

# Norfolk Historic Buildings Group


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# Newsletter

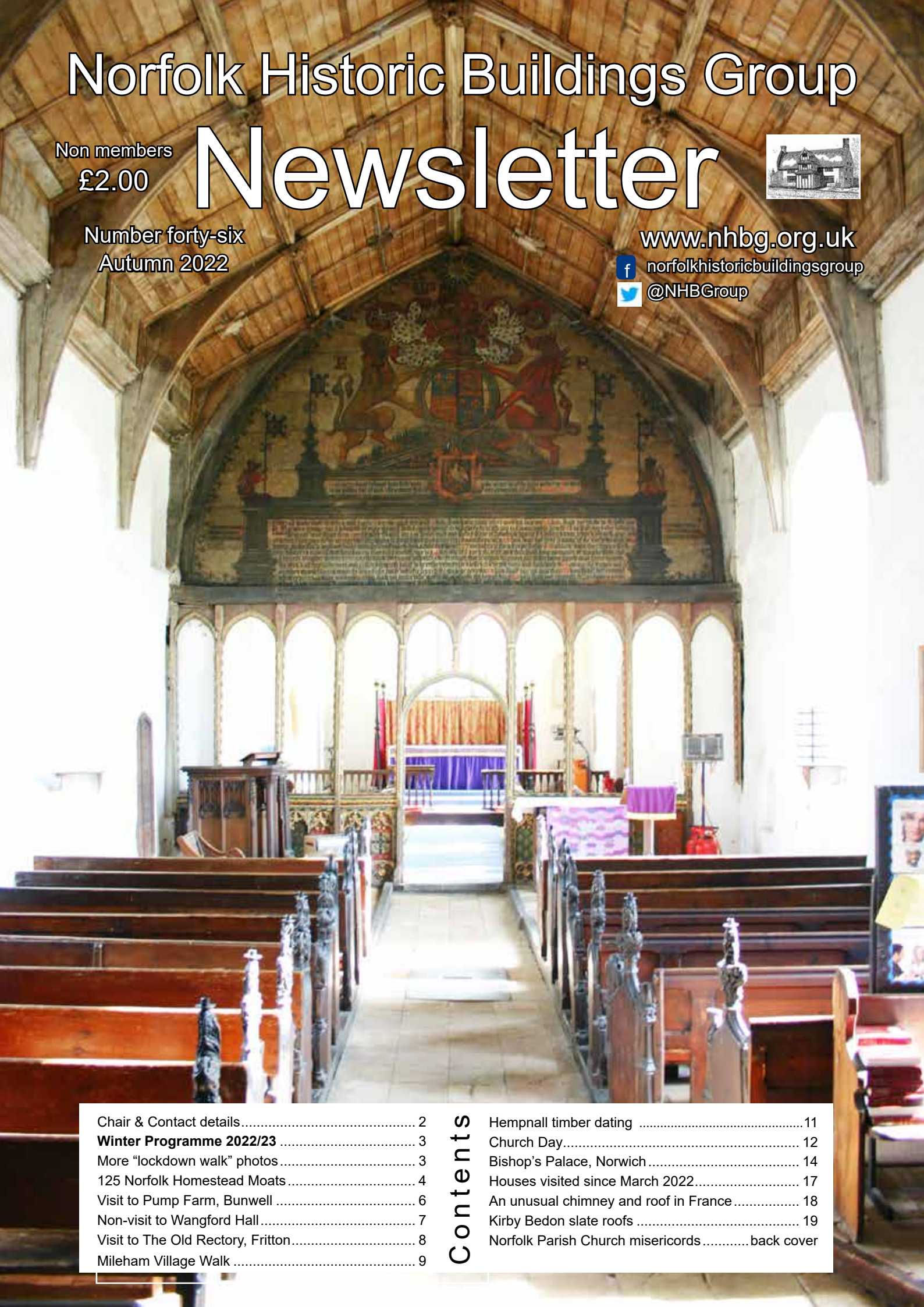


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# CHAIR

During the Summer, the committee has been discussing how to proceed with our winter lectures.

Some members have a desire to return to the situation before 2019 when social mixing was the norm and considered desirable (one-third of the respondents to the questionnaire sent out via email), whilst others are more reticent. The NHBG winter meetings were often a good place to meet new people, catch up with friends and to discuss buildings (and everything else) face to face. The forced use of Zoom has introduced a completely new option - one which allows us to transmit our winter talks to a far wider audience and also to surmount the increasing problem of a membership whose desire to drive at night on country roads is diminishing.

One apparently simple option would be to combine the two methods - to broadcast the talk over Zoom from a winter talk held at a real venue. However, it does introduce additional problems - it is not easy to meld the two methods. It is easy for a speaker sat at their desk on Zoom to relate to the images on the screen. This is far less easy when the speaker has to relate to the audience in person, but also remain in camera shot for the Zoom audience, or at least within the capture range of the microphone. It also involves the costs of both methods, as well as adding speakers' travel expenses, which can be considerable when attracting good speakers from afar. We have also been lucky to find venues with reasonable costs but most central ones want prohibitive commercial fees.

We have tried to open-up the Zoom sessions for a "socialising" period before the talk, but understandably few people are prepared to strike up a conversation with everybody looking at the screen, or to talk across everyone else.

If anyone has a solution, please let the committee know.

**Ian Hinton**  
**Chair, Norfolk Historic Buildings Group**  
**March 2022**  
*ian.hinton222@btinternet.com*

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Two vacancies

**Paul Hodge** *(not on committee)* *Facebook Group*  
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## Administration

### AGM Report - July 30<sup>th</sup> 2022

Thirty-five members attended the AGM held during the lunch break of the visit to Mileham held in the village hall.

Apologies were received from 18 people who are listed in the minutes. The minutes of the 2021 meeting held in The Fox at Garboldisham were accepted as a true record; there were no matters arising.

The Chairman's report covered the activities during the year with a partial return to normal, but said that the use of Zoom will continue for winter meetings so that our talks continue to reach a wider audience - most of our previous talks are available on YouTube. He also reported on the successful visit in April by the VAG to Lynn and outlined the ongoing NHBG research, including Boulton & Paul, the dendro results in Hempnall which may be widened to include a new technique using oxygen isotope analysis for dating wide-ringed timbers, as well as the start of a new project on the buildings of Elm Hill in Norwich.

The Treasurer outlined the accounts which were included in the agenda and the Independent Examiner expressed his satisfaction with their appropriate standard. There was one question about the use of the reserves - which are kept to cover our future research and its publication.

It was reported that there were 255 members at the end of the year - this has been basically the same for a few years.

As there being no other nominations, Maggy Chatterley was re-elected as Treasurer by acclamation and the current committee members were similarly re-elected.

The committee's proposals that NHBG subscriptions and the AGM quorum remain at the current levels were accepted, and that Peter Milne remain as Independent Examiner.

There was no other AGM business.

The Chairman thanked members for attending and everyone who helped run the group, particularly the committee, who have had adapted well to the new arrangements. The meeting was closed at 1:15pm after asking for suggestions for locations for future years.

*Lynne Hodge*

Cover photo - Ian Hinton

The chancel-arch tympanum of 1587 in St Margaret's, Tivetshall; a rare survival, displaying The Decalogue

# Winter Programme

The possibility of arranging joint live and Zoom meetings has been considered (see Chair - left), but the technical difficulties of guaranteeing sufficient broadband speed, and the physical difficulties of having the speaker face the computer camera at the same time as the audience, or arrange for a separate camera operator, have proved insurmountable, so we will be continuing on Zoom.

Lynne will send an email reminder 10 days or so before each talk, inviting you to email Jess for a link to the Zoom session for the talk.

## 2022

October - Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> :

**Norwich Gasworks** (title to be agreed)

November - Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> :

**Pete Goodrum - The 250-year history of Jarrolds; buildings and printworks**

December - Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> :

**Vic Morgan - An exploration of the history of Elm Hill**

## 2023

January - Thursday 12<sup>th</sup>:

**Anna Kettle - The craft trade of Pargeting - an overview of history and techniques, including recent investigations**

February - Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup>:

**Sarah Pearson - Riddlesworth; the development and decline of a Norfolk Estate**

March - tba

**Members night - volunteers welcome**

If the situation, or technology, changes enough to allow joint face to face and Zoom meetings, you will be kept informed by email (or letter for those off-line) of any developments and arrangements for them.

*Mary Ash (Winter programme organizer)*

## Did You Know?

Your newsletter may have arrived with an odd set of stamps on the front. This is because the Royal Mail is ending the use of stamps without a barcode at the end of January 2023. As you can imagine, the NHBG has a large stock of stamps so is using up its stocks of odd values prior to the end date. They can be exchanged for the new versions by sending them off to the Royal Mail, but you cannot get proof of posting and we have almost two-hundred pounds-worth of stamps bought ahead of the annual price rises in previous years.

Be aware that non-barcoded stamps have no value after 31/1/2023 and will engender a £2 charge to the recipient if used.

## "Lockdown walk" photos



We found this tucked away in The Whipple Science Museum in Cambridge whilst hunting for a shoe last. - a wonderful hall containing a pendanted, hammer beam roof with spandrels of flat scrolling timber.

