |

**MEASURED SURVEY OF  
THE GRAVEYARD TO COPFORD CHURCH  
AUGUST 1981**

MEASURED AND DRAWN BY  
ADRIAN S. KOVAL B.Sc. Hons., B.Arch, RIBA



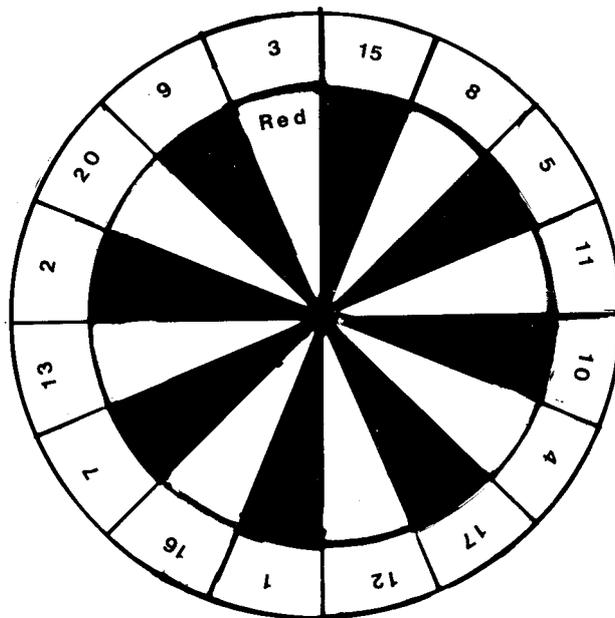
### A GAMING DIAL AT STONE STREET, SUFFOLK

A.J. Fawn

Fifteen years ago Mr Harley published an article in the Bulletin which described the gambling device found in pubs and known as a gaming dial (1). He illustrated four examples from Suffolk and Surrey and asked his readers whether they could provide any existing examples in Essex. I have not seen one in Essex but there is still one in position on a joist in the ceiling of the public bar at The Compasses at Stone Street near Boxford not so far over the border.

The dial is a wooden disc with painted numbered sectors, rather like a dart board, and with an iron arrow mounted on a central pivot. It is fixed upside down on the joist so that the arrow is suspended horizontally beneath it. The method of play is to spin the arrow and to allow it to come to rest against a chance number. In addition to being numbered the sectors are painted red and black alternately, shown white and black in the diagram below.

### Gaming Dial Stone Street



Mr Harley described some ways of playing the dial, including betting on whether the arrow landed on odds or evens. Such a bet would be unfair on this dial since there are nine odd and seven even numbers. They run from 1 to 20 with the exceptions of 6, 14, 18 and 19. The alternative wager of calling red or black would be fairer and make for a more equitable distribution of payment for rounds.

According to local information (the pun is deliberate) the dial was removed in the thirties for a time but was later happily reinstated close to the bar where it continues to amuse some visitors although I have never seen any of the regulars playing. Suffolk folk have more sense.

#### Reference:

- 1) Harley L.S. The Gaming Dial. CAG Bulletin 10(3) (1967) 39

### **SITES AND MONUMENTS RECORDING - HOW MEMBERS CAN HELP**

There is a vast amount of archaeological and historical information relating to the history of the Borough of Colchester in the archive of the Colchester Museum, Unfortunately, this information is not always readily available for use because the large amount of material needs to be organised into a comprehensive recording system. This process has already begun, but because it is such a large project more help is required.

The information will be recorded on standard record sheets on a parish basis, so if you are interested in the history of your parish why not help to record it for the Museum and probably find out more about your area too?

If you are interested please contact me at the Museum Resource Centre, 14 Rygate Road, Colchester, Essex, CO1 1YG, telephone Colchester 77475. Your help will be greatly appreciated by the Museum staff.

M. J. Winter.

### **THE CHURCH OF ST MARY THE VIRGIN, LITTLE BIRCH**

1) The fabric - G.M.R. Davies

2) Documentary History - A.R. West

#### **The Fabric**

The ruined church of St Mary the Virgin, Little Birch is one of the most archaeologically significant in Essex (1) and as such is legally protected as a scheduled ancient monument. Its roofless remains stand surrounded by trees and undergrowth in the former grounds of Birch Hall which was demolished in 1954.

The oldest part of the building is the nave, which is Norman, or possibly late Saxon, and measures 9.7 x 5.8 metres. The north wall has a doorway with a window on either side of it, that to the east being Norman but now blocked; the other is probably 14<sup>th</sup> century with an early 16<sup>th</sup> century brick head. The round-headed arch to the rear of the south doorway is made of Roman bricks and of the two windows to the east of it the western one is also Norman. In both corners at the east end of the nave there are pilaster buttresses of unclear function. These are made of Roman brick, as are the quoins at the west end of the building. In the north-east corner of the nave traces of the blocked staircase to the roodloft, lit by a small 15<sup>th</sup> century window, can still be seen.

The chancel, which measures 8.1 x 5.0 metres, dates to a period of major structural alteration in the 14th century. The side walls both contain two windows, with a priest's door between the southern pair. The east window has been almost completely destroyed and there is a breach in the wall beneath it. A piscina with moulded jambs and trefoiled head survived on the south side until its disappearance a few years ago.

The tower, now much overgrown with ivy, was also constructed in the 14<sup>th</sup> century. The lowest two of its four stages, which abut against the west wall of the nave, are original, while the upper stages were rebuilt in red brick in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, at which time a stair-turret was added in the south-west corner of the nave(2).

