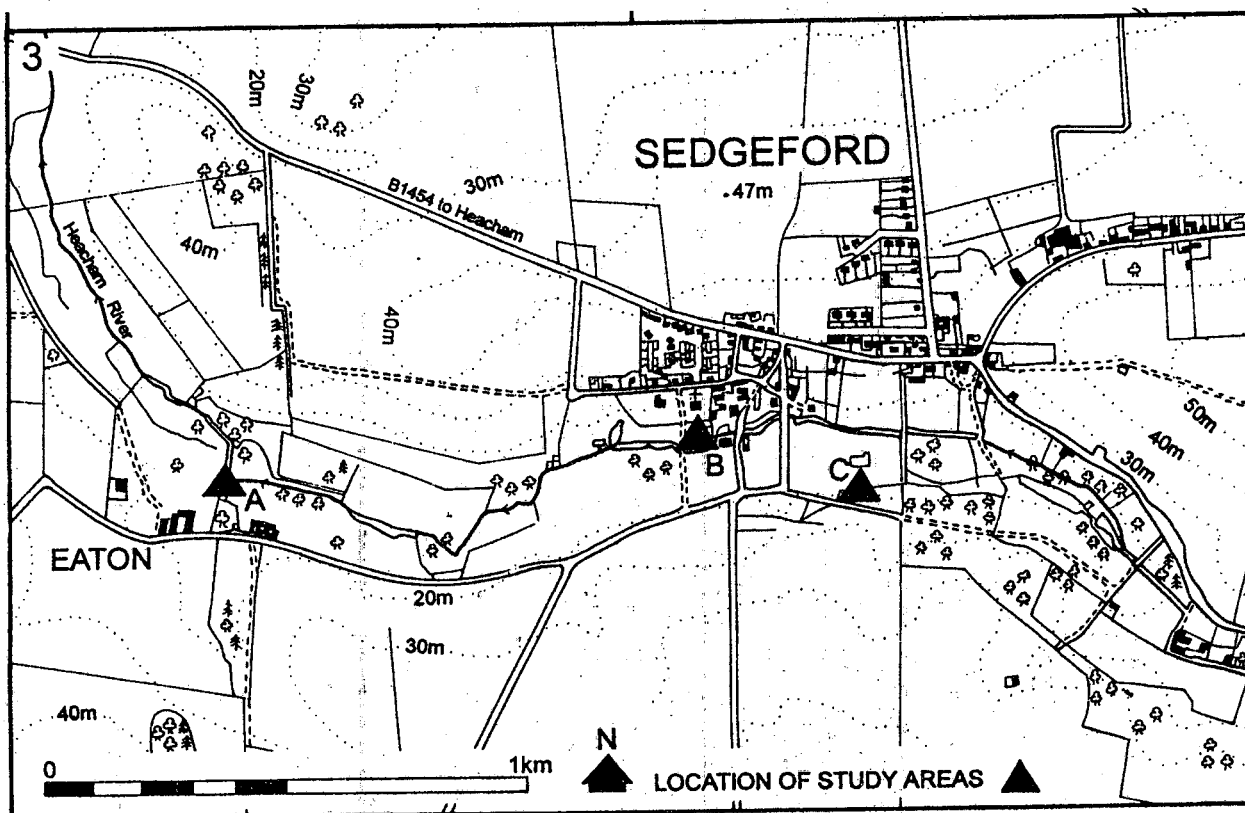


**Sedgeford Historical and
Archaeological Research Project**

THE REPORT

No 4

1999



Study Areas in 1999 -
 A Eaton:
 B West Hall and St Mary's Church:
 C Boneyard/Reeddam Anglo Saxon Cemetery

Sedgeford Historical and Archaeological Research Project

THE REPORT



Single Barn in the centre of West Hall Farmyard circa 1908

No 4

1999



Sedgeford Historical and Archaeological Research Project
1999

Director
Neil Faulkner

Assistant Directors
Keith Robinson
Melanie van Twest

Director of Science - Peter Carnell
Director of Historical Studies - Janet Hammond

Associate Directors
Edward Biddulph - Boneyard
Andrea Cox - West Hall

Supervisors
West Hall - Andrea Cox
Geophysical surveying - Peter Carnell
Reeddam - Kim Garbutt, Gareth Davies
Photography - Keith Robinson, Tim Snelling
St Mary's Church and Churchyard - Richard Hoggett
Human Remains - Melanie Van Twest, Patricia Reid & Jamie Owen
Animal Remains - Pauline, Ray & Helen Thirkettle & Laura Stockley
Boneyard - Edward Biddulph, Katie Pack, Tegwen Roberts & Richard Skinner
Field History - Janet Hammond, Linda Nudds & Monica Place
Planning and drawing - Nathan Chinchin & Matt Ratcliff
Pottery and small finds - Sophie Cabot & Ray Ludford
Standing Building Survey - Michael Medlar
Geological Survey - Mark Jordan

General Editor - Janet Hammond

Proof Reading - Mo Eeles

THE REPORT

No 4 1999

Interim report of the Sedgeford Historical and Archaeological Research Project

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ILLUSTRATIONS

Drawings of Finds	Ray Ludford
Archive Postcards & Photographs	Mr & Mrs Humphries,
Site Photographs	Tim Snelling and Members of the SHARP team
LeStrange Maps NR, OEF & IC	The Norfolk Record Office and the LeStrange Estate

Sedgeford Historical and Archaeological Research Project, 1999: Fourth Interim Report

by
Melanie van Twest

with contributions from
Andrea Cox, Neil Faulkner, Janet Hammond and Richard Hoggett

Boneyard/Reeddam: the Saxon settlement and cemetery

The main focus of SHARP in Boneyard/Reeddam has enlarged greatly upon the original 1996 open area, and is revealing a complex sequence of both human and natural effects on this piece of landscape. The 1996 trench (Area 1) was believed to be, at the end of 1998, almost completely explored to the natural, and in 1999 the intention was to 'finish off' this area while concentrating mainly on newer investigations.

Events in 1999 have changed this situation dramatically. The most significant discovery was the remains of a small, probably square, posthole building comprising three sides formed of 13 postholes (the fourth side having been lost to a later ditch feature running across the entire site) in the south-west corner of Area 1. A gap in the line of postholes was found on the eastern side, presumably for an entrance. On the uphill (southern) side, two drainage gullies were identified, the larger perhaps for rain-wash down the hill, the smaller (closer to the postholes) probably for run-off from the roof. A convenient thunderstorm during the excavation demonstrated their possible purpose very effectively. The building underlies seven burials found previously, and it therefore predates the cemetery, making it middle Saxon or earlier. An Iron Age date cannot be precluded, since nearby, just beyond the presumed truncated north side of the building, half a 'Belgic'-type pot was found in a primary ditch deposit.