The building is to be found on Free School Lane. It was built in 1618, completed in 1628, as the first Cambridge Free School and this room is the original hall of what became the Perse School. Originally it had two wings and a small courtyard. Falling into disrepair in the early nineteenth century, it then housed the Fitzwilliam Collection until the new museum was completed and subsequently reverted to a school with an added wing in the same style. In 1890 it was bought by the University as part of the New Museums site. The building became an Electrical Laboratory, then part of the Department of Physical Chemistry before the Department of History of Science converted it in 1975 into an intriguing museum housing the Whipple Collection.

It just goes to show that you just never know what lies behind a door that claims to be the Department of Physical Science.

*Rosemary and Robin Forrest*

see <https://www.whipplemuseum.cam.ac.uk>



A deep taper-burn on a French cupboard door was discovered in an antiques market by Les and Vanessa Scott.

Why was the mark made there?

These marks appear just about everywhere. There are obviously early ones around windows, doors and fireplaces thought to protect against the entry of unwanted spirits. They have been found in roofs, placed there before the covering was installed – thought to be protection against fire. They also appear in places close to where the marital bed may have been (Home Farm, Hempnall), - for fertility? They are also seen on equipment such as wine presses – possibly for a blessing on the product. Not many are found on cupboard doors and it would be useful to know the date of these doors. They are obviously older as the joints are pegged – in this country eighteenth and early nineteenth-century doors were made this way - a little late for protection marks perhaps? Was the timing different in France? Has anyone else seen one on a cupboard door?

*Ian Hinton*



## 125 South Norfolk Homestead Moats (April 13<sup>th</sup> 2022)

### Owen Warnock

*This article draws on Owen's dissertation which was written during 2021 for an MA in Landscape History at the University of East Anglia.*



*Elsing Hall*

Images taken from Owen's Powerpoint

Homestead moats – as opposed to moats around castles and towns – are mysterious things. They often surround houses of interest to the NHBG, but always predate those houses. Excavation evidence suggests that most were constructed between 1150 and 1340 and that the vast majority contained houses. However those houses are now long gone: many moat islands are now vacant and if there is a house on the island it will be more recent. Moats typically enclose between ½ acre and 1 acre (although the average in the study area is below ½ acre) within water-filled ditches between 3m and 5m wide. There is virtually no contemporary documentary record about their construction and so there is considerable controversy about why they were dug. While motives such as providing a source of water for domestic or livestock consumption, for fish ponds or for putting out fires might seem obvious, if any of those reasons were the primary motivation for digging, a simple pond would have been much more straightforward. That leave two major contenders for why most were created: first, for defensive or security purposes and second as a matter of status, fashion and aesthetics.

The number of identified homestead moats in England has risen steadily since the early 1960s, reaching a total of over 5,400 and possibly as many as 8,400. They are particularly common in Norfolk, Suffolk and Essex: in 1978 the totals were 822, 1010 and 945 respectively. However, the distribution of moats within counties varies enormously.

A set of 43 parishes wholly or partly enclosed by a 14km by 17km rectangle of territory in South Norfolk was selected for the dissertation. It sought to identify all the “homestead” moats in those parishes. Most of them are recorded in the Norfolk Historic Environment Record and many are shown on larger-scale ordnance survey maps, but nine sites were added to those on the HER list and twelve sites, referred to as possible moats, were excluded (in those cases where the evidence was considered to be thin). That produced a total of 125 moats. Identifying moats is tricky. We know from maps extending over a period that a rectangular moat can decay over time to a three-sided feature or an L-shape or even a single line. If all that remains is a single line then it may be hard to be sure that there ever was a moat, although aerial photographs, LiDAR and the presence of small “returns” at the end of the remaining ditch may help. It is certain that we will be unaware of some moats which have disappeared completely and will be treating some earthworks as homestead moats when they were not. We just have to do the best we can.

This was illustrated with three examples in the parish of Tacolnестon, all of which are discussed in the NHBG Journal no 4 on that parish. The first case is 275m from the church is still complete and water-filled; medieval and post-medieval pottery was found when the ditches were dredged. Field names support the suggestion that this was a manor house site, in the typical Hall-Church complex of later Saxon times.



*Manor-house moat site in Tacolnестon close to the church?*



*William's Manor moat - visible as a crop mark? later flowering showing deeper soil*

In contrast, the second moat is what may have been the site of the second manor within Tacolnестon, Williams Manor, is now all but invisible on the ground. However there is an aerial photograph showing crop marks of at least one moated enclosure and the 1845 tithe map and early OS maps shows a single ditch of what may have been a second moat. A sketch map from the 1650s and a “Dove Hose (sic) Field” name for an adjacent enclosure support the inference that this was a manor house site.

The third case is what is now known as Tacolnестon Hall, and may have been the farmstead of Sparkes in late medieval times. This is surrounded by a moat consisting of one full arm and two



*southern arm of second moat? (Present on early maps) Jack's Wood moated enclosure?*

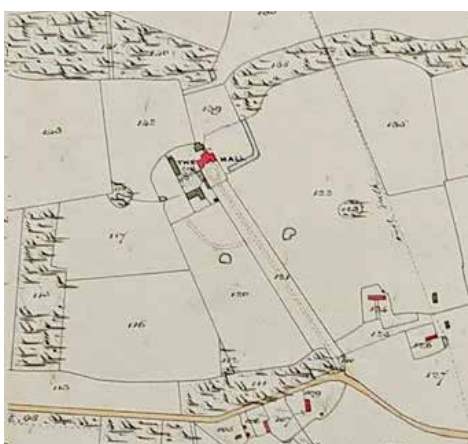
halves, but this may be a modern-era garden feature, since part of the moat lies where the tithe map shows buildings. One well-known complication is that what appear to be later garden features may have been created from medieval homestead moats.

*moated site shown on aerial photo?*





Tacolneston Hall  
/?Sparkes



As it appears on  
the tithe map of  
1845

with more substantial ditches and so were less likely to disappear by natural decay or human intervention.

In addition to the larger number of non-manorial moated sites in the southern half of the study area, other differences were that in the southern half moats were more likely to be in peripheral positions within parishes and were more likely to be adjacent to or very near to land which had, at the time of their construction, been common land.

## Conclusions

It appears that the clayland plateau was relatively under populated at the time of Domesday whereas it was relatively densely populated by 1520 (see Williamson, Skipper and Pound in the Historical Atlas of Norfolk, 1993, pp 42-3, 94-5). Moreover, the proportion of the population that was free in 1066 was relatively high (see Williamson and Skipper in the Historical Atlas of Norfolk, pp 40-1). Bringing all these elements together, there is support for the suggestion that there was a post-Domesday trend of colonisation of the clayland plateau by non-manorial landowners, and that these people (or their descendants) dug moats, albeit ones which were less substantial than those within the main settlements of parishes where, typically, a manor house would be based.

This study has not assisted the debate on why homestead moats were built - security or fashion/status. Perhaps the motivation was status and fashion cloaked by a security excuse: with some substantial landowners (but not all) wishing under the guise of taking security measures, to boast about how much of value was contained within the moated buildings – somewhat similar to the electronic gates outside some large rural houses today.

## Selected findings from the study area

The locations of the moated sites are shown on the map. Moats are shown as red dots, the parish boundaries are purple, the Hundred boundaries in red.

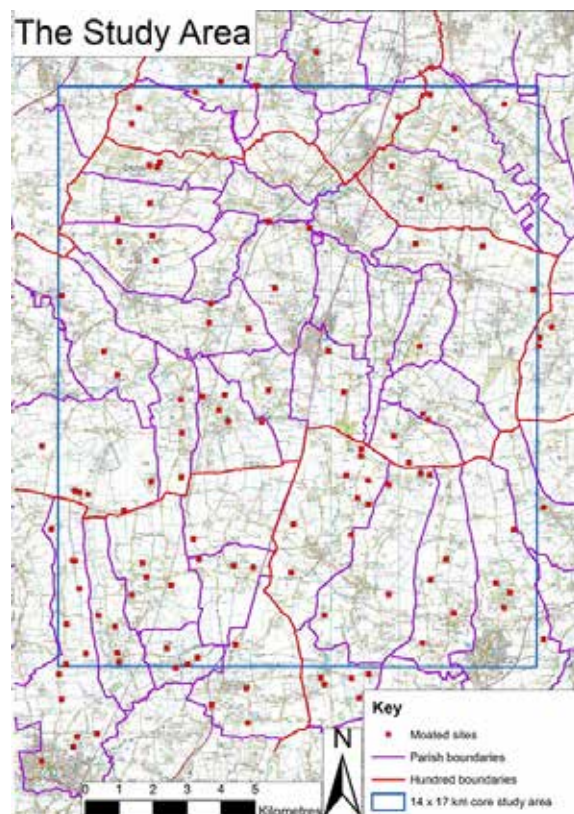
## Density of moats

Most of the land in the southern half of the study area is on the boulder clay plateau, with the land in the northern half lower and more frequently intersected by rivers and streams. Moats are twice as dense in the southern half (0.54 per km<sup>2</sup>) as in the northern half of the area, but even there the density is more than double the Norfolk-wide average.