Other local churches have similar architectural characteristics. Little Birch may be compared with the two churches with which it has such close connections, Easthorpe and Great Birch, though the latter was rebuilt in 1850. Its dedication to St Mary the Virgin is also common in nearby churches: Easthorpe and Layer Marney are the closest.

Because of its secluded position on a private estate, historic Little Birch church is not well known and has received little recorded comment during the depredations of the last 300 years. Philip Morant in his History of Essex, which was published in 1768, merely comments as follows, 'The church is ruinous; the tower, which is pretty high, and the walls only being standing. But the roof is quite gone'(3).

However, a reference in his account of Olivers in Stanway parish makes it clear that the church was already in a state of disrepair in the early 17<sup>th</sup> century. There he records that John Eldred 'an eminent merchant', alderman and bailiff of Colchester, who was born in 1595, 'purchased Olivers, and lived, in the latter part of his life in Little Birch Hall; the church of which being ruinous, he and the patroness jointly repaired it, he dying 9<sup>th</sup> October 1646, aged 81, was buried in that church. A monument was there erected to his

memory, which when that church grew ruinous again, was removed by his grandson (d. 16<sup>th</sup> November, 1682) into the church of Earls Colne'(4), where it still remains.

The church's sorry condition in the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century is further attested by a formal record of the induction of the Rev. John Haggard as rector on 19<sup>th</sup> January 1754, who next day, it being Sunday, duly read 'openly publickly and solemnly the Morning and Evening Prayers appointed to be read' and made the customary declaration, within the roofless walls of the ruinous church. As late as 1813 the Rev. Edward Green, whose family lived at Lawford Hall, was appointed rector of the parish (5). Finally in 1816 the church was declared redundant by private Act of Parliament(6) and transferred to private ownership and the livings of Great and Little Birch were thereby united.

Although the walls of this long disused church still stand to most of their original height, they are somewhat overgrown with weeds and creeper, and general deterioration is such that certain fragile parts of the structure, like window arches and the tower parapet, are liable to collapse before very much longer. In view of this the Roman River Valley Conservation Zone's Archaeological and Historical Working Group, in consultation with the Colchester and Essex museum and with the active support and interest of the owner, Lt. Col. J.G. Round, is embarking on a programme of clearance of all vegetation in and around the ruins. It is then hoped to consolidate the walls so that in due course the monument may be made accessible at certain times to the public as part of the interpretation of the Roman River Valley.

### **Documentary History**

The ruinous parish church of Little Birch is less than a mile from that of Great Birch, which now serves the united parish. The two Birches are not known to have had any original connection, and it was presumably their separate manorial ownership which led to the building of separate churches. The first recorded Lord of Little Birch manor is the Saxon Thane Wluuard.(7)

The parish had strange boundaries, and these were perhaps the principal causes of its eventual decay and disappearance. The two Birches and Easthorpe, together with parts of Copford and Messing, were intermingled as a number of detached and widely dispersed areas, some very small in size. They may have originally represented cultivated land or forest clearances in different ownerships which were of significance at the time of the fixing of parish boundaries perhaps as early as the late 7<sup>th</sup> century. Little Birch was certainly the most unfortunate of the parishes formed in this way, as being both the most scattered and the least populous. One of its largest areas actually lay to the north of Easthorpe Street, including at its most southerly point, what was for at least three centuries the village alehouse; only 100 yards from Easthorpe church! In such circumstances parish loyalties must have been slight; it is significant that wills of Little Birch inhabitants often direct that they be buried elsewhere.

The church stands in a prominent position, presumably in relationship to an earlier hall, for there is no evidence of a village ever having existed round it. Although Great Birch possessed the early castle of the Gernons, it was Little Birch which from medieval times possessed the most important hall in the district. Such prosperity as the church enjoyed was related to the fortunes of the hall, and the various phases of its architecture, both in their building and decay, and must be seen in relation to it.

After the Conquest, ownership of the manor passed to Hugh de St Quintin. Of the church at this early period there are few significant records, but in 1254 there is a note that 'the parson of Stancot receives half a mark for tithes of sheaves from Richard of Aldeholt, which he says pertain to Little Birch.' In 1326 the manor of Little Birch was granted to Ralph de Tendring and his wife Dionysia, by John de Sutton, vicar of Stoke-by-Nayland. The principal seat of the Tendrings, Tendring Hall, lay in that parish. It must have been the Tendrings who undertook the main rebuilding and extension of the church, and it is known too that they rebuilt and greatly remodelled the hall at this time. The Tendrings do not seem, however, to have resided there themselves. In 1500 William Tendring died and the manor passed to his son-in-law Robert Forster. By his will he left the profits of a tenement called Lucas (identifiable but now long demolished) 'to a priest who shall for the time being fortune to do divine service at the Church of Our Lady of Little Birch for 21 years. If an honest priest cannot be purveyed and had to serve, etc., then 40s of the said profits to the Friars Minor in Colchester'. He gives the impression that even at this time the church was not prospering and there is other evidence that the church was less well endowed than its neighbours. This Robert Forster died a very old man and his son George died soon afterwards, leaving his two daughters as co-heirs. The hall and manor quickly passed from their husbands to Henry Golding.

The Goldings were a well-known Essex family whose seat was at Belchamp St Pauls and Henry became a leading figure in the district as soon as he took up residence. In 1571 he became a freeman of

Colchester and its Member of Parliament the same year. He extended the hall, but it is likely that it was Robert Forster, not Henry Golding, who built the top two stages of the tower and carried out the other 16<sup>th</sup> century work. On Henry Golding's death the hall passed to his brother Arthur, a poet, translator and scholar who lived there until 1598. Beset by financial worries and law suits he returned to Belchamp St Pauls where he died a ruined man in 1606. The hall was sold and the buyer was none other than Lord Petre of Ingatestone Hall, who settled it on one of his sons on the occasion of his marriage. The hall itself is described at this time as an ancient edifice, built chiefly by the Tendring and Golding families, and adorned by nine escutcheons of their arms(8).