1 Silver penny of Eadwulf
King of East Anglia 796-8

Area 2, the Reeddam trench opened in 1997, was under excavation again in 1999 after a hiatus in 1998 due to a high water-table. Excavation was made possible with the assistance of a large pump kindly loaned by Anglian Water. The dense layer of burials found in 1997 continued to be the main focus of work. Unlike Area 1, the inhumations are very tightly packed, with large amounts of disturbed bone in consequence. In a relatively small trench (10m x 5m), 45 burials have thus far come to light, compared with 73 in Area 1 (20m x 15m). Another point of difference is the high proportion of juvenile burials in Reeddam: 31% compared with 7%.

In 1999, two Reeddam skeletons excavated in 1997 were examined in detail for the first time. These were two adult males, buried side by side approximately 0.2m apart. Both exhibited evidence of severe wound trauma to the skull and jaw, caused by a sharp weapon, which in one case had cut away part of the jaw, shearing through tooth roots and bone alike. The complete lack of healing shows that the wounds were the cause of death. The similarity of the injuries and proximity of the burials suggest that both men died in the same incident and were interred simultaneously. One other Reeddam skeleton appears to have been decapitated. At present, we can only speculate about wider interpretations both of these burials and of the Reeddam assemblage as a whole, though the possibility arises that two separate phases of interment may be represented by Areas 1 and 2 respectively.

Crucial to our understanding of the relationship between the dry hillside of Boneyard and the wet valley floor of Reeddam is Area 4, investigation of which commenced in 1999. Progress was slow due to the complexity of stratigraphy at the base of a steep slope much disturbed by past riverine erosion, soil creep, bioturbation, and human intervention to terrace and utilise the ground. Natural flood deposits and colluvium appear to be interwoven with, as yet ill-defined, human occupation evidence, including probable boundary ditches, pits, postholes, cobbling, midden-debris, and a hearth. Despite the difficulties, archaeological layers seem better preserved at the base of the slope than at the top, where they have been subject to greater erosion, and, though progress is likely to remain slow, the investigation of Area 4 in the future should produce a much fuller stratigraphic sequence than that available elsewhere.

West Hall: the medieval village centre

The other main excavation site is that of West Hall Paddock. With the church, it is the focus of our investigation into the later medieval period at Sedgeford. Area A, the only one of three 1996 test-pits to show significant archaeology, was backfilled to a quarter of its original size at the end of 1998, and the aim was to finish the remaining area in 1999. At the beginning of the season, Area A comprised a medieval boundary system on the west, and a sequence of sand and peat on the east. The boundary system consists of a substantial chalk wall, which geophysical survey has shown runs most of the way south to the river. To the west is a series of rammed chalk and flint surfaces forming a path - at least 15 layers repaired and used over a significant period - apparently giving access to the south door of the church. On the far side of the path is a backfilled ditch and a later line of probable fence-posts. These remains represent a complex sequence of at least five main periods, some of several phases. It is believed that this boundary system was the meeting of the manorial lands of the Priory Manor and that of the local gentry, the de Sedgefords, whose manor-house may have been located in the adjacent 'Dovecote Piece'.

In 1999, the remaining section of wall and pathway were removed, revealing a dense flint and mortar surface laid over dumped sand and silt deposits. The discovery of a posthole and a human burial within one of two cuts into this material suggests that it may represent a floor, perhaps that of a small chapel associated with an early manor complex. The burial, which may be Saxo-Norman in date, was of a woman of about 35 who suffered from two (almost certainly related) disabling



2: Skeleton of woman found at West Hall

conditions - a malformed right leg and severe scoliosis (spinal curvature). The context of the burial raises the possibility that she was a woman of religion or of high status. Excavation of the second grave-cut in 2000 may shed further light on her identity.

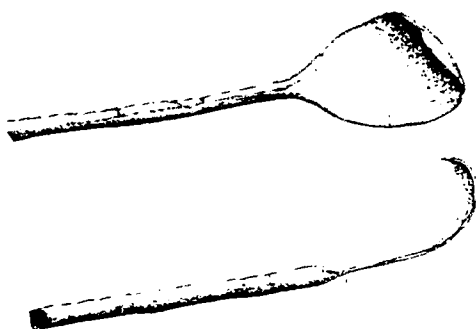
Beneath the underlying sand and silt deposits was a layer of peat representing a time when the area was marshy. This sealed two Roman layers cut by a small drainage channel containing further peat and large, apparently dressed, flints. Currently, therefore, the sequence in West Hall Paddock appears to be as follows. First there was a Roman phase, during which period

the water-table (and possibly the river level) gradually rose until the area was abandoned. Then, possibly after the Norman Conquest, it was reclaimed by depositing large amounts of sand and silt, probably to permit use as the site for a small building, perhaps a chapel, incorporating at least two burials. Latterly, probably from the high medieval period onwards, a substantial boundary system was established to emphasise the division between two manor complexes and provide access between them to the parish church from the south side of the river.

Investigations at West Hall remain pivotal to our understanding of the shift of settlement focus from Boneyard/Reeddam to the present centre. The peat and Roman deposits explored this year have added to its importance, and in 2000 other parts of Area A will be re-opened to allow these to be more fully sampled.

St Mary the Virgin: the medieval parish church

Whereas the area of the Boneyard/Reeddam excavation to the south of the river represents the location of the early medieval settlement, the church of St Mary the Virgin, north of the river and west of Boneyard, became the focal centre of Sedgeford in the later medieval period. Investigation of this shift is central to our research at the church.



3 Spatula/spoon copper alloy fragment from Boneyard/Reeddam Similar to four examples from Middle-Saxon settlement site at Brandon. Appears to be an unusual object.

The 1999 season saw the conclusion of the first phase of recording the building's fabric, begun in 1996. Over the years, many different approaches to the task have been investigated - archaeological, architectural, photographic and art-historical - and these have been combined with the study of surviving documents to produce a history of the building from its earliest phases through to the present day. The floor plan and exterior of the building have been recorded at a scale of 1:50. Interior features have been recorded in great detail using measured sketches, scale drawings, photographs and written notes. In this way, over 450 individual building elements have been identified and interrelated to produce a detailed structural sequence. In addition, to complement work on the building itself, a contour survey of the surrounding churchyard has been conducted and inscriptions of extant gravestones systematically recorded.