## Manorial Sites

The extent to which moated sites in the study area were manorial sites was assessed. The period when moat construction was at its height coincided with the period when subinfeudation had led to the number of manors being at its highest, and the study showed that in general the more manors there were within a parish the more moats there would be too. This supports the argument that moats were often associated with manor sites:

There tends to be fewer manors than moats in the southern half of the area – one of a number of differences between the northern and southern halves. Where there is good evidence that a site was manorial, the moats tend to be larger and were more likely to have survived as complete rectangles or three-sided shapes, suggesting that they may have been constructed



VAG Spring Conference talks by NHBG members - 23rd April 2022, now available on Youtube. All 6 can be found by searching for 'Vernacular Architecture Group' in Youtube, or each talk by typing the codes below into your browser:-

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Tom Williamson</b> - Norfolk's geology and landscape and its effect on county's vern. arch. | - <a href="https://youtu.be/4rlgEslEEww">https://youtu.be/4rlgEslEEww</a> |
| <b>Ian Hinton</b> - A stills tour of two Norfolk timber-framed houses                          | - <a href="https://youtu.be/P-QMT0z5aMM">https://youtu.be/P-QMT0z5aMM</a> |
| <b>Jess Johnston</b> - Some buildings of the south Norfolk market town of Diss                 | - <a href="https://youtu.be/VCd07Hos8Tg">https://youtu.be/VCd07Hos8Tg</a> |
| <b>Dominic Summers/ Ian Hinton</b> (Dominic was ill on the day) - Two Norfolk churches         | - <a href="https://youtu.be/Por5-5UmEjo">https://youtu.be/Por5-5UmEjo</a> |
| <b>Anne Woollett</b> - Smaller houses in Norwich including Cathedral Close                     | - <a href="https://youtu.be/CfO0Cr0gvSc">https://youtu.be/CfO0Cr0gvSc</a> |
| <b>Chris King</b> - Some seventeenth-century Norwich merchant's houses                         | - <a href="https://youtu.be/hdzGN147Gi4">https://youtu.be/hdzGN147Gi4</a> |

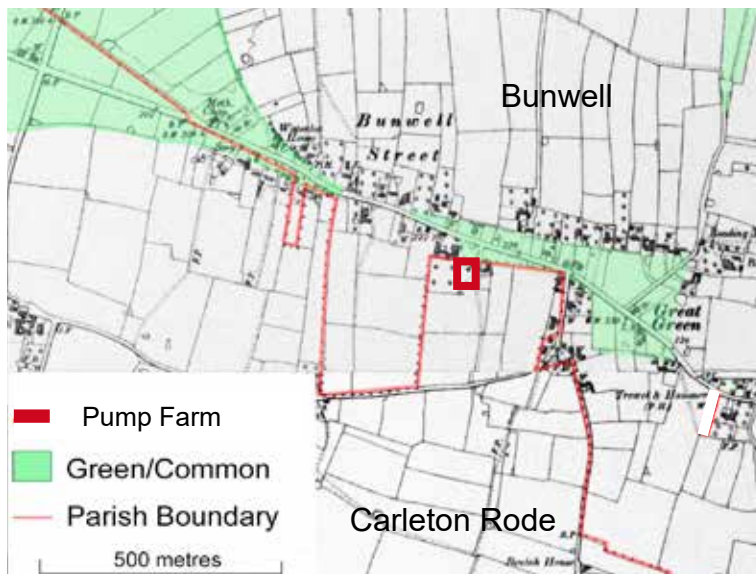
# Summer Visit

## Pump Farm, Bunwell (May 21<sup>st</sup> 2022)

### Nigel Gilham



*Discussions in the garden by part of the group over a cream tea after the tour*      **Photos:**  
Ian Hinton



On a warm, but thankfully dry day, a good contingent of NHBG members visited Pump Farm, situated in the hamlet of Bunwell Street, part of the south Norfolk village of Bunwell, just south of Wymondham. Pump Farm, an early seventeenth century house with further extensions of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, lies adjacent to the edge of what used to be Bunwell Great Green but is actually located in Carlton Rode parish. It is accessed by a track off the main road and has an east-west orientation. The house is currently owned by Sarah Spooner and John Gregory, both based at the UEA.

Ian Hinton led the group around the outside of the house, pointing out various features. He described it as originally a two-celled building with a central chimney stack, probably open to the roof before the insertion of a floor and the raising the eaves to create a second floor. Ian pointed out that the service cell at the west end was added possibly when the roof was raised. Both the southern and northern extensions are brick-built with the parlour bay having been rebuilt in clay lump in the nineteenth century. The house is mainly rendered, and on a northern wall can be seen the shadow of the timber frame bleeding through the render.

that the timber framing between the hall and the service cell was originally the external wall with multiple braces and an upstairs window. Also on the gable end in the service room was another brick stack which had been capped off. The stairs are steep, starting from the hall and located in the service room. Care had to be taken not to hit one's head on the descent!



*Looking west in the hall at the steep stairs and into the service-room extension*

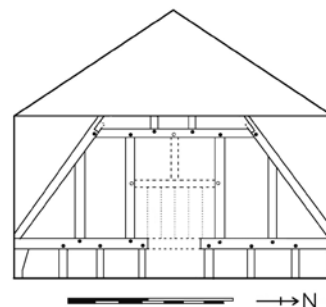


*Current floorplan - the original house in red*

On completion of the outside tour of the house, we split into two groups and explored the interior. The central chimney stack has two hearths between the hall and the parlour, with the hall hearth having holes for mounting the chimney crane to enable the cooking pots to be swung on and off the fire. We saw evidence

The parlour at the east end, having thick clay lump walls, was slightly narrower than the other rooms, by 50cm, and Sarah confirmed that during the winter this was the warmest room of the house.

Upstairs, having negotiated the steep stairs, we could see the original rafters, which Ian noted were set at 55 degrees, so was probably thatched originally. In this frame was evidence of an unglazed window, with an empty diamond shaped mortice for a mullion in the cut-through tie beam, confirming that it was once an outside wall.







*The original end wall of the house, showing the steep roof and position of the gable end window*

In the room above the clay-lump parlour, the wall was considerably thinner with slight timber framing from the nineteenth century which Ian described as “primary bracing”.



*The thin, nineteenth-century, primary bracing*

Ian thought that the extension with the pantiled roof had been added in the eighteenth century as the purlins in the roof had the typical shaved ends to fit into the mortices in the principal rafters. The remainder of the roof is slated.



*The shaved purlins in the roof of the pantiled extension*

After both groups had explored the house, we enjoyed a cream tea in the garden. Sarah then gave us a brief history of Pump Farm and the surrounding area based on her own research. When the house and land were sold, the neighbouring farm buildings were converted to living accommodation and a new house was built on the eastern side of the farmyard.

Many thanks to Ian for organising the visit and excellent sign-posting. Special thanks to Sarah and Jon for allowing us to explore Pump Farm and to Sarah’s mother for the excellent cream tea.

This was an unusual chance to see a smaller two-celled, possibly single-storey, house that was built for a less well-off resident, but has survived until today (ed)

## Summer Visit

### Wangford Hall, Lakenheath (July 9<sup>th</sup> 2022)



The original visit to this house in 2020 had to be cancelled during the various lockdowns, and it was written up as a virtual visit in *Newsletter 40 - Summer 2020*. Unfortunately, this year’s re-arranged visit also had to be cancelled due to Covid.

Listed as a late 16C house, it is obvious that it has an earlier origin because of the open-hall, the display crown-post roof, jetties and display close-studding with large timbers. The history and decline of the building and its status can be traced from a high-ranking hall house, through a general farmhouse, a Georgian dwelling, a Barnardo’s home during WWII and lastly as an agricultural school for troublesome boys.

Fingers crossed for a third attempt at a successful visit in 2023!

## The Old Rectory, Fritton (June 18<sup>th</sup> 2022)

Lynne Hodge



About twenty members gathered in the glorious garden of our hosts Glenn Floyd and Jeff Turnbull. Their house is intriguing, with a thatched single bay, two storey, rendered range, and a large chimney stack which towers above a one and a half storey brick range of two bays with a pantile roof built on a slightly different alignment.

Old photos show that the house had been divided into three cottages but sale particulars of 1952 show that it had been returned to a single dwelling when the dormer windows were extended and added. The official listing text suggests that the rendered part is 17<sup>th</sup> C and the rest later <sup>1</sup>.



English Heritage photo of 1947 <sup>2</sup>

Entering the house though tells a different story. The central room is partly timber-framed with elaborately roll moulded principal and common joists of c1550. The common joists rest on a clamp on the rear wall, suggesting that the floor was inserted and that this was originally an open hall. The front wall is now 18<sup>th</sup> or 19<sup>th</sup> C brick. The partition at the service end has three doors, one to the stairs and two to the service rooms which have now been amalgamated by the removal of the timber-framed wall between.

*the moulded principal and common joists of the inserted hall ceiling*



The mortices for the partition are visible in the rough principal joist (which turned out to be elm (*ed*)). The stairs now lead from this room. In the stair well is an anomalous timber post with a tenon and wall plate, below the level of the current wall plate. The roof structure at this end of the house appears to be 18<sup>th</sup> C with shaved purlins.