Another aspect of the church emerges from a terrier of 1610(9) attested by the then rector, Timothy Munk, and Edward Kempton, churchwarden. This details the glebe, which was widely scattered and partly in out-tithes from other parishes. An example of this is the Old Holt land mentioned in 1254, which is probably that referred to here as 'three acres in the great field lying within the parish of messing called Sudgetts abutting upon a great yard being parcell of Old Holts'. It is not perhaps surprising, therefore, that the terrier also states 'we have no parsonage house, neither have had within memory of man'.

In 1607 the hall and manor were sold to Sir John Swinnerton, of Stanway Hall. He rebuilt Stanway Hall and refurbished both Stanway and Lexden churches, but there is no evidence of money being spent on Little Birch. Thereafter the manor descended in the Swinnerton family and eventually by marriage to Sir William Dyer of Tottenham, by whom it was sold in 1724 to James Round, a bookseller of Exchange Alley.

The most distinguished inhabitant of the hall in the 17<sup>th</sup> century was John Eldred, a celebrated merchant and navigator whose journey to Tripolis in Syria was described by Hakluyt. Eldred settled in Colchester, retiring to Birch Hall where he died in 1646. At this time the church was used as a burial place of both the Swinnertons and the Eldreds and a number of their escutcheons and monuments existed in the church. Probably in the 1630s John Eldred and Lady Swinnerton jointly repaired the church, restoring it from what was described as a ruinous condition. But by 1682 however, the church had again fallen into disrepair. The immediate causes seem to have been the Swinnertons now existing only in the female line, the troubles of the Civil War and the lack of a distinguished tenant at the hall. In the 1660s both Stanway and Layer Marney were also ruinous, though the latter was repaired.

An inquisition of 1650 repeated that there was no parsonage house, and valued the glebe at £5-8s pa, and the tithes at £15. It added that there was no incumbent and that the patroness, Lady Swinnerton, had recently died. There was in fact a rector, although so little in evidence that there is no record of his ever having been sequestered. This was Richard Mitchell, who had succeeded one Timothy Munk in 1630, and he did in fact recover the living after the Commonwealth until his death in 1666. During the Commonwealth there is no evidence that Little Birch was served at all until 1557. It is likely that Richard Rand, resident at Easthorpe Hall, assisted until his duties at Marks Tey and elsewhere became too onerous. In that year Thomas Martin, previously rector of Chipping Ongar, was appointed 'lecturer'. He was ejected from Layer Breton in 1660, but was subsequently ordained and became rector of Alresford in 1661 and vicar of Elmstead before his death in 1672.

After this not only was the church ruinous and the living of little value, but there was even confusion about the patronage. Newcourt, normally so knowledgeable, was in 1700 unable to discover whose title it was (10). This confusion arose from the descent of the Swinnertons through co-heiresses. Presentations were in fact made, shared amongst several parties, but became irregular. Obadiah Paul held it in plurality with Easthorpe from 1671, presented by Charles II because of lapse. He resigned in favour of Francis Dezee 1695, though he continued to hold Easthorpe until 1703. Thereafter presentations were formally as those of Great Birch.

In 1754, when James Haggard was inducted as rector, prayers were said within the ruined walls. Soon after this Haggard was appointed rector of Bennington, and Great and Little Birch were then united.

After this time there are a number of descriptions of the church as a mere ruin, roofless, and its walls partly demolished. Its decay appears to have been gradual neither arrested by repair nor assisted by actual destruction. The tower appears to have received some care as a landmark and feature once it became private property.

### **Pre-Restoration Rectors**

The following list of pre-Restoration rectors is basically that of Newcourt's Repertorium, but there are certain additions and alterations. The dates are of presentations except where stated.

Michael between	1194 & 1238	John Marshall	1440
Richard	1276	Will Luttrell	1441
Adam de Kersey	1335	John Gibbon	1443
Roger	c1348	John Wyn	1469
John	1351	Edmund Bonifant	1469
William Cook de		John Merryn	1482
Okely Exch	1355	Will Cresswell	1489
Simon de Hodeline	1355	Rob Ancock	-
Roger de Kestevene	d.1369	John Wardman	1502
John de Tendring	1369	John Richer	1502
John de Hertehall	1370	Will Hebbe	-
John Petit	-	Nic Rawlins	1520
John Smith	1381	John Saltmarsh	1528
Will Danewell	1391	Thomas Brand	1544
Ric Aldbrough	-	Rad Smith	1584
Will Northwold	1426	Will Taylor	1591
John Clarke	1427	Tim Munke	1608
Clement Wellys	1434	Ric Mitchell	1630
Will Estrington	1435		

#### **References:**

- 1) Rodwell W. & K. Historic Churches: a wasting asset. CBA Research Report No. 19(1977) 97 Contains a brief archaeological assessment.
- 2) RCHM Essex iii(1922) 8-9 contains a fuller description.
- 3) Morant P. History of Essex Vol 11(1768) 185.
- 4) " " " " 193.
- 5) Round J.H. see note in Trans. Essex Arch. Soc. NS XV(1921) 314-5
- 6) 56, GEO. 111 c31 received Royal Assent 20.6.1816.
- 7) Morant P. History of Essex Vol 11(1768) 184.
- 8) " " " " 185.
- 9) Copy in ERO.
- 10) Newcourt R. Repertorium Ecclesiasticum Londinense (1708-10)

A.J. West would be grateful for any further information about the history of the church.