Once the initial analysis of the church itself is completed, an attempt must be made to place the building in context. We know it was once a 'peculiar' of the Dean and Chapter of Norwich Cathedral, and undoubtedly a closer analysis of the links between the two institutions will shed more light on the history of the building and the development of the village. On a broader scale, comparison between the development of Sedgeford church and those of the Dean and Chapter's other peculiars would be of great benefit, perhaps allowing signs of stylistic diffusion or the work of a single architect to become apparent. Ultimately, the church of St Mary the Virgin is one of many within the wider ecclesiastical system, and the search for answers must be broadened beyond the individual building if the role of the church within the village is to be fully understood.

Other work: West Hall Farm and Eaton

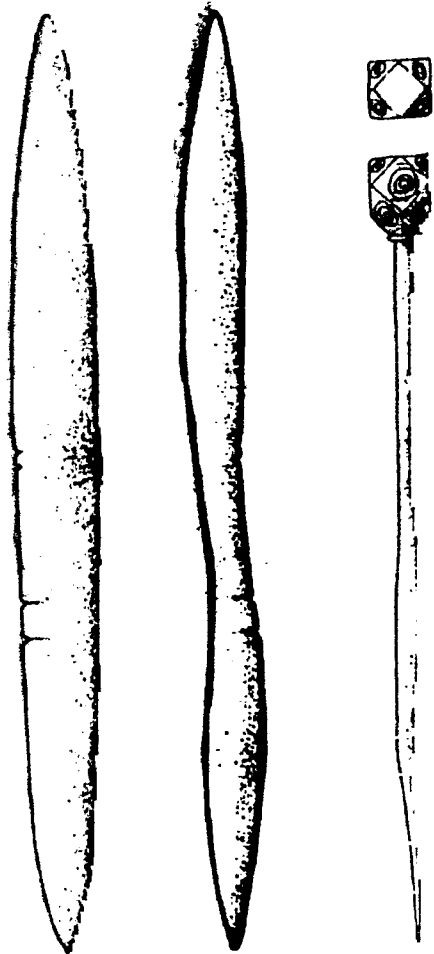
SHARP is a long-term project with concern for the whole parish heritage. A number of additional activities were therefore undertaken in 1999, some development-driven, some contributions to the wider aim of understanding the development of settlement and land-use in other parts of the parish.

Prior to the redevelopment of West Hall Farm, located north of the river and east of the church, an investigation was undertaken involving document research, oral history (the recollections of Mr Ted Rix since the 1930s), hedgerow survey, standing-buildings survey of redundant structures, and trial trenching to locate buildings recorded on old maps and documents. Some further work is planned, but our main conclusion at present is that little evidence for the pre nineteenth century uses of the farm has survived.

The deserted medieval hamlet at Eaton, two miles west of Sedgeford village, was the focus of non-invasive research in 1999, mainly by resistivity survey and structured pH testing. Two areas of both high resistivity and high acidity were identified in a yard adjoining a large barn, one of which corresponds with an area of hard-standing close to the barn doors. The resistivity also revealed a ditch, possibly associated with yard drainage. In addition, work was carried out in the area of Kyme Bridge, a medieval river crossing-point, where evidence was found for causeways on either side of the presumed bridge location.

Conclusion

SHARP continues to develop its activities with the intention of building comprehensive knowledge of all periods of settlement and land-use within the parish. Current research close to the modern village seems to show Iron Age and middle-late Saxon occupation south of the river, with Roman and post-Conquest medieval settlement to the north - though further investigation will no doubt show this to be too simplistic. Although SHARP is a volunteer project whose main activity is a six-week summer season, post-excavation work is continuing, and the first four years of excavation are due to be published in 2001. This report will cover evidence found in 1958 and in 1996-99, and will include a full discussion of changing methodologies together with provisional interpretations and conclusions. We hope to follow up with further reports at approximately four-year intervals, each of which will draw upon earlier work in developing interpretation and understanding of the site. In addition, a full edited site archive is planned for publication in CD-ROM format.



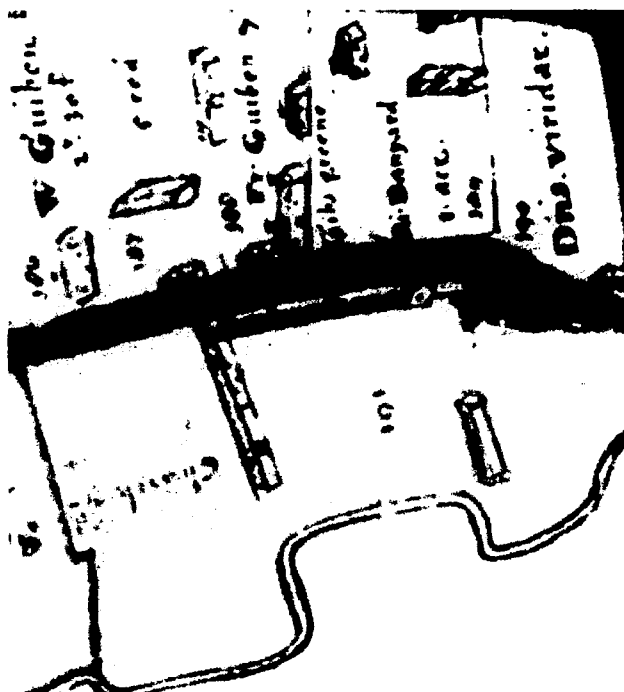
4 Bone and bronze pins found in 1958

The Search for the Tithe Barn - Sedgeford 1999

Michael Medlar

The change of use from agricultural to domestic of the buildings in West Hall Farm - which commenced at the beginning of 1999 - resulted in a standing building survey being undertaken on the barns and outbuildings in the farmyard. This survey concentrated on the brick and stone buildings at the expense of the modern concrete and timber structures. The farmyard had been part of a working farm until the end of 1998. Parts of the complex were still being used for storage of fertilisers when the survey was undertaken, while one area had been sublet and was unable to be measured.