At the other end of the house, the parlour is fully timber framed with large studs, arched braces and plain flat-laid common joists all suggesting a date of c1600, although the mantle beam has roll mouldings which may date to c1550. There is some paint on the plain, chamfered, principal joist being the remains of an early decorative scheme.



*the moulded bressumer or mantle beam of the parlour fireplace*

*part of the decorative paint scheme on the parlour principal joist that must have been above the later ceiling (since removed) and therefore escaped being varnished over*



photos: Maggy Chatterley

1 C17 timber-frame cottage, plastered. Thatched roof with gabled ends. Two storeys. One bay, casements with leaded panes, large brick stack on north end. Later brick wing on north end, much modernised, lower pantile roof, single storey and attic, two large modern dormers and casements.

<https://britishlistedbuildings.co.uk/101050294-the-old-rectory-cottage-morningthorpe-and-fritton#.Yq8ThOzMLVg>

(accessed 12/3/2020)

2 [https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/photos/englands-places/card/269862?place=Fritton+Common+\(Morningthorpe\)%2c+South+Norfolk+\(Conservation+Area\)&terms=Fritton&searchtype=englandsplaces&i=4&wm=1&bc=2%7c3&g=7834](https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/photos/englands-places/card/269862?place=Fritton+Common+(Morningthorpe)%2c+South+Norfolk+(Conservation+Area)&terms=Fritton&searchtype=englandsplaces&i=4&wm=1&bc=2%7c3&g=7834)

(accessed 12/3/2020)



The room above the parlour again has very large show timbers and two original unglazed windows with diamond mullions. The tie beam has been cut to give more head room. There is a fireplace with a brick arch though it is difficult to imagine the room could be warmed with no glass in the windows! There are no shutter grooves or rebates so perhaps there were hinged shutters or oiled cloth to keep the draughts out.

### Discussion

There are various puzzles with this house.

- Was the two storey parlour a rebuild or a new addition?
- The chimney appears to be built within the frame of the hall serving two rooms - the parlour and hall - which are now on different alignments.
- If the stack was built in c1550 when the hall was ceiled then why was it so tall?
- Was there a second storey built above the hall at that time which has subsequently been removed?



- What is that anomalous jowled timber post in the stairwell with its upright tenon (apparently for a tiebeam) just below the current wallplate?

We were able to sit in Glenn and Jeff's summer house to discuss these problems at the same time as enjoying the delicious home-made scones and cakes which they kindly served us. Very many thanks to them both for their hospitality and letting us see their fascinating house and beautiful garden - particularly the roses, especially the Queen of Sweden.

left  
the anomalous  
jowled post  
with tenon

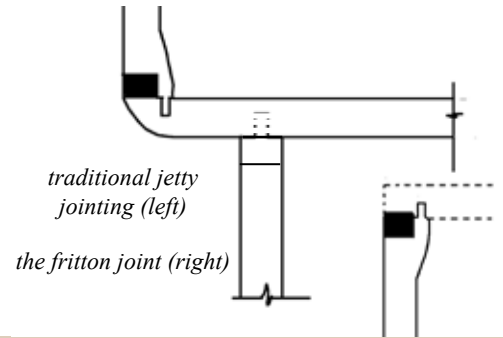
right  
The Queen of  
Sweden



### Postscript

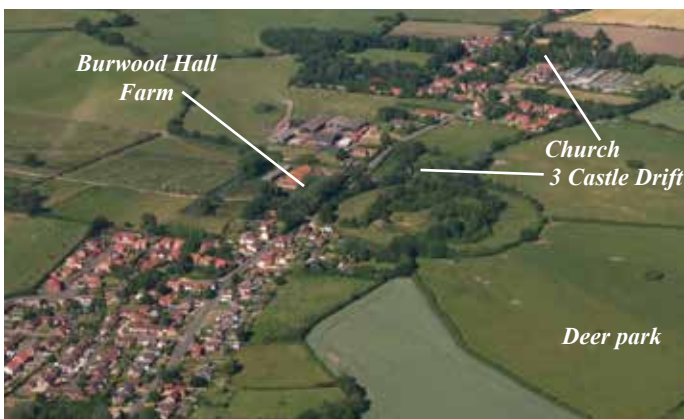
Subsequent to the visit, Les Scott raised the possibility that that the remnant jowled post and tenon (pictured above) were part of a jetty structure, since removed.

Since it was at the rear of the property it is unlikely to have been a jetty as they were essentially for display, therefore most likely to be at the front or side (or both). This is reinforced by the fact that jetty supports do not always have a jowl as it is often only a jointing between two timbers, or the third horizontal timber sits on top of the posts. In a jetty this three-way jowled joint occurs the other-way-up on the end of the extended joists, housing the bressumer.



## Summer Visit

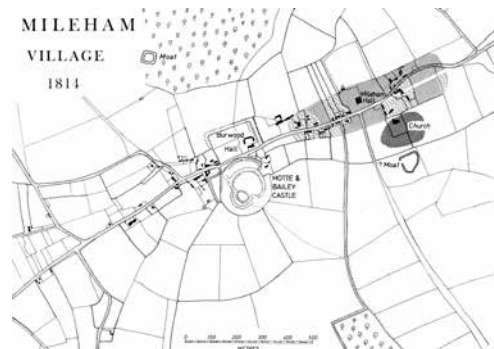
### Mileham village walk (July 30<sup>th</sup> 2022) Anne Woollett



Mileham, castle and village from the west, with the Norman deer park to the right.

Used under Creative Commons Licence - Geograph-5836874 by Chris

Thanks to our excellent guides, Peter & Susanna Wade-Martins and Mark Butler-Stoney, we had a great and varied tour round Mileham, seeing the church, cottages and houses, agricultural buildings and the castle, and thanks to Mark for making access to the castle possible by cutting the grass.



Village plan showing the Middle and Late-Saxon settlement areas (the darker and lighter shading)

Wade-Martins P, 1980, Village Sites in Launditch Hundred, EAA Vol 10

### Norman Castle.

Peter Wade-Martins showed us round the Norman castle which unusually had both an outer ring work and a motte and bailey. Built at a strategic site on the Kings Lynn to Norwich road and at the watershed of the rivers Nar and Scarning/Wensum. The remains of the flint keep are still visible. There was also a substantial enclosure along the road, perhaps for a market or collecting tolls. The castle was probably in decline by the end of C12 but has provided stone and flint for later houses.



remains of the flint keep

Photos: Anne Woollett unless credited otherwise



# Summer Visit

## Cottages

Mark explored with us several cottages close to the castle. One on the Street has walls of flint but a brick frontage from about 1800. No 3 Castle Drift is another early C17 house which has both English- and Flemish-bond brickwork suggesting that the cottage was raised from 1½ to 2 storeys. The west gable wall with a mix of flint and stonework- some worked - from the castle. In their Survey Michael and Susan Brown noted a truncated principal rafter – a structure only occasionally seen in Norfolk roofs. Michael suggested that even though it was not tied into the roof, the t-p-rafter may have provided some support and probably had its origins in Low Countries<sup>1</sup>.

*No 3 Castle Drift with part of the group listening to Michael's analysis of the house*

*photo: Ian Hinton*



*The western wrap-round gable with the reused stone from the Castle below: the truncated principal-rafter roof (photos: Michael Brown)*

A picnic lunch was held in the village hall, followed by the AGM (reported on p2)

## Burwood Hall

Burwood Hall replaced the medieval Burghwood Manor. The hall and farm were built within the Norman enclosure. The farmhouse dates from 1793 and was where Edward Coke (of Holkham) was born and started farming. Here with the guidance of Mark and Tom Butler-Stoney and Susanna Wade-Martins we saw a variety of farm buildings and began to recognise the differences between stables (high doors with better and more spacious accommodation than many of the farm workers), cow sheds and dairies (with cows and modern robot milking machine) and threshing barns. The barns had brick threshing floors and were built of brick which absorbed moisture from the crops. In contrast with some

*The rear of Burwood Hall Farm - a model farm of 1793 replacing the medieval Burghwood Manor; built inside the castle bailey.*



<sup>1</sup> Susan & Michael Brown, Truncated Principal Rafters in NHBG Newsletter 26, 2013, p13



*left: The threshing barn, with a reduced-size south door opposite the full-height door behind the photographer below: Animal buildings in the foreground with the taller barn behind*

threshing barns, Burwood Hall's barn had smaller doors on south side, reduced in size when winnowing machines came into use and it was less essential to have a good flow of air moving through the barn. Such changes reflected changes in technology and in the balance between the production of wheat and meat. Cattle had been kept primarily to provide manure but as markets changed in the 1870 and 80s, when wheat began to be imported from US and the development of the railways, cattle became more important and farm buildings reflected these changes.



## Old Hall Farm.

Further to the east is Old Hall Farm, the next stage in our tour, with impressive stables and double-pile farmhouse. The

stables built of red brick were meant to be seen - they face the road - and the gable end is of fine quality flintwork which is even galleted. The farmhouse has wrap-round C16 gable ends in brick and is two storeys high. The bricking-up of the central section is dated to c1700-1720, with brick probably replacing a timber framed structure (and behind is a later extension).



*the join between the gable and the later bricking-up (photo Les Scott)*

## St John the Baptist Church

The church was our final stop. This is south of the road in the centre of a Middle Saxon settlement, identified through pottery scatter. The village later moved north, closer to the road.