## **OBITUARIES**

### **Mrs Ruth Carter**

Ruth Carter, a long-standing member of the Group died in August 1982. Ruth and her husband Mac joined the Group in its early days and took an active part in all its affairs. At that time they farmed at Tolleshunt Darcy and both had wide archaeological and antiquarian interests. Ruth in particular, was very much concerned with folklore and was a fund of knowledge in this field, making a great pair with Mac whose interests were much wider. For many years they were both Committee members and meetings were held at their house, Bushes Cottage, Layer Breton. Here Ruth was a wonderful hostess keeping us (the Committee members) sustained with coffee and biscuits throughout the whole evening. It was more like a family party than a Committee meeting, but with Kay de Brisay as our mentor we managed to get through the business efficiently.

Ruth had not been fit since breaking a leg a few years ago, but her sudden death is a great loss, not only especially to Mac, who himself is far from well, but to all members of the Group, despite the fact that they had been unable to attend meetings recently.

ABD.

### **Mr Reginald W. Palmer**

Reg Palmer died 7<sup>th</sup> February, 1982, he was 78. He had been an active member of the Group for many years. Reg came to Colchester in the mid-1960s on retiring from the headship of a training school for post office workers in the Midlands. He was soon introduced to the Group by Mac Carter, taking part in many excavations and also as a member of the Committee. We shall always remember Reg for his constant helpfulness as well as his manual skills. When Kay de Brisay fell ill at the time of the Salt Weekend which she had organised, Reg took over the entire operation. Not only did he take charge and supervise the helpers and look after the speakers, but he managed to arrange a telephone link-up between the Conference Room at the University and Kay's home so that she was able to hear the talks from her bedside. Looking at our excavation equipment now one sees the signs of Reg's careful handiwork, such as the excavation notice board, various sign posts and pieces of equipment which he had made with such care and ingenuity. Latterly Reg became somewhat deaf, but he still came to the weekly Winter meetings and never complained of his handicap. All our sympathy goes to Dorothy, his widow, who we are still glad to see at our talks each week.

KAE.

## **WINTER MEETINGS 1981/2**

**Recent excavations at Ivy Chimneys, Witham** 19<sup>th</sup> October, 1981

Mr. B.R.G. Turner Archaeology Dept., Essex County Council.

Mr Turner explained that the site overlooks the London/ Colchester Roman road and that Roman pottery and coins had been noticed in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Between 1964-72 the local amateur group had conducted limited excavations during which votive offerings, suggesting a religious nature for the site, had been found. The certainty of forthcoming building development led the DOE to finance an area excavation which was carried out by the County. By this time much of the surrounding land had been built over and there had been much 'treasure hunting'.

The excavations revealed early IA occupation including the drainage ditch of a dwelling hut with post and stake holes of subsidiary buildings, querns and an oven. In the 1<sup>st</sup> century a substantial wooden building was erected in a 50' x 60' enclosure. This was identified as an RB temple, close by was the dark silt of a large pond with ditches for filling and for overflow arranged so as to regulate the water level; the shallow end was lightly cobbled. Nearby was a large post hole and also a deposit of 30 palaeolithic axes. This suggests a Jupiter column, the axes being regarded as Jupiter's thunderbolts. The whole assemblage has several parallels in Gaul. Further east were signs of an apsidal Roman temple, with deposit of horse, dog and sheep bones. Over 1,500 small coins and many deliberately broken bracelets, brooches etc. were found in depressions filled in from middens and covered over with gravel.

**The Dunwich Underwater Project.** 26<sup>th</sup> October, 1981

Mr G. Cousins

Three members of the Dunwich Exploration team brought a variety of pieces of their diving equipment to the meeting and explained its use in exploring the remains of Dunwich, now under the waves.

Mr. Cousins first gave an outline of how the city, first referred to in the 7<sup>th</sup> century, had grown in importance until it became the chief East Anglian town, covering a square mile. It had 19 churches, chapels and religious houses but its prosperity, based on its port facilities, rapidly faded when the harbour was blocked by the growth of a shingle spit. Efforts to cut the shingle bank were unavailing and the sea also continued to erode the coast at the rate of one metre annually until little now remains.

Diving takes place in adverse conditions, surveying is difficult, visibility under water is very restricted, there are strong currents which alter the accessibility of objects on the sea bed. In spite of this large pieces of carved stone have been lifted and the accuracy of a 14<sup>th</sup> century map confirmed to a good extent. The position of the Maison Dieu has been established. One major find which was brought ashore was a quarter ton part of a 10' x 4' 14<sup>th</sup> century tombstone from the ruins of All Saints Church.

**Excavations at Goltho.** 2<sup>nd</sup> November 1981

Mr. G.T.M. Beresford FSA.

Mr Beresford began excavation on the site of the manor house of the deserted village of Goltho, nine miles east of Lincoln, in 1971. First findings showed there had been a substantial 1<sup>st</sup> century RB building nearby, though it was also known that there had been IA occupation. After the RB building period the site was abandoned to the 8th century.