The farmyard is situated to the north of the Heacham river, immediately to the east of St. Mary's church. David Yaxley suggests the farmyard was the site of the manor house given by Herbert de Losinga to the Priory of Norwich Cathedral in the early twelfth century.¹ At some time prior to the drawing of the 1631 map of Sedgeford, the manor house had moved to the south of the river to occupy the site of the present West Hall farmhouse.² This map shows a narrow range of buildings occupying the north and west parts of the farmyard.³ There is also another building in the centre of the farmyard which, in that period, reached the causeway over the river to the east. This latter building would have occupied a position slightly to the south of the cartlodge. (Figure 1)



1 West Hall farmyard - LeStrange Estate map 1631

The alignment of buildings on the 1631 map is inconsistent with the present boundaries, especially on the western edge of the farmyard. If the buildings portrayed on the map are accurate, the churchyard wall would have been a few metres further east at its southern end. The only evidence for the drawings of the buildings being accurate representations of the actual structures is the sketch of "The Buck", which resembles closely the present building. Normal conventions on maps of this early date are for houses to be shown with windows and chimneys; but all small houses have one floor and one chimney, while larger ones have two chimneys.⁴ Barns follow a similar pattern, with small ones having one full height doorway and larger ones, two doors. Where the building forms an L-shape or surrounds a courtyard, the gable end is frequently shown with a narrow frontage. The lack of surviving farm buildings

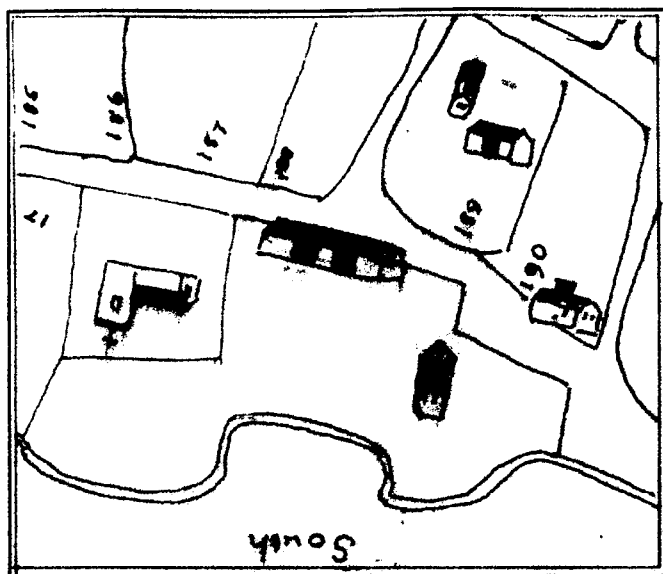
¹ David Yaxley; *The Prior's Manor-Houses*, The Larks Press (Guist Bottom, 1988), p. 20.

² The 1631 map does not show either West Hall farmhouse or the church.

³ NRO Le Strange OC 1.

⁴ This applies to maps drawn for the Le Strange family, as can be seen on Ringstead, Holme and Hunstanton maps

from the early seventeenth century in Sedgeford makes it impossible to determine whether the 1631 map portrays West Hall farmyard accurately.



2 West Hall farm-yard on LeStrange map of about 1690

On this map, the long building on the north side of the farmyard corresponds in length to the current boundary. It has been suggested that this building represents Sedgeford's Tithe Barn. The structure is shown with double doors - implying it was an important barn. A field book from the 1690s has a slightly different picture of the farmyard.⁵ The building in the centre of the complex remains, but the L-shaped building in the north west corner has been replaced by a barn which does not reach the churchyard wall to the west or the corner to the north east by the cartlodge. It was an important barn as it had two doorways. (Figure 2)

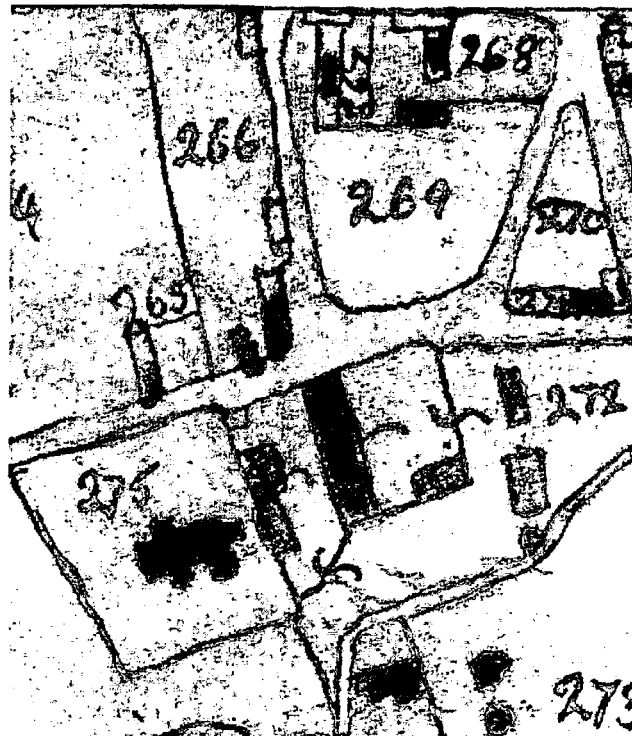
The 1797 Enclosure Map does not have a pictorial representation of the buildings in West Hall farmyard. However, a large building occupies the northern edge of the complex. The central building has disappeared and been replaced by two smaller buildings against the churchyard wall. The earliest datable evidence discovered during the summer survey was bricks measuring 8 ½" x 5" x 4"; these were found in the churchyard wall. Bricks of this size date from after the Brick Tax of 1784.⁶ These bricks had been inserted into the chalk of the churchyard wall to form a levelling layer. This suggests that the chalk wall dated from before 1797. These large bricks were also discovered in the wall of one of the stables, and at the bottom of a trench dug in the north west of the farmyard. They appear to relate to the construction of a stable range for the working horses of the farmyard. This range had been modified during the nineteenth century, with the removal of a gable roof and its replacement by a lean-to roof - as can be seen in photographs dating from the early part of the twentieth century. The addition of smaller, more standard-sized bricks on top of the large bricks on the churchyard wall, with slots for roofing timbers, underlines the photographic evidence. This stable block appears to have been swept away during the modifications to the farmyard in about 1960.

In the stables, the walls with these large bricks lean against a chalk wall of another small building, which extends to the south where the stable block was. The building was constructed of chalk with brick facings, and was clad on its southern gable with carstone. Although it originally had a steeply-pitching roof, it was always clad with pantiles - implying an eighteenth century date. This building is preserved within the range which is on the south-west edge of the farmyard. It appears to have been built using the churchyard wall as part of its foundations.

⁵ NRO Le Strange IC. This field book is not dated but one similar in style for Ringstead (NRO Le Strange EH. 8) is dated to the 1690s.

⁶ R.W.Brunskill; *Brick Building in Britain*, Victor Gollancz Ltd. (London, 1990), p. 192.