There is part of a preaching cross placed on a C15 table tomb. As Ian Hinton (our guide for this part of the tour) indicated, the core of the church was Norman, as shown by the priest's door in the south chancel wall which has Norman shafts but a later Early-English pointed arch, did the style change during the building process or was the later pointed arch a replacement?

The glass in the west window is very fine and largely complete. Dating from about 1340 it shows St Catherine, St John Baptist and St Margaret. The lower panels contain glass removed from elsewhere in the church. Like the tower built slightly later (after the battle of Crecy) the window was paid for by the Patron, Lord Fitzalan. The tower is on the north side of the church and serves as a porch giving entrance into north aisle. of tower and west windows in nave and aisles. The font dates from C15 and the bowl of an earlier font has been



*Priest's door in the south chancel wall*



brought into the church. The poor box has the date 1639. In the south aisle window is a fragment of glass showing a pack horse - an appropriate image for a village on an important route. There are two tall niches, one on either side of the east windows with some quality carving, although they are somewhat damaged. The two-seat sedilia has been rendered unusable by the raising of the chancel floor to the level of the seating.



right:  
the magnificent west window  
- glass from around 1340

left:  
the porch-tower on the north  
side of the church



above: the packhorse

left:  
the sedilia seats at ground level  
due to the raised floor, the small  
piscina and aumbry to its left  
and one of the damaged image  
niches in the east wall



The castle also features in a new book "The history of Norfolk in 100 places" by David Robertson and Peter & Susanna Wade Martins

## NHBG Research

### Timber dating in Hempnall - Ian Hinton

The final phase of the Hempnall project - attempting to date the buildings - has been delayed by the pandemic. Samples were taken earlier in the year, but, as is typical for Norfolk, only half the samples produced a date. The remainder had insufficient rings to enable a secure comparison to the database. The results will be written up in an addendum to the original Journal and will be available free to anyone who bought the original study. We

are hoping to include the results of a new technique for dating wide-ringed timber - oxygen-isotope analysis. Unfortunately the NHBG was unsuccessful this time in obtaining a grant from the Norfolk & Norwich Archaeological Society towards this work, but when funds are available one sample will be tested from the earliest phase of four of the houses which did not date by dendro - Meadow Farm, Krons Manor, The Old Vicarage and The Old Rectory at Fritton.



The Chequers

#### The Chequers, Hempnall

Two ranges - 17 samples in all

12 from the front range first floor ceiling and roof, dated -1617-1620

5 from the rear range inserted floor, dated -1553

1 sample from the frame of the rear range - **did not date exactly - no sapwood, but matches the ceiling samples - so is almost certainly 1553 too.**



Krons Manor

#### Krons Manor, Hempnall

Three phases - 8 samples in all

4 from the crossing corner-posts and principal rafters, **did not date**

2 from the frame of the first range wallpost and wallplate - **did not date**

Remainder of the structure was too fast-grown to sample

1 sample from first range to be sent for <sup>18</sup>O analysis



The Old Vicarage

#### The Old Vicarage, Hempnall

Four phases - 5 samples in all

4 from the inserted ceiling of the hall chamber - dated - 1649

1 sample from the wallpost in the first phase - **did not date**

Remainder of the structure was too fast-grown to sample

1 sample from first range to be sent for <sup>18</sup>O analysis



Lime Tree Cottage

#### Lime Tree Cottage, Hempnall

One main phase. - 8 samples in all

2 from the wallplates - one dated to 1559/60

1 from a corner post, **did not date**

5 from the common joists in the ground

floor ceiling, all dated - **winter 1559/60**



#### Spring Mead Garage, Hempnall

Frame and doorway

5 samples in all

4 from the principal joists - dated

- 1696-1721

1 from the *ex-situ* spandrelled doorway - dated - 1545



The Old Rectory,  
Fritton

#### The Old Rectory, Fritton

Two phases - 2 samples in all

2 from the service end of the lower range

- **did not date**

Remainder of the structure was too fast-grown to sample. 1 sample from lower range to be sent for <sup>18</sup>O analysis



## Church Day (August 20<sup>th</sup> 2022)

### Dominic Summers & Ian Hinton

Thirty members gathered at the end of the long hot spell of weather to view two spectacular (and cool) churches.

#### Pulham St Mary the Virgin

Pulham was constituted as a single parish, with St Mary the Virgin (Pulham St Mary) the parish church and Pulham St Mary Magdalen (Pulham Market) a chapel of ease. Domesday Book records Pulham as a wealthy settlement, and as Blomefield suggests, the chapel of ease was probably established to serve a growing population where the markets were held.

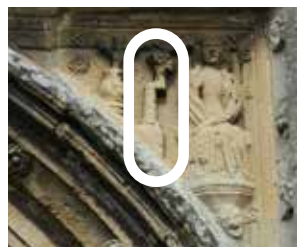
St Mary the Virgin is characterised on approach by its tall west tower with multiple stages and its very grand south porch. At first, the tower appears typical of many ambitious towers built in East Anglia in the late middle ages, with a prominent belfry stage with elaborate Perpendicular tracery. Yet, the organisation of the lower stages, with much smaller openings and a lot of disruption in the material, suggests that fabric from an earlier tower was reclothed in the fourteenth or fifteenth centuries.

The splendid porch is a work of the fifteenth century. It is often compared with the porch at Cley and the unusual brattishing around the parapet is, indeed, similar. Yet Cley is more ambitious in scale and has an extravagant display of dynastic heraldry on the vousoirs of the outer arch, whereas Pulham St Mary's porch has no family heraldry at all. This is unusual, as ambitious porches of the time usually proclaimed the identity of their donors. Here the decoration is all religious. Above the door is a frieze of shields, the outermost blank, then the three crowns of East Anglia and over the door two angels bearing the arms of the Passion and the Trinity.

Either side of the door are ranks of angels playing wind instruments to the left and stringed instruments to the right. In the spandrels is a wonderful if slightly strange carving of the Annunciation of Mary with an odd stove-pipe shaped ornament.



Angels with Trinity and Passion



The Annunciation of Mary

The body of the church is the result of successive building campaigns from the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, together with a very expensive restoration by G.F. Bodley in the late nineteenth. The chancel was built in the early or mid-thirteenth century, some of the lancets are still in place, although the east window with reticulated tracery was added about 50 years later. There is an unusual double-arch piscina (is this Bodley work?) and on the outside north wall, traces of an early sacristy with a piscina.



Pulham's impressive porch



Bodley's reworked screen from the chancel side. Also showing the off-centre tower arch

#### Photos: Ian Hinton

The chancel arch is noticeably off centre when viewed from the nave. This is the result of a widening of the nave to the south probably before the building of the south aisle in the fourteenth century. A clerestorey was added in the fifteenth century, together with the large windows in the north wall. The chancel screen, like the font, is largely Bodley's work, though the painted panels were thankfully retained. Late 15th century depictions of the apostles are in various states of survival, though it is possible to make out that the painting was very fine. Unusually, there is a similar programme of the apostles in the stained glass of one of the north windows, framed by the tracery cells.



15th C Apostle survivals on the screen

#### Tivetshall St Margaret

Domesday Book also records two churches in Tivetshall, probably both built as private chapels before the Conquest. Tivetshall was established as a single parish and Blomefield implies that St Mary's, in the south, became the parish church and St Margaret's a chapel of ease. By 1603, according to Blomefield, they had become separate parishes, reflecting the growth in the settlement in the north of Tivetshall, closer to St Margaret.



There is little documentary evidence for the building of the church, other than two bequests, one of 5 marks to building the "new tower" in

1456, and another of 1498 for a new tenor bell. The moulding of the door frame and the small two-light west window, together with its tracery design, are consistent with a mid-fifteenth construction campaign, even if the tower is a modest affair without buttresses and does not conform to the popular idea of grand, high status fifteenth century west towers in Norfolk.

The nave and chancel are both earlier than the tower. The



chancel was rebuilt in the late 13<sup>th</sup> or early 14<sup>th</sup> with a piscina, a wall recess for an Easter sepulchre, and some windows with Y-tracery evidence of that phase. A large Perpendicular window was added later.

The nave appears to have been thoroughly renovated later, probably early in the fifteenth century. The windows and the excellent south door in the porch, with Arms of the Passion and the Trinity in the spandrels, belong to this fifteenth century campaign.

However, much earlier fabric is still visible at the base of the exterior north wall; whole flints laid in straight courses suggest construction of the late eleventh or twelfth centuries. Various layers of render are still visible on the north wall; although few Norfolk churches have surface render now, it is probable that walls built from flint rubble, without knapping or other surface decoration, would probably have been covered in lime plaster.

Inside, the eye is immediately drawn to the extraordinary tympanum above the late 15<sup>th</sup> or early 16th century chancel screen, a very rare survival (see front cover). It extends below the springing of the chancel arch to the top of the screen, removing the original rood beam and loft, the access doors for which are still present. It emphasises the liturgical division between nave and chancel. A painted depiction of the Rood was painted over eventually with the arms of Elizabeth I and the Decalogue in fine black script, recently and beautifully conserved. The date of the repainting is recorded as 1587 and the names of the churchwardens of the time are painted at the sides of the tympanum. At each side of the royal arms are symbols of the four Tudor monarchs and centrally, below the arms, the white falcon of Anne Boleyn is very prominent. Almost all such tympana were removed during subsequent episodes of iconoclasm in the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

The dado of the original screen remains. Although it has no figures, the transom is handsomly scrolled. The base quatrefoil carvings are common to many Norfolk churches such as Westwick and Alburgh, as are the gold stencils. The joints between the posts and transom are known as masons' mitres, similar to the high-quality screen at Barton Turf, probably dating it to the middle of the fifteenth century.