The excavations centred on the castle mound, first to be revealed were the post holes of a hall, below this the remains of a motte and bailey castle and below this again the post holes of a manor house of around 1,000AD. Yet further down were traces of a 9<sup>th</sup> century hall, with kitchen, weaving sheds etc., nearby, and even further down again, were signs of 8<sup>th</sup> century and RB settlements. The 9<sup>th</sup> century hall was approximately 75' x 18', the long sides being bowed. It must have had tie beams (there were no buttresses) and a Romanesque roof construction. It was stave built and had resemblances to Greenstead church and to a similar construction at Hemse, Norway. The outside was probably decorated and the roof ornamented with finials. This substantial building had certainly not been built by the villagers as the structures contemporary with it had been. Those were clay tempered with chopped straw and timber laced as a present day African house. The next hall on the site was shorter; it left post holes and between the posts had been sleeper sills on which stood staves. Unlike the previous building the hall was not partitioned - the owner lived elsewhere.

After the conquest a small motte and bailey castle was erected and the defences enlarged. Stone was scarce so the motte was revetted with timber, turf and stones picked off the fields. Part of a bridge

structure was found.

Finally in the 12<sup>th</sup> century it was held by the strong Kyme family who had over 100 manors. They cut off the top of the rampart, threw it in the enclosure and built thereon a hall of unusual shape. It had an aisle all the way round, similar to stave churches in Norway and probably had a clerestory.

The only building on the site now is the little brick 15<sup>th</sup> century church on the site of the early mediaeval one.

**Excavations at Stonea.** 9<sup>th</sup> November, 1981

Mr. R. Jackson, British Museum Prehistoric and RB Antiquities Dept.;

Stonea in earlier times was an island in the Fens. Signs of a substantial Roman building, worked stone fragments and box tiles had been noted. Two casual finds, one a rare gold votive plaque dedicated to Minerva, and the other a knife handle bearing a head of Minerva, suggested the site might have been a temple. However, to date, no temple has been located.

So far two sites at Stonea have been investigated. One is Stonea Camp on the edge of the peat Fen. This is a D-shaped IA fortified site with defences along the straight side which followed the edge of a now vanished watercourse, and a treble rampart along the curved side. The whole site has been much damaged by recent ploughing. The speaker showed how the rampart had been slighted soon after construction. Coins found in the top soil were mid first century. It seemed that the construction and slighting were related to Roman action against the Iceni in 47 AD, rather than events during the Boudiccan revolt.

The second site was at Stonea Grange, a little to the north of the camp, also much damaged by ploughing. Here foundations of a 16m square building constructed of layers of stone and mortar were found. The foundations were 1m deep and 1m thick, at one end there had been an apse. The structure is interpreted as a tower; it had later been added to with a hall and a row of rooms on a corridor. It had been built regardless of expense, the stone having been fetched 30 miles; glass and plaster painted to imitate marble were also used. Three representations were found of Minerva, so a temple to that Goddess is probably nearby. The building was built about 130 AD and the site abandoned about 200AD. Whatever activities continued there had ceased in mid 3<sup>rd</sup> century - a period of flooding. In the next century the site was levelled and a building erected on it.

**Roman villas around Verulamium.** 16<sup>th</sup> November, 1981

Mr. D.S. Neal FSA., DOE.

Mr Neal referred to the large number of villas, all by streams and rivers in this part of the Chilterns, but was particularly concerned with Gorhambury, very near the Roman town.

Excavations showed the earliest sign of occupation to be Neolithic, shown by a hut, there was also evidence of BA occupation but the most important pre-Roman finds were the ditches of the IA round enclosures with massive gateways at the entrance. There were three phases for these enclosures. One hut was constructed with posts, another built on sleeper foundations, but the most striking was an aisled hall or barn, previously unknown in this country. Its plan suggested the aping of a Roman villa; it could be described as a 'proto' villa. The site had a disastrous fire in Boudiccan times but then had been used for a small masonry villa with a cellar. Fragments of mosaic and stucco showed that it had some importance. The IA ditches were kept and used by the new owner. The coins on the site stop at 353 AD; by then the buildings had been demolished and a barn built over the boundary of the two enclosures. This barn shows no sign of structure between the post holes - the spaces may have been filled in with thatch. A fine collection of iron tools was found.

All the villas in the district show a general decline from about 300 AD, as did Verulamium itself. Of the other villas in the area, only Lockleys and Park St. were built over native farmsteads; all seem to have been established about 75 AD. The study of manorial documents indicates that estate boundaries at Gorhambury continued into the middle ages and some modern boundaries go back, in fact, to the IA.

**A practical approach to archaeological evidence.** 23<sup>rd</sup> November 1981

Mr. D. Harvey, North Worcestershire College.

Mr Harvey is a potter and approached his subject as such, rather than as an archaeologist. He described developments in pottery making from Neolithic times onwards. He explained that clays were either primary, that is found on the site of origin (in England mostly in the west country), or secondary, where the clay formed from the weathering of felsparic rocks, was moved by streams and deposited in estuarine conditions. Secondary clays have a high proportion of impurities and so melt at lower temperatures than primary clays; iron found in them is the cause of red coloration in pottery. Clay with a high calcium content produces yellowish white pottery.

If a clay is too sticky, for example for coil pot making, sand should be added. Some clays contain pebbles which can be removed by making into a slurry and sieving, or into a slip and then pouring off. The addition of sand and quite large particles is evident in BA urns and the fine clay used in Samian ware seems to have been produced by pouring off the slip and then allowing the small particles to settle. There is no real distinction between clays and glazes, it is a question of the proportion of flux.

Early pottery fired at low temperatures in bonfire conditions was soft and not sufficiently robust to withstand the leverage of a handle. The first handles are broad and strap like to give a wide spread of leverage. But the handleless beakers were shaped so that they were convenient to hold. Pre-wheel pottery was made round so that any shocks would go round the fragile fabric and the pots would be less likely to break.