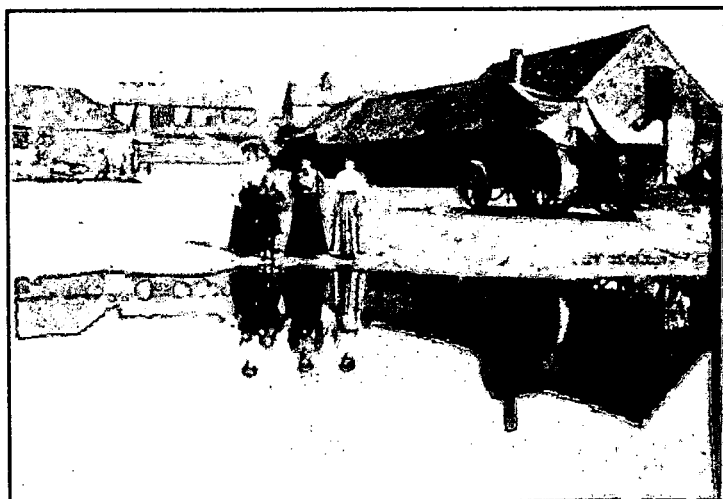
The 1840 Tithe Map (Figure 3) shows a completely different arrangement for the farmyard. The large building on the northern edge has vanished and been replaced by another, which is aligned north/south rather than east/west. The only remaining evidence for the east/west barn is a buttress, three feet thick, which supports the northern wall of the farmyard. It is constructed of chalk, and its western face is clad and galleted with carstone and stepped in the manner of an exterior wall. The remains of the replacement barn can be found in the central wall of the surviving double-barn structure. There is evidence of a blocked, full-height doorway, and the wall is made of chalk which is clad with carstone on the western side. Facings for doorways and corners are of hand-made bricks. The eastern half of the double-barn structure seems to be a late



3 West Hall Farmyard - 1840 Tithe Map

nineteenth century rebuild; the western half bears the date "1960" and is constructed of machine-made bricks clad with carstone on its northern gable and random chalk and carstone on the southern gable to make it blend in with the other half of the barn. The central wall was raised using chalk with brick strengthening; it appears to be of lower quality construction than the base of the wall. The roof is constructed of machine-sawn softwood and metal kingposts, and is bolted rather than joined - all of which features confirm a late-nineteenth century date.⁷ There is a lean-to on the southeastern corner of the building, and the possible remains of others on the western wall, where scars of brickwork are evident.

The cartlodge (Figure 4) appears as two separate buildings on the 1840 Tithe Map. The southern building was probably the granary built following the Enclosure Act. Observation on the 25th December 1998 revealed it to be very similar to that at East End Farm at Ringstead. Unfortunately, the construction of the building so close to the river had meant that the southern wall had sunk, making the structure unsound and the granary had to be demolished before it could be measured.



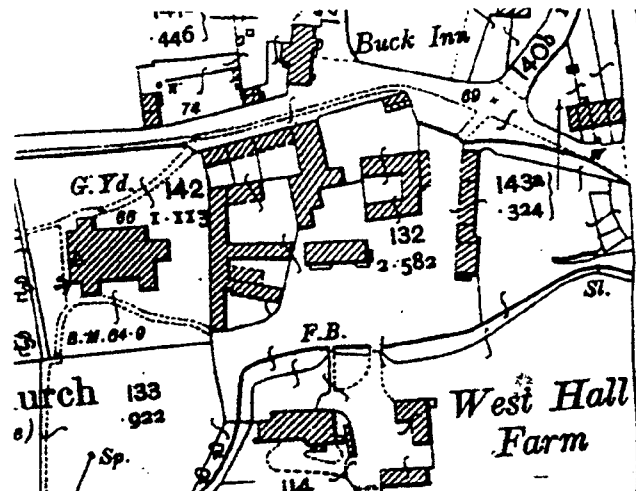
4 Waggon-house and Cart-lodge with Granary over. 1908

The roof construction was one of through pegged purlins, with dovetailed collars. The

⁷ Susanna Wade Martins; *Historic Farm Buildings*, Batsford (London, 1991), p. 80.

original carpenters' marks were still visible, indicating the building had been prefabricated and then assembled on site. The walls on the north and south side were primarily made of chalk with brick laid in "English Bond" where they would be exposed. A waggon house with granary erected in West Hall farmyard cost Edmund Rolfe £88 3s 6d in January 1797, and would appear to be this building.⁸ The northern part of the cartlodge is constructed of chalk and flint with carstone cladding and hand-made brick facings; this building is shown on the Tithe Map, but the centre section - which is a rubble construction - does not appear until the 1888 Ordnance Survey Map.

The major development of the farmyard took place between 1840 and 1880. The 1888 Ordnance Survey Map (Figure 5) shows many more buildings than any of the earlier maps. This reflects the growing importance of animals, especially cattle, on Norfolk farms during the nineteenth century.



5 West Hall Farmyard - Ordnance Survey 1888

The surviving barns do not have evidence of ventilation holes - suggesting that they were never intended to be threshing barns. The east/west aligned single barn in the middle of the farmyard appears to have been constructed as a granary in its original format; (frontispiece) the eastern part of this barn had a mezzanine floor, two blocked windows and a doorway in the eastern gable - all of which suggest that this was its original purpose. The barn is asymmetrical, with the eastern part being only half the length of that on the west. The western part could have contained a static threshing engine, or may have been for storage of grain prior to cleaning. The roof of this building is of a scissor-beam construction, which is unusual in a building this large in the mid-nineteenth century. The scissor-beam construction is more often associated with animal sheds at this time.⁹ The timbers are adzed rather than sawn, and retain their carpenters' marks. It is noticeable that they have not been erected in sequence, and that the bays are not of equal width. The east gable and south face of this barn are clad with squared blocks of carstone, while the other two faces have rubble carstone cladding. The basic building material is chalk with brick facings.

The south-west corner of the farmyard consists of an L-shaped loose-box arrangement of animal sheds. The 1888 Ordnance Survey Map confirms that this was formerly two animal yards, and aerial photographs taken in the 1970s show the central wall dividing this area into two yards. The surviving boxes have at least five different phases of construction. The first is described above in paragraph 6; this was converted into three boxes and extended to the south by the addition of three more boxes. These last three boxes appear to have used the churchyard wall as their back wall, and were enlarged by raising and extending them eastwards in the nineteenth century. Five boxes of the northern range were made from carstone, chalk and flint, and appear to be contemporary with the three boxes which had been added on the south side; they were raised and extended by the addition of one box using very hard bricks from the Heacham brickworks.