*the southern side of the screen dado*

There are some fine bench ends, probably made just before the Reformation to judge from the decorative details below the carved figures. They have all been defaced, yet enough detail survives to appreciate that they were finely made. It can be seen that they were originally just benches as the backs are nailed on, requiring some of the figures to be cut back.



*One of the damaged bench ends with a de-faced, planed-back figure and nailed-on back*



*The 15th C doorway with decorated spandrels and an original plank and muntin door*



*The white falcon of Anne Boleyn*

## Tiivetshall St Mary

The other church in Tivetshall is St Mary – drawn by Ladbroke in the 1820s.

Local stories have the tower collapsing as a result of a sonic boom in 1949,

but given that it is completely remote from the village, and St Margarets is no further away from the people, it seems more likely that a tipping point had been reached and it was allowed to decay. Supposedly, the church had been abandoned in the 19<sup>th</sup> C, but the east window today is different from that shown in the 1820s in Ladbroke's drawing which appears to show an arched transom and the lower portion blocked, perhaps for a reredos. So work was still going on in Victorian times – also the roof was apparently replaced in the 20<sup>th</sup> C – why, if it had already been abandoned?

By one of those amazing coincidences, the father of Bob Limmer, an NHBG member on the visit, had worked on the consolidation of the building after the tower collapse.



*Chancel and east window*



*Nave and tower remains from the north-west*

The feeling amongst the ex-military in the group was that the collapse was more likely to be caused by the effect of two years of heavily-laden USAF bombers from RAF Tibenham flying low over it during the war.

Remedial work of the 20C included a concrete ring beam at the top of the east wall, brick buttresses and a renewed porch doorway. The poor bonding provided by flint construction shows up as large cracks right through the walls.

There is remarkably little brick used inside, apart from some 16C versions in the porch walls (and the piscina arch - part of 20C remedial work). There is some reused carved stone in the walls, including a section of window mullion, probably indicating an earlier church on the site.

*right:*  
*The sedilia in the window embrasure and piscina with a brick arch*



*left:*  
*Two pieces of reused freestone in the walls, including a section of window mullion*

There was discussion on the day as to who was responsible for St Marys. It is insured and looked after by Tivetshall PCC



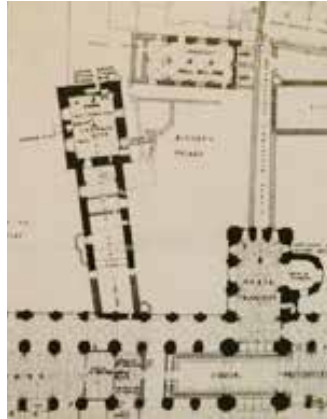
## The Bishop's Palace, Norwich Cathedral

Anne Woollett

*This piece stems from the research done by Anne in preparation for the visit of VAG members for the Spring Conference in Norwich and Norfolk, which was unfortunately curtailed by the pandemic and parts of it seen over Zoom. Ed*

The Bishop's Palace is the oldest residential property in Norwich. Building started in about 1096 and it is still in use, though it is no longer residential.

Roberta Gilchrist describes the Palace in her book<sup>1</sup>. She draws on the work of Whittingham<sup>2</sup> whose 1980 plan (right) shows the palace and the outline of the current building.



### Losinga's Palace.

The palace was established early in the development of the precinct by Herbert de Losinga starting in about 1096. It started as a three-storey fortified tower on an earthwork mound, on north side of the cathedral, close to the site of the former Anglo-Saxon parish church of Holy Trinity. It was built on higher ground in a commanding position, probably as part of a designed landscape, and thought to be a base for overseeing the construction of the cathedral and priory.

George Plunket's views of the tower and palace complex (right) were taken in 1937<sup>3</sup>.



Adrian Marsham's photo (left) of the eastern façade shows the tower, built with flint with stone quoins. The Norman flint rubble walls can be seen at the top but are obscured at lower level by the C19 restoration.

By 1120 the first phase of the Cathedral was complete and a vaulted passage was added to the Tower to create a two storey accommodation wing (De Losinga's Palace). This Passage gave direct entry to the Cathedral at gallery level marked by a blocked doorway between cathedral's 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> bays, following the example of Imperial Palace at Aachen.

The photo of the western façade of Losinga's Palace (below left) shows the tower standing out in the centre of the current western façade behind the tree, with Losinga's Palace on right. The additions on left are more recent. The watercolour by Mrs Stanley (on the right), now in Norwich Museum & Art Gallery collection, was made before the C19 additions and shows the tower in the centre with Losinga's Palace on the right, still attached to the Cathedral.



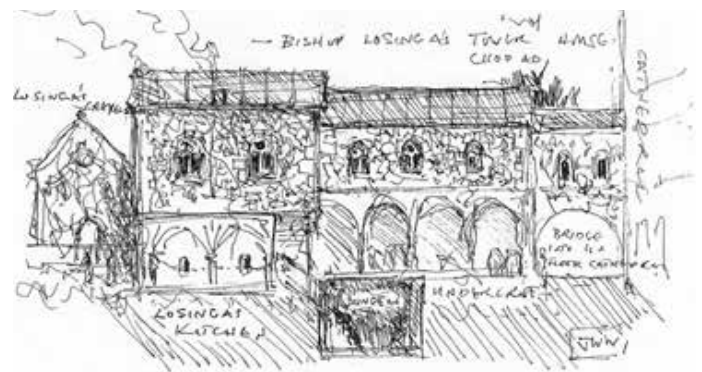
*Drawing reproduced with permission from Norwich Museum Service.*



The Tower and Losinga's Palace both

had undercrofts, as shown in the sketch below by John Walker who was archivist at Norwich School. That under De Losinga's Palace is a barrel vaulted undercroft of 5 bays with transverse ribs and dates from the early C12. It extended as far as the Cathedral.

As John Walker's sketch below shows, there is a small, vaulted chamber beneath Losinga's Palace undercroft, is shown in the photo right. This is the space which Whittingham calls the crypt and John Walker labels as 'the dungeon'.



In the C15 a Queen-post roof with moulded timbers was added to the Tower. It is now hidden behind a C19 ceiling - Adrian Marsham's recent photograph shows its full glory.

1 Gilchrist, R (2005) Norwich Cathedral Close: the evolution of the English Cathedral Landscape.  
 2 Whittingham, A B (1980) The Bishops Palace, Norwich. Archaeological Journal, 137, 364-8  
 3 <http://www.georgeplunket.co.uk/Norwich/clz.htm#Cath>

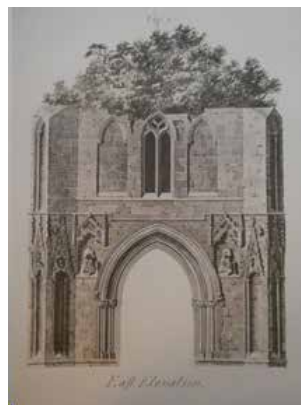




photo (above) shows it in use as a recreational room for Norwich School.

In the early C14 one of Bishop Salmon's many changes to the Priory was the insertion of stone vaults into the Tower - a rib-vaulted undercroft of four bays with a central octagonal pier and hollow chamfered arches. Whittingham suggests this was used as a kitchen and Norwich Museum has several C19 pictures of it in use as a kitchen. Terry George's

magnificent aisled hall (36.6m x 18.3m) to the north, as shown on Whittingham's plan. This was aligned N-S with kitchen, buttery and pantry at the north. This was an impressive hall: its scale was exceeded only by C13 Archbishop's Hall at Canterbury, and was comparable with later royal C14 halls at Westminster. Only the two bay porch remains with shafts with lively foliage capitals supporting tierceron vaults with carved bosses. This was drawn/recorded by J A Repton in 1798 (below left).



## Bishop's Chapel.

In the C12 a chapel (St Mary's) was built to the east of Losinga's Tower & Palace. Bishop Salmon replaced its apse with rectangular east end. It was destroyed in 1540-50s but Bishop Reynolds (1660-1676) had a new chapel built using masonry and tracery from Salmon's chapel (below) including the stiff leaf capital (below). It was built on the medieval foundations and lower courses of southern bay of Salmon's great hall. The altar of this chapel was aligned with Cathedral's high altar.



## Bishop Wakering's Cloister.

In about 1420 a cloister was added (during Bishop Wakering's time, 1415- 1425) to provide access from Salmon's Palace, a small East-West Hall and chapel area to north transept of the cathedral. The lower levels of this cloister remain below ground.

## Palace Gatehouse

In 1435 the gatehouse of the Bishop's Palace (with brewery and granary) was constructed with two entrances - one for people and one for carts - two turrets, battlements with tracery and shields, and with a barrel-vaulted undercroft.