The speaker showed slides of experimental firing in bonfire and primitive kilns. He explained that it is essential to get the clay to dry out before firing and to raise the temperature slowly. The iron in clay normally gives a red coloured pot when fired in an oxidising flame. In a reducing flame (that produced by burning smokey material) black pottery is produced. The glazed appearance of some early pottery is produced by burnishing before firing when leather-dry.

The Romans obtained black pottery by using a slip containing manganese. They, and other Mediterranean potters, obtained a kiln temperature of 1,100 degrees, as against a maximum of 800 degrees obtainable in an open fire. Firing pottery in early type kilns would take 7-8 hours, though briquetage as found in salt production could be made from coarse clay in 1½ hours. In later times kilns were improved by introducing baffles which made the heat circulate through the kilns, this also economised on fuel.

**Roman administration in the Western Provinces.** 30<sup>th</sup> November 1981

Mr. M.W.C.Hassall FSA., Institute of Archaeology, London.

Until 212 the main division of the free male population was between citizen and non-citizen. An example of a citizen was Marcus Favonius Facilis, the centurion buried at Colchester.

In Britain it is likely that the Governor's palace is represented by the large building formerly on the site of Canon Street Station, London. Britain, being heavily garrisoned, was an Imperial Province. One of the Governor's chief responsibilities was to see that the Annona, the corn tax, was raised in his province. Much of the administration however, was the responsibility of the Procurator, especially in raising the land and property taxes. A tile stamped PP BR LON(Procurator of the Province of Britain, London) and a well preserved wooden writing tablet branded with his stamp have been found.

The imperial post system, with its staging posts and rest houses was also an important part of the administration - a slow post for heavy loads and a fast one for mail and important passengers who needed a pass to use the facilities. Local administration was generally left in the hands of local people of influence except in the four Coloniae.

**Excavations in Leicestershire.** 7<sup>th</sup> December, 1981

Mr P. Liddle, Archaeological Survey Officer, Leicester Museums.

Mr Liddle described Leicestershire's concept of Community Archaeology, a system of recruiting volunteers in parishes, or groups of parishes, to carry out systematic field-walking. Fieldwalking had discovered a wide distribution of IA sites, hitherto unsuspected; also evidence of extensive IA corn-growing and the use of querns. There is evidence, too, to show that many Roman townships were on the sites of pre-Roman settlements. Leicester Forest, a hunting preserve in mediaeval times, was also a forested area in Roman times when it was ringed with tile and pottery kilns.

Earthworks at Gumley, once thought to be the site of King Offa's palace, are now recognised as a

deserted village. Keythorpe also seems to be a deserted village and the rectangular mark there is due to a moat. After referring to finds at Thurleston (2<sup>nd</sup> century BC to Roman), the motte and bailey at Hallaton, a Roman site photographed by Jim Pickering which may be a villa or a religious site. The speaker concluded with a discussion of an important site at Medbourne. Medbourne had long been recognised as a Roman site from coin finds and the discovery of a 3<sup>rd</sup> - 4<sup>th</sup> century mosaic floor (now lost). A Saxon spearhead had been found and a number of other artefacts. It was the last parish in historic Leicestershire to be enclosed. Aerial photographs show probable BA barrows and in Roman times there was a town of about 75 hectares. As in other small Roman towns iron slag finds show that smelting was carried on. All old field names are known and some of them are suggestive of ancient occupation. The speaker thought it probable that the mediaeval field system could be reconstructed.

**Ipswich and its Urban Origins.** 25<sup>th</sup> January, 1982.

Mr K. Wade, Urban Archaeologist, Suffolk County Council.

Ipswich has always been a safe harbour and pottery found there showed it to be one of the first established towns after the Roman period in N. Europe. The first systematic study of Saxon pottery from Ipswich was made by Hurst in 1957, later, Stanley West found middle Saxon pottery in the dig at Carr Street. No further excavations took place until 1974 by which time much had been destroyed. Rubbish pits, rich in mid-Saxon remains show that much food had been consumed, presumably exchanged for urban products, mainly pottery. Goods imported from Flanders and the Meuse Valley (6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> centuries) prove trade connections with the continent. Wine came in barrels and one Bavarian type has been carbon dated to 871AD. Associated pottery can now date the transition from Ipswich to Thetford ware as about that time. Both these wares were manufactured in Ipswich. There is little doubt that the early Saxon towns were due to Royal initiative; they were not market towns as we know them, but places for exchanging royal patronage. Some Royal towns of this period have their foundations confirmed by documents though not in the case of Ipswich where there was little growth in the Saxon period. No Viking material has been found though there are records of Viking raids of a very destructive nature.

**A Romano-British Cemetery at Stebbing.** 2<sup>nd</sup> February, 1982

Mr C. Gowing.

Two villas in this parish had been established from excavation and casual finds at a third site, N.W of Porters Hall, seemed to justify further excavation. An amphora had been found and enquiries brought other facts to light including the finding of a Roman jewellery box which had been unearthed at the erection of an electricity pylon. The box contained an exceptional silver brooch of the Flavian period and two well worn coins of 57 BC. Also found there were part of a Roman glass burial urn together with the handle of a fine glass vessel and the corroded iron fitting of a wooden box which had contained the whole assemblage.