⁸ NRO Hea 168 251x3.

⁹ Susanna Wade Martins; *Historic Farm Buildings*, pp. 80-85.

A U-shaped range in the north-east corner of the farmyard was not investigated because it was still being used. cursory inspection of the exterior suggested a nineteenth century date, with considerable twentieth century alteration - especially to the northern part of the building. This range was clad with carstone and had hand-made brick facings.

The modernisation of the farmyard in the 1960s had destroyed much of the stable arrangement in the north-west corner, although there was still evidence of where mangers had been located. It appears that West Hall Farm was not in the forefront of agricultural innovation in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries; rather, it followed the trends set by Coke at Holkham and other Norfolk farmers. The middle of the nineteenth century was the high-point of Victorian agricultural prosperity, and a period when many Norfolk farmers constructed yards for their animals; (Figure 6) this is because of the increased number of cattle which



6 North-west corner of farm-yard circa 1909 showing prize bull and lean-to buildings against churchyard wall

were kept, and the scientific improvements in animal husbandry.¹⁰ It should be remembered that West Hall Farm was a stud for Hackney horses at the end of the nineteenth century, and many of the boxes in the south-west corner were whitewashed and had clear pantiles - letting in more light than would have been required for cattle - suggesting that they may have been stables. One of the boxes was identified by Ted Rix as being the bull-box, and it is known that sheep were kept in this yard in relatively recent times. This confirms that a working farmyard was required to react to changing economic circumstances and that, before modern machinery, existing buildings were modified rather than replaced.

The Tithe barn was not found, but this could be because the underlying chalk is very close to the surface and no foundation trenches would have been necessary. The normal practice in Norfolk was to re-use building materials - be they stone or wood - and the nature of the local materials at Sedgeford (chalk, flint and carstone) makes it almost impossible to identify where they have been re-used. The buttress, over three feet thick, is the only remains of a substantial building aligned east/west against Church Lane; but its construction suggests a date from the seventeenth century rather than from the medieval period. The exciting discovery of the summer was the unusual scissor-beam roof of the single barn together with, *in situ*, the machinery used for cleaning the grain.

Acknowledgements

The author would like to extend thanks to the following people: Mr. Goddard for permission to record the buildings while he and his men were working on them; Mr. Trevor Forecast for allowing access to the cartlodge while it was in the process of conversion; Janet Hammond for the loan of equipment, and for her expert knowledge of the site and support for the investigation; Ted Rix and Bill Armitage for giving their time to visit the site and explaining former workings of the farmyard; the students on the Standing Buildings Survey Course and the Field History Course, and all other volunteers and residents of Sedgeford who assisted with measuring the buildings - especially Michael Nudds, Pauline, Ray and Helen Thirkettle, and Sheila Medlar.
M.J.Medlar 27th January 2000

¹⁰ Susanna Wade Martins; Historic Farm Buildings, pp. 60-70.

"It was all horses then."

An oral history of West Hall Farm in the Thirties
told by Ted Rix to Janet Hammond

That's a sad thing seeing all the old farm buildings falling down or being converted into houses. I remember what the farms were like when I was a boy in the thirties, it was all horses then, no tractors. Mr Newcombe-Baker may have had a tractor before the War but none of the other farms did. Mr Heading was the farmer at West Hall Farm; I used to go down to there after school and help. There were none of the rules and regulations like there are today, we children used to go and give a hand, but then, farmyards weren't such dangerous places in those days, not like they became after the tractors and motor and electric powered machinery came in.

At West Hall there were three teams of horses and three team-men to look after them. The teams were of four to six horses depending on the job and the state of the land. The first team-man was the head one, he took over the young horses after they had been broken in to get them used to the work. When three teams went out of a morning it was the first team man who led them out, followed by the second team man, and after him the third. The others



1 Opening up 'stetches' with the plough.

weren't allowed to go ahead, there was a proper order for doing things and they all knew it and stuck to it. That stayed like that until the war; then things changed a lot and after it was over the old ways never came back.

The horsemen had long days, longer than the rest of the men. At six in the morning they had to be in the yard to get the horses into the stable and feed them. They would put up the nosebags of bait to take to the fields for the horses, then they'd go back home for their own breakfasts. By seven they were back in the stables harnessing up for the day's work. They had half an hour for lunch when they'd eat their ducky and the horses had the nosebags that had been put up that morning. Knocking off time was four o'clock in the winter and four-thirty in the summer, by that time the horses were in their stables brushed down, groomed, fed and watered, but that wasn't the end of the day for a team man. He was back in the stables at six-o'clock to turn the horses out into the horse yard and fill the hayracks for the night. If he thought there was anything amiss, he would take his lantern and check them again before he slept. In the summer they went out to the horse's field. When I was a boy, the team-men all lived in the pair of cottages opposite the church gate, the second team man was the first's step-son, and the third was son of the farm foreman, who lived in the cottage next door.

Cattle were kept on the farm, mainly bred for meat, the only milkers at West Hall in those days were the cows kept to supply the house. There were no sheep belonging to the farm in those days. Mr Parker would put his flock to graze the stubbles and eat off the tops. I remember once going with Frank Mann, the shepherd, to take a flock to Houghton. We took our bikes and he had a very good dog. We had to make sure the gates were shut so they didn't get in the fields on the way, and it was a bit of a job at the cross roads, but there wasn't so much traffic about in those days; if you met a flock you just waited and it walked past you. If you caught up with one, well . . . let's say if you were following a flock of sheep you didn't have to be in too much of a hurry!

It was a mixed agriculture so we didn't have to use so much of the artificial fertilizers. During the winter the cattle were kept in yards, as were the horses when not out working, so by summer when the cattle had gone to market or been put out to grass, and the horses were also going out to pasture in the evenings and weekends, the yards were high with manure. This was dug out to plough into the land in the autumn. A day's work muck carting was twelve tumbrels of manure, after you had finished your twelve you could go home. Each load was dumped on the field in eight spaced heaps and these were evenly spread over the land by the men with forks. The number of loads to the acre varied from ten to twenty depending on the state of the land and the crop to be sown.



2 Pulling manure from tumbrel with a muck crome.

The grain crops were often undersown with grasses and clover for the following year's hay crop. They'd get the corn drilled, the head team man would do the drilling and he'd be followed by the boy with a harrow covering the seed over. When the seed had come up, they used to drill the undercrop between the corn rows, then roll the whole field. By the time the corn crop had been harvested the undercrop was well advanced to provide a good crop of fodder next hay making.