## East-West Hall at NW corner of the Palace

This hall was built later in the C12, probably when Turbe was bishop (1146/47-74). It is at right angles to the tower and C12 palace, creating an L shaped arrangement.



Plunket's photo (earlier) shows part of this hall on the right hand side. The lower part of the façade is of flint rubble, with tracery windows and arch of a door which gave access to the undercroft. The first floor has a covering of brick, flint and chert, part of C19 renovations. The blocked door, partially below ground now, can be seen on the right.

Later, Bishop Salmon inserted a rib vaulted stone undercroft of four bays with central octagonal piers and hollow chamfered arches to create a ground floor aisled hall with chambers above. Pevsner suggests that unanswered vault springings at the east end showed that the undercroft continued further east. Now used as Norwich School Library. Photo by Terry George.

Adrian Marsham's short video gives a sense of the roofs of the L shape of the C12 buildings in relation to the Cathedral.

<https://www.facebook.com/adrian.marsham/videos/788943252064555>

## Bishop Salmon's Hall.

By the C14 the palace was seriously old-fashioned and Bishop Salmon (who was also Chancellor to Edward III and hence had access to serious funds) updated and modernised the Priory complex. As well as the changes he made to the Tower and Small East-West Hall, in 1318-1325 he added a large and

After 1538 the now-secular Cathedral became poorer and the Palace was too large. Salmon's Great Hall was demolished, except for its porch. Bishops were not required to reside at the Cathedral and many bishops spent little time in Norwich. Those who did visit often preferred to live at residences outside the City. As a result the Palace underwent a long history of cycles of dilapidation and restoration.

A survey in October 1594 revealed a substantial house with around 40 rooms including several chambers. It is thought that oak panelling from St Benet's Abbey was brought to Bishops Palace in 1536. This paneling, with linen fold carving and a row of male and female heads in profile, has been reassembled in the vestry at the Cathedral (illustrated in St Benet's Abbey by Tim Pestell 2007, published by Norfolk Archaeological Trust).

Because few bishops made it their permanent home, the Palace was given over to a keeper and after 1600 fared less well. During the Civil War the Bishop was ejected from the Palace. Some of the Palace was turned into a meeting house for secretaries and the rest into small tenements for poor families. (This also happened at Salisbury and Lichfield). In 1660-1676 repairs were undertaken by Bishop Reynolds who also built a smaller chapel reusing stone and the windows from the older chapel.

There were extensions at the north end of the Tower as indicated in Whittingham's plan, perhaps in the C17. The palace's lack of symmetry did not conform to C18 ideas about aesthetics, but it was less displeasing to the Victorians.

## C19 Restorations.

In 1858-9 restorations were undertaken by Bishop Pelham (1857-93) under the auspices of Ewan Christian (architect to Ecclesiastical Commission). Mrs Stanley's watercolour, shown earlier, was made before those restorations and gives a sense of the fabric of the palace and how it still extended as far as Cathedral.

Six bays of the barrel-vaulting with flat transverse arches in Losinga's Palace were retained with two storey hall heightened and a stair turret added on east side. The last bays containing a kitchen, brewhouse and other service rooms were removed ('hacked off' in Whittingham's account), severing the connection between the Palace and the Cathedral.

The palace façade was given a make-over with walls of flint and chert, brick and stone dressings, brick relieving arches and horizontal brick bands. The west façade was completely refaced. The east facade and south face of the East-West Hall still have some earlier flint work and the remains of blocked Romanesque windows.

The Great Chamber or Bishop's Parlour was given a plaster vaulted ceiling. This hides the C15 queen post roof seen and drawn by Robert Smith and recently photographed by Adrian Marsham.

However, in spite of these restorations the Palace was very large and cold by C19 standards. Atherton reports that the daughter of Bishop Sheepshanks (1893-1910) described the dining room as 'an icy purgatory'.

The Palace was used as Red Cross VAD Hospital in WW1. WW11 also brought about changes. Digging air-raid shelters in 1939 in what had been the old cathedral cemetery and currently part of Norwich School disturbed inhumations. During the War the Bishop's Palace was used by American Red Cross and Norwich School's School End House was taken over by Auxiliary Territorial Service.

There are photographs taken by Ministry of Information (now in Imperial War Museum Collection and available on line) showing American forces using the Bishop's Palace in 1943. Eating in the East-West Hall (right).



<https://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/search>

## Norwich School

In 1959-1960 the Palace was transferred to Norwich School and a new residence built for the Bishop. Norwich School first moved into the Close in 1551 after the city purchased the former chantry chapel and college of St John the Evangelist for the use of the grammar school. The School gradually expanded its use of buildings in the Close. School House was given a Gothic north wing which contained the dormitory for boarding pupils. In 1908, a redesigned School Lodge and a block of six classrooms designed by Edward Boardman (New Buildings).

Boarding was phased out in 1989 and the Bishop's Palace converted into teaching space. The chapel became the school library. There is a you tube video about the school by John Walker, the school archivist. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GpEPKiZWqeQ>

The Palace is not easy to view at close quarters. The east side of Losinga's Palace and East-West Hall, the remains of Bishop Salmon's Hall, Bishop Reynold's chapel and north transept of the Cathedral are best seen from Bishop's Garden which is open for charity events on Sundays in summer <https://www.dioceseofnorwich.org/about/senior-staff/bishop-of-norwich/gardens/opening-dates-times/>

Thanks are due to:

Adrian Marsden for his excellent guidance around the Palace;  
Terry George for information about, and photographs of, the undercrofts and for providing me with a copy of John Walker's helpful drawing;  
Gerard Stamp for his photographs;  
The George Plunket collection (<http://www.georgeplunkett.co.uk>);  
Norwich Museum Service;  
Norwich Castle Museum & Art Gallery for permission to reproduce two illustrations from their collection ;  
and a Cathedral guide who let me into the vestry.  
The unacknowledged photographs are mine.

Some other useful sources:

Atherton, I (1996) *The Close*. In Atherton, I, Fernie, E, Harper-Bill, C and Smith, H (eds) *Norwich Cathedral: Church, City and Diocese 1096-1996*.

Harries, R., Cattermole, P., and Mackintosh P (1991) *A History of Norwich School*.

## NHBG Research

### A Digest of Buildings Visited Since March 2022

*This is a digest of the Norfolk houses which the NHBG has been invited to look at and to prepare brief reports on. These are ALL private houses and NO contact may be made with the owners in any way except through the Committee.*

*These summaries of those reports are to inform members of the work undertaken on behalf of the Group.*

Lynne Hodge

### Lees Farm, Erpingham

Lees Farm is two-celled house with a central chimney, a lobby-entry onto the stairs and a rear outshut. A date stone of 1730 is set into the west gable wall. All the external timber frame has been replaced in brick - the front wall in English bond right to the eaves. The upstairs part of the eastern gable end wall, which is 60cm (24ins) thick, shows the original tie beam, which has three taper burns in its centre adjacent to a blocked window and two panels of wattle and daub below it. Internally the front wall shows a slight eaves raise of about 30cm.

The hall fireplace houses a large bread oven and the principal joist in the hall has a nick after the chamfer stop indicating a date after the early seventeenth century. Many of the common joists have been replaced throughout the house and the principal joist in the parlour chamber has been re-used, apparently from a storey-post.

There are remnants of a red painted scheme with gold flowers adjacent to the ceiling in the parlour.

Despite the datestone, the layout and timber decorations point to a probable early to mid seventeenth-century date.

Lynne Hodge & Ian Hinton





## The Old Trowell and Hammer, Bunwell Street

One of six beer houses in the parish, The Old Trowell and Hammer consists of four cells all built in clay lump on a flint plinth, with the front wall and west gable brick-clad with rubbed-brick arches and inserted sash windows. Extensive building work to rectify subsidence has exposed much of the clay-lump construction, including the entire chimney stacks, except for the part above the roof. The front plinth appears to sit on brick arches implying cellars but the ground water is only a few feet below the surface. Dating to the middle of the nineteenth century, it was a pub for 100 years



*Ian Hinton*

## Rookery Farm, Swaffham

The house is of 1½ storeys, built of brick in English bond with an off-centre stack and a pantile roof, although it was previously thatched. There is a modern bay window to the second bay where formerly there was a door in the lobby entrance position. There are 5 modern dormer windows. The rear of this range is built of flint rubble with a roof raise in brick making it two full storeys. There is another range built at right angles to the rear.



The central ground-floor room has a fine ceiling with crossing axial and transverse principal joists with deep chamfers buried in the walls with chamfered common joists laid in a chequerboard or counterchange pattern. Unusual for Norfolk, but many examples

are found in Shropshire and Herefordshire and have been dated to the late 16th or early 17th century, although this example was probably inserted.

A cellar below this room is built mostly of brick laid in English bond and has two candle niches with an inscribed date of 1697, does this date the bricking-up of the walls?

On the first floor a large cranked tie beam above the central room has one arched brace in place with a strut above, and peg holes indicating the position of the other brace; it appears to have been an open truss. Old timbers have been reused in the north wall, including 3 'raised crucks' which have been bolted onto the original frame, a small section of which is still visible.

So much change has happened that it is only possible to speculate as to the history of this house.