These finds encouraged the speaker to make a systematic excavation which revealed a Roman cemetery. BA occupation of the site was indicated by a concentration of BA flints. In one Roman burial was a coin of Faustina together with a solitary sherd, other such finds have been made elsewhere and the speaker referred to the mention of scattering sherds by Hamlet. Another grave had the ashes of a prismatic glass jar similar to the one in Colchester Museum. The cemetery had been provided with an enclosure ditch in which were 1<sup>st</sup> century finds and cremated skull fragments. Some of the cremations had no skull confirming the IA nature of the population as such a ritual is pre-Roman. It is likely that there was a villa near the cemetery. The Stebbing cemetery, like others roundabout has, so far, revealed no burial dating after the second quarter of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century.

**The Underwater Archaeology of the Mary Rose.** 8<sup>th</sup> February, 1982.

Miss A. Hildred, Member of the Mary Rose diving team.

The Mary Rose sank within sight of Henry VIII in 1545 with the loss of 700 lives. She had been 'modernised' nine years earlier and become one of the first ships with gun ports. On sinking she settled at right angles to the tide which, in time, made a scour pit and wore away half the ship. The remaining half is well preserved though some guns and finds were removed in 1836. At the site of the wreck the water was 50' deep and to this must be added the depth of the scour - another 25'. A grid of stout wire was laid out, all divers were provided with a plan and given a tour of the site with an experienced worker when they joined the project. The divers removed the silt gradually with air lifts and deposited the silt down tide on spoil heaps. A plan of the ship was drawn. A vast number of well preserved artefacts were recovered, many in the chests in which they had been stored in the ship and some of the chests were raised intact. Finds included bows, arrows, barrels of salt meat, pulleys, sail-making material and shoes (in hundreds). Altogether 400 combs were recovered, six or seven sundials as well as a box containing the complete set of tools of a Tudor

barber surgeon. A video camera recorded the various stages of the excavation and all finds, together with their positions, were computer recorded. Even the ballast was examined and revealed oak leaves and plum stones. Heavy deck Timbers were removed to lighten the wreck for lifting.

**Recent Excavations at Culver Street, Colchester.** 15<sup>th</sup> February, 1982.

Mr N. Smith, Colchester Archaeological Trust.

This rescue was prior to large scale redevelopment which will remove all archaeological levels. The site is part of the original fortress of the 20<sup>th</sup> Legion and it determined the plan of the later Roman town. Centurion's quarters were recognised, built of clay blocks on cement and pebble bases which showed marks of the shuttering used. The quarters were substantial houses and were retained when the fortress was dismantled. The surviving blocks were hardened by fire during Boudicca's revolt. Found to the east of the former library, were the Tribunes' houses, of more typical Roman military style. The houses had cess pits about 10' deep containing drains. In one a number of broken high quality north Italian egg-shell ware vessels were found. When the army moved on in 49 AD these houses were not retained. The street grid of the fortress became the basis of the grid of the Colonia. Later houses were more flimsy than earlier ones. After the revolt a massive clearing up was undertaken and the burnt clay spread over much of the site and the roads re-gravelled. The town had already been extended to the east, chiefly to accommodate public buildings, the temple, theatre and basilica. One find was a broken amphora of unusual type (late 1<sup>st</sup> century) originally filled with fish sauce. Unfortunately the mosaic discovered and drawn in the 19<sup>th</sup> century had been removed. Under the floor of a court-yard type house were the bones of four still-born children. An unexpected feature (behind the library) was the discovery of a large basilica type building over the sites of 2<sup>nd</sup> century houses. The walls were 15m thick, mainly of rubble and important enough to have been allowed to encroach on the street. A similar structure was found at Lincoln and a suggested use, though without supporting evidence, was that it was a church. A Saxon hut had been cut through a mosaic floor, it was of 7<sup>th</sup> century, measured 12' x 9' and was the third such hut found in Colchester.

**North Shoebury Excavation** 22<sup>nd</sup> February, 1982

Mr. J. Wymer FSA.

This large scale rescue dig of a multi-period settlement is on the site of the fertile brick earth laid down as a windborne late Pleistocene deposit. The Neolithic landscape was very different from the present one, there have been great alterations in sea and land levels, though by early BA times the coastline had assumed a shape much as it is now. Mr Wymer found domestic pottery, daub, loom weights, 'Ardleigh' type urns sherds and shell fish and mammal remains. A cremation pit had piles of burnt peas (? a funeral feast), the first proof of pea growing in this country. Grain storage pits were also found. There was little early IA material though a considerable amount had been found nearby, but in searching for Saxon pottery a ditch full of Belgic pottery was discovered. Also of this period was a round hut with a drainage gully and a pit in the middle. It had no finds though nearby was a pit with a cranium and a broken pot. Bones, many of dogs, were well preserved in this soil. The Roman pottery was mainly 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> century. A smith's furnace testified to iron working. Although pagan Saxon burials were seen in 1972, Mr Wymer found none. The site of North Shoebury Hall (only the associated barn now stands) was investigated. A large enclosure with Thetford ware was the probable site of the Domesday manor. This was followed by an aisled hall (12th century) which was replaced by the third manor - the 16th century hall recently demolished.