Root crops had to be singled. The drills didn't space the seeds far enough apart in the rows for the roots to grow properly, and there were gangs of hoers who'd be employed to thin out the seedlings to seven inches apart, so leaving the rest room to grow. They were led by a 'lord' and 'lady' and like the team-men they worked the field in order. The 'lord' was the leader, and the 'lady' (who was always a man) was second in command, they set the pace and you weren't allowed to get in front of them, neither to get out of your place behind if you wanted to keep your job. You needed a good eye and steady hand to cut out one little plant from another with a hoe. Another summer job in the fields was the weeding. The charlock was pulled up by hand, the thistles were a different matter, there was a special digging tool made for that job, a spud, that had a blade a couple of inches or so wide and about six inches long on a handle so you could shove it down to cut the thistle stalk under ground. This was done just before they flowered, that avoided the summer seeding and was said to weaken the plant, so as that it wouldn't make enough growth to flower and seed again that season.

Harvest time would last two or three weeks depending on the weather. If the farmer hadn't got enough men he would employ some casual labour. There was a 'lord of the harvest' as well. He set the pace for the scythes. There were horse drawn reapers and binders on the farm, but they couldn't get into the field until a couple of swathes round the edges had been mown by hand. The 'lord' and a pair of men would do that getting close up to the hedges. They were followed by a second group who picked up the swathes of cut corn and with twisted straw ropes made them into shoofs. When they'd finished, the machines would come in, and as they went round and round the field the bit left to cut got smaller and smaller. Well, all the rabbits and such like kept on moving further and further in till there wasn't room enough for them, and they'd start to make a bolt for it. We boys would be there with sticks to knock them on the head, and the dogs would chase those that got away. Sometimes someone would have a gun, then we'd all get out of the way in case we got shot as well. At the end the rabbits would be laid in a line and all the workers would get one or two depending on how many had been caught. If we boys got one with a stick, we'd pick it up and run home with it if we could. We wanted to make sure of our dinner.

Harvest days were long. Start seven in the morning finish eight at night, half an hour for breakfast and an hour for dinner. At 'fourses' time the wives would come to the field with the children and bring bottles of hot tea and food. After they had had their tea the children were allowed to ride in the empty wagons. Meanwhile the shoofs were lifted up and stood in shocks, eight shoofs in each shock, ready for the wagons to cart them to the stackyard. In the harvest gang there was a loader, a standing loader and two pitchers plus a boy who was called a horse leader. When the pitchers had pitched the shock they used to call out loudly 'Hold tight' or 'Holdgee' and the boy would lead the horse and wagon on to the next shock. Up at the yard there were four men at the stack. The stacker and two more on the stack, one unloading and a lad to keep the elevator horse going.

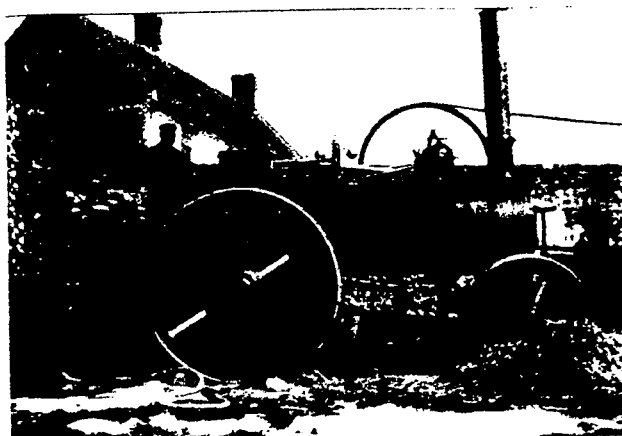
After the stacks were all made up in the stack yard they had to be thatched because threshing was not usually done until after Christmas and the grain had to be kept dry. Some farms did have a man who could thatch, but at West Hall they had a man come in to do the job. The farm supplied all the brotches, thatching straw, string and water and the thatcher would arrive with his tools and his servant. First they would damp the straw evenly, this was to make it pliable, then the servant would make the damp straw into bundles called yealms, a number of which he used to lay into a carrier made from two sticks held together at one end, then shin up the ladder taking them to his master. The thatcher would start laying them in at the eaves of the stack, securing them with the brotches and string, and working his way round and up to the point or ridge at the top.

A different gang came for the beet harvest. The men were often Irish and they stayed in big huts down at Peter's pit. Lifting beet could be a miserable old job. They were lifted from the ground with a beet plough, the men would take the beet, two rows each, picking them up and knocking them together to get the mould off before putting them down the four rows into one. Next they would cut the tops off before throwing them into the tumbrel to be taken to the beet clamp, and sometimes hands got so numb that a chap would chop a finger off and never feel it till he saw the blood running! The beet were taken to the beet factory at Lynn by rail in ten or twelve ton trucks. There were no women on the farm in those days but during the war the Women's Land Army girls, who lived in a big place at North Creak, used to be delivered by lorry to help with the carrot pulling and potato picking. At the end of the War the German prisoners in camp on Snettisham beach used to come and help on the land, they could do all the jobs including handling the horses and tractors. Some of them married local girls and stayed here.

As well as the root crop harvesting in the autumn, the banks and hedges used to be trimmed. The banks would be tidied up and the overhanging growth on the hedges trimmed back, so as they didn't catch the wagons laden with corn and hay next harvest time. That was all done by hand of course and there were different bill hooks for the different jobs. We also had to clean out the ditches in the Reeddam. In those days the best grass grew there, but the ditches had to be kept open so the water would run off into the river and drain the land. That used to go from the spring in the chalk pit along the top of the Reeddam then down past the osier bed into the river, opposite where the sewer pumping station is now. The ditches in the wood had to be cleared as well so that the land didn't become waterlogged there and flood the Reeddam. There was always one bit on there that was very wet anyway, if you stepped into it you were above your knees in soft mud. Once, some time in the 'eighties we were trimming the poplars which had been planted on the Reeddam in the 1960s, using a chainsaw and standing on a high lift trailer, when the tractor pulling it the tractor suddenly lurched when a wheel sunk in the soft spot. We fetched another tractor to pull them out and that got stuck as well; eventually we got them all out backwards.

It was a great day when, after Christmas, we heard that the farmer had said "We'll have to get the engine in, we need some more chaff for the horses." The steam engine and threshing tackle would come from Howlings at Ingoldisthorpe or Bushells at Ringstead and us boys were always keen to see them at work, as well as enjoying the excitement of the rat hunt which always happened when a stack was taken down. Like with the rabbits we would be armed with sticks and all the good ratting terriers in the neighbourhood would be there to get the old varmints as they came out of the stack; but it was the engine that excited us most.