*Lynne Hodge & Ian Hinton*

## Hewkes House Reepham

Hewkes House is located on the east side of the Marketplace in Reepham. It is of two storeys plus part attic with a red-brick façade in Flemish bond and a shallow slated roof with a deep overhang with a hipped northern end. The sash windows are set flush with the wall surface. The attics sit above most of the front range with a cat-slide roof at the rear. The roof structure is fully visible, mostly of sawn-square pine but with some of the larger timbers in oak. It has a single set of in-line butt purlins, many of them are shaved to tenon into the principal rafters – generally an eighteenth-century feature. There are several reinforcing inverted "knees" in the attic rooms which are bolted to the floor, each of which sits adjacent to one of the principal rafters.



This house is a re-fronted older house. The setting of the sash windows could indicate an earlier date for the front wall than the listing suggests. Much of the narrow hall behind the front door is cut through an earlier sizeable chimney stack as an arched passage. The positioning of this stack would suggest a seventeenth-century layout of a three-celled house, possibly timber-framed with a lobby entry, later refaced with brick.

*Ian Hinton & Anne Woollett*

## Mulberry Cottage, Garboldisham

Mulberry Cottage is listed as an 18C timber framed house. It consists of three cells with an off-centre chimney stack and an additional stack on the north gable. The gable walls are of brick and the front and rear walls are still timber-framed with no mid-rail, all on a low brick plinth and all rendered. The roof has single side purlins with clasping collars and ridge piece.



There is a two-storey extension at the rear above a cellar. It is also thatched, next to a single-storey pantiled lean-to.

The current door beneath the modern porch opens on to the original lobby, but there is a ground slab below the small glazed opening to the right. This is in the cross-passage position. Currently inside this is a housed, straight staircase rising from the rear.

The floors in all three rooms are supported by applied clamps at their outer ends and the principal joists are mostly notched in place, suggesting they may have been inserted. The common joists are edge-laid and some have chisel-cut assembly marks.

The large hearth in the hall has a substantial mantle beam with more than 25 large burn marks near the centre and a particularly large one at its left end.

The construction of the floors might suggest an 18C date, but the floorplan and roof strongly indicate a 17C date. If there was a crosspassage, this date could be even earlier.

*Jess Johnston & Ian Hinton*

## An unusual chimney (and roof) construction in France

Ian Hinton

I noticed the chimney stack in the rear room at the Rose and Crown in Snettisham whilst eating lunch out recently. It appeared to have a wrap-round mantle beam, which reminded me of one I had worked on in the 1980s in France. In fact the Snettisham example was constructed as a decoration, with the return parts only mitred and nailed to the main beam.



The chimney at the Rose & Crown

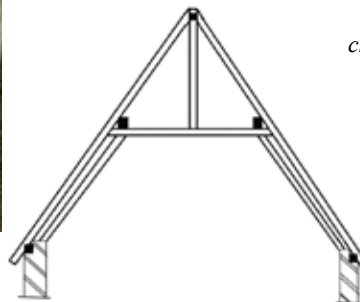
The chimney in France that I worked on was near Loche in central France, south of the Loire valley in the main limestone belt. I spent several long summers developing building skills in the late 1970s and early 1980s with a group of French and English friends. This house, thought to be seventeenth century, was part of a group of buildings in a small hamlet and it had been used to make the bread for the hamlet until the early twentieth century. It had lain empty for much of the time since and was in a sorry state. We had replaced the roof covering and most of its structure during the previous summer (which appears to have been a french version of a truncated principal rafter roof. Except that here, the purlins are continuous and rest on the collars which are then supported by the second, truncated, principals. The collar, in turn, supports the king post and braces.



above: during the roof replacement the previous year - an interesting mix of truncated principal rafter and king-post construction



A French drag - stone dresser



In 1986 one of the tasks was to replace the chimney which had collapsed some years before. It had been inserted into the building and not bonded to the flint gable wall (the centre one in the picture above) and at its base it was supported by timbers cantilevered from the wall - rather than by the typical brick or stone piers - and one of the side pieces had rotted off in the wall.

We cut a tenoned mitre for the corner in a reused piece of timber to match the original, and reset it into the wall - this time with a larger stone corbel for support. After this had set, I rebuilt the stack which was mostly made up of the original blocks where this was possible (cleaned with the aptly-named french drags). It is made of the local limestone, which is very white and close-grained with few fossils, so is very easy to work. This was the last full summer I spent there. I did not know then that this would set me in good stead for an interest in similar constructions in Norfolk many years later!

right: the bread oven after the chimney fall



below right: the new frame with corbel, supported whilst setting



the new tenoned mitre



above: your correspondent at work (with hair!)

below: the completed chimney with the prominent new corbel





## Kirby Bedon, St Andrew - Slate roofs

Tim Holt-Wilson & Ian Hinton

As part of the Broadland Mills and Marshes Project, we took participants to eighteen churches during the summer of 2021 to study the building sequences, the rocks in their walls and to discuss the rocks' origins.

At Kirby Bedon St Andrew, some repair work was being undertaken on the porch, so the builder's detritus was evident during our visit. Scattered around the church, particularly on its north side were small pieces of broken slate from the roof. Tim picked up three pieces and commented on the differences in colour and appearance.

- 1 A very thin (c. 3 mm) schistose<sup>1</sup> slate from the nave roof,
- 2 A thin (c. 6 mm) grey slate from the porch,
- 3 A thin (c.5 mm) blue-grey slate from the chancel roof.

Tim sent the samples to Dr Joan Walsh of The British Slate forum. <http://www.britishslateforum.co.uk/forum/>

Her reply is set out below:

Sample 1 is a highly tectonised slate - which we have discussed before - these must come from Norway. There is no other source of such deformed slates in the British Isles or in the west of Europe.

The two grey slates (samples 2 & 3) could possibly be either Delabole (Cornwall), or the Welsh grey slates. One of them has small brown spots which occur in Welsh greys as they weather. However, I can't say with any confidence that these spots are not also found in Delabole.

The second blue-grey has a very smooth texture which is typical of the Delabole. Trace element analysis would distinguish between these two sources.

Her conclusion was that

"It is strange that there are two, and possibly three different sources of the slates in one building. I usually take into account the age of the building and known trade routes when identifying slates from historic buildings but lack such information in this case".

The samples came from different parts of the building, but all were likely to have been part of nineteenth-century re-roofing, presumably different phases, all after the arrival of the railways permitted wider distribution of highly localised types of slate. An X-ray Fluorescence analysis of the minerals could help confirm the likely source areas.

In her reply, Dr Walsh mentions a previous discussion about 'highly tectonised slates'. This refers to an earlier conversation with Tim H-W about a similar looking, highly distinctive, schistose slate from the chancel roof at Runham church. She was unable to confirm a source in the UK. Further discussions with Adrian Read (a Norfolk geologist living in Norway), and retired Professor Knut Bjørlykke (Oslo University) have yielded information about a possible source area in Norway. According to Prof. Bjørlykke, the material is typical of the high metamorphic "slates" of Telemark, a county on the west side of Oslofjord. It is a fairly common rock type which has been worked at a number of scattered quarries, and it has been exported to England in the past. Pevsner states that Runham church was reroofed in 1857, so this is most likely when the Telemark slates were imported. They were doubtless chosen for their celestial, sparkling quality.

### Conclusion

Putting this information together, we have evidence that two different UK slate types were used at Kirby Bedon and one imported Norwegian type. These must have been the result of separate re-roofing episodes. Slates were definitely part of a nineteenth-century North Sea trade, and it will be interesting to know how many other Norfolk churches have roofs dressed in this distinctive, sparkly slate.

<sup>1</sup> Schistose crystals are larger than those of slates (although macroscopically not visible) but smaller than those of gneisses. They are formed in the parallel arrangement of flat, tabular, elongated or flaky minerals. The rock having a Schistose structure has a tendency to split readily into flakes, leaves or thin slabs. (<https://geology.com> - accessed 12/2/2022)



Above:  
St Andrew, Kirby  
Bedon



Sample 1  
Schistose slate from  
the north face of  
the nave roof



Sample 2  
Grey slate from the  
porch



Sample 3  
Blue-grey slate  
from  
the chancel roof



Above:  
St Peter & St Paul,  
Runham



Close up of the  
decorative schistose  
slate from Norway  
on the chancel roof





Lynn  
St Margaret



Grimston



Blakeney



Cley



Thompson



East Lexham



Attleborough

### Some Norfolk Parish Church Misericords

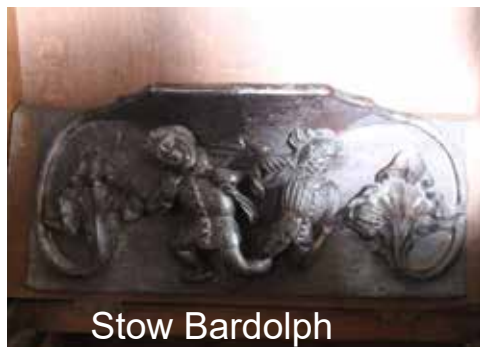
photos: Ian Hinton



Cawston



Lynn  
St Margaret



Stow Bardolph



Salle



Cawston



Norwich St  
Gregory



Lynn  
St Margaret



Trunch



Ranworth



Salle