**Boat Archaeology and the work of the Archaeological Research Centre.** 1<sup>st</sup> March 1982

Miss S.V.E. Heale, National Maritime Museum

The speaker is concerned with archaeological boat research, chiefly in NW Europe, from earliest times. She gave many instances of illustrations of boats and ships, for example Scandinavian rock carvings of the BA, the Caergwle gold-covered bowl, made of pitch and considered to represent a large coracle, a carving on a pillar at Bantry and a BA wooden model, apparently of a ship with human figures. Later examples include the ships on the Bayeux Tapestry, a ship on a seal and another on a medieval coin. Until recently excavation of ships and boats from peat or other waterlogged strata was not systematic and what was found often perished quickly through drying out. It needs careful excavation to show whether logs, pots and bundles of reeds, which were all used in boat building, were part of boats or not. Recent excavations at Ferriby and Brigg have employed modern methods and revealed that boats made from logs, sewn with vegetable fibre and caulked with moss were of considerable size. The Ferriby example is dated to 1500 BC. Here excavation was difficult as it could only be done at low tide and in daylight. The Brigg raft was found to be mid 7<sup>th</sup> century. Dendrochronology is sometimes useful for dating. The speaker concluded by describing the 10<sup>th</sup> century Graveney ship from Kent (now represented in the Museum by an authentic fibre glass cast); the five 10<sup>th</sup> century trading and war ships sent across a fiord; the Sutton Hoo ship and a Viking ship found in

Ireland. Experiments have been carried out to build copies of early ships using stone axes and other early tools. The amount of effort required to build these early vessels is an indication of the importance of water transport.

**Property & Community, East Brittany in the 9th century.** 15<sup>th</sup> March 1982

Dr W. Davies, Dept of History, University College, London.

Dr Davies described her researches into the Cartulary of Redon in East Brittany. She was especially concerned in the light which this threw on the position of priests in the communities of 9th century Brittany. The Cartulary was a collection of early 9th century charters, leases etc., some dating back to 800 AD and unique as private charters. They primarily concern grants of land, nearly all quite small, to Redon monastery which show light on early transactions. Priests acted as sureties to settlements of disputes and as witnesses. They acted as notaries, as agents of Redon and other small monasteries, and also for lay landlords. Little is known from these documents about their spiritual functions. Many priests owned their own property, often inherited, and the priesthood often 'ran in families'. Priests fall into two categories in their documents. Firstly they are found as individuals acting in transactions in a wide spread of places, or on the land concerned, or, in cases where the property was being given to Redon monastery, in the church there. Secondly, priests are found acting in transactions almost entirely in one place and their names appear frequently for decades. The former type appear to come from Redon, the latter are locally based, and here is evidence of a 'proto' parochial system going back before the founding of Redon monastery. These local priests were not parish priests as they occur in tiny colleges, up to four in a place. It is interesting to note that priests seem to be the only class to have money to take pledges for, or to buy-up land. How this was so is not clear.

HP.

Note: - This set of informal notes is produced as an 'aide memoire'; they are not reports which have been seen by the lecturers.

## Colchester Archaeological Group

### WINTER MEETINGS 1982/83

In the Lecture Room, Colchester Castle, at 7.30pm

#### 1982

- October 11<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - followed by a short talk.
- October 18<sup>th</sup> RECENT EXCAVATIONS IN CANTERBURY  
T.TATTON-BROWN, Director, Canterbury Archaeological Trust
- October 25<sup>th</sup> RECENT EXCAVATIONS IN LINCOLN  
M.J.JONES FSA, Director, Lincoln Archaeological Trust
- November 1<sup>st</sup> EXCAVATIONS AT NORWICH  
B. AYERS, Field Officer(Norwich), Norfolk Archaeological Unit
- November 8<sup>th</sup> THE PRODUCTION OF MEDIEVAL GLAZED TILES  
B. JOHNSON, Conservator, Norton Priory Museum, Runcorn
- November 15<sup>th</sup> PREHISTORIC LEICESTERSHIRE  
P.N.CLAY, Field Officer, Leicester Museums Archaeological Field Unit
- November 22<sup>nd</sup> RECENT WORK ON SAXON NORTHAMPTON  
J. WILLIAMS, Archaeological Officer, Northampton Development Corporation
- November 29<sup>th</sup> COLCHESTER CASTLE  
P.J.DRURY, Chelmsford Archaeological Trust
- December 6<sup>th</sup> ARCHAEOLOGY IN BUCKINGHAMSHIRE  
M.E. FARLEY, Field Archaeologist, Buckinghamshire County Museum, Aylesbury
- December 13<sup>th</sup> XMAS PARTY - 8 pm. The Church Hall of St Peter's Church, Colchester.

#### 1983

- January 31<sup>st</sup> RECENT EXCAVATIONS IN SOUTH ESSEX  
MISS P.A. GREENWOOD, Assistant Curator, Archaeology & Local History, Passmore Edwards Museum, Stratford
- February 7<sup>th</sup> EXCAVATIONS AT THETFORD, NORFOLK  
A.K.GREGORY, Field Officer, Norfolk Archaeological Unit
- February 14<sup>th</sup> RECENT EXCAVATIONS IN ESSEX  
J.D. HEDGES, County Archaeological Officer, Essex County Council.
- February 21<sup>st</sup> WINDMILLS and WATERMILLS IN ESSEX  
M.R. ORGAN, Mill enthusiast and owner of Ramsey Mill
- February 28<sup>th</sup> ROMAN CAMBRIDGESHIRE  
MISS A.TAYLOR, County Archaeological Field Officer, Cambs.
- March 7<sup>th</sup> AERIAL ARCHAEOLOGY  
J. PICKERING, AFC, FSA
- March 14<sup>th</sup> THE EXCAVATION OF HEN DOMEN MOTTE and BAILEY CASTLE  
P.A. BARKER, FSA, Staff Tutor in Archaeology, Powys. Dept. of Extramural Studies, University of Birmingham

Members - entrance per meeting 20p.

Non-members are welcome – entrance per meeting 50p.