The thatch would have been taken off the stack to be threshed and the tackle was manoeuvred into position. Then the belts from the thresher were attached to the belt drive of the engine. At the rear of the thresher was the elevator to take the threshed straw to where the new straw stack would be made. The men would get up onto the grain stack and pass the shoofs down to the drum feeder who fed them evenly into the threshing drum inside the machine. There the grain would be threshed out from the ears, and it would pour through another smaller hopper into a sack on the outside of the machine (16 stone for barley and 18 stone for wheat), the chaff from round the grain was so light it was almost blown into another sack. Being in charge of filling the chaff sack was dusty work. The rest of the shoof passed out of the thresher onto the elevator and as one stack shrunk the other grew until by the end of the day both were done. One stack was a day's work and when it was finished the engine and tackle packed up and went home, unless it was to do another stack on that farm the next day. I still remember the big engine as it trundled off with the day closing in, its firebox glowing red and a shower of small sparks from the funnel gleaming in the darkening sky.



3 Steam engine bought by John Anthony of West Hall in the late 19th century, probably made by Savages of Lynn -c 1909

After threshing the sacks of corn were loaded onto the double breasted wagon pulled by two horses and taken to the farm where the grain was shot out onto the barn floor. As the heap grew they would put planks on it to walk up and make it higher. Later on the corn would be dressed out with a hand turned 'Booby Dresser' which was filled with a container called a bushel. When the head corn came out of the dresser it was bagged in 16st. sacks and either stacked in the barn two high, or loaded onto the double breasted wagon and taken down to the railway station where it was loaded into a box truck and sent to the granary or corn merchant.



4 Thresher and elevator in West Hall yard circa 1909

There was once a bad accident in Sedgeford with a steam engine. The brakes failed as it turned into the Snettisham road and it rolled down Cornerstone Hill out of control. The driver jumped out but the fireman was too scared to do so and hid in the coal box. When the engine hit the bridge wall, at the bottom of the hill, it turned over into the river and the poor fellow was crushed by the coal. That was a rare old do, a terrible tragedy.

They were hard days when I was a boy, particularly for our parents, what with large families and low wages, but we boys enjoyed being on the farm when we were off school, and I'm glad I saw the old farming ways. worked them too as a young man. In those days the job was more friendly, always someone there to have a laugh or moan with, not like today when you can go out in the morning on your tractor and not see or speak to another soul. maybe until you get home. if there was no one else in the yard at knocking off time. Wireless in the tractor cab's all right but arable farming today's mostly a lonely life.

Ted Rix. February 2000

Changes in Land Use in Sedgeford between 1866 and 1966

Michael Nudds

When looking at the changes in land use over this hundred-year period in Sedgeford, in North West Norfolk, one must first look at the larger picture, and the industry within which these changes have occurred.

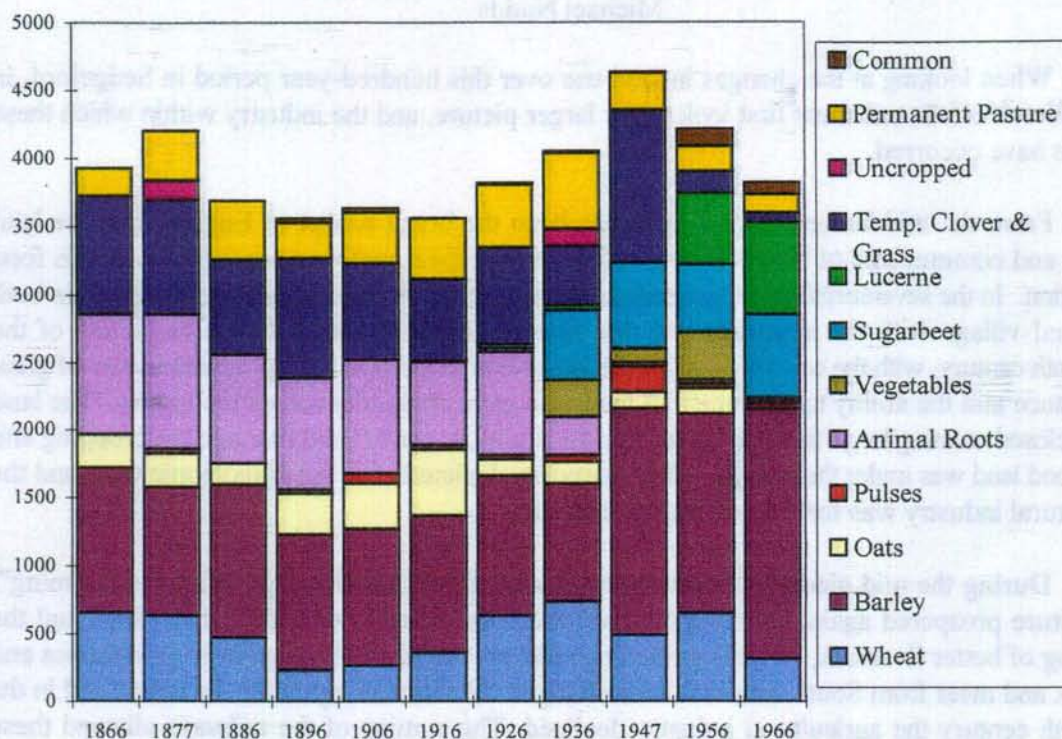
From the middle ages East Anglia has been the bread basket of England and the land owners and communities of North West Norfolk have in their own way prospered with this food production. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the woollen industry also flourished in both town and village with the abundance of raw material close at hand. In the beginning of the nineteenth century, with the country at war with Napoleon in Europe food production was of great importance and the ability to produce that food also gave prosperity across the region. The land was enclosed creating large farming units with the ability to control and manage the cropping and most good land was under the plough. This prosperity declined after the Napoleonic wars and the agricultural industry was forced to reorganise itself.

During the mid nineteenth century, often called the "Golden Age of English farming", agriculture prospered again. Farming methods were improved with higher crop yields and the breeding of better livestock, but this golden age did not last; imports of grain from America and Canada, and meat from South America soon changed the situation again for the worse and in the late 19th century the agricultural industry declined. The coming of the railways allowed these imports free movement around British Isles and that with a declining population in the country, saw land taken out of production. There was no confidence to invest, rents dropped and the countryside no longer prospered. The investment in the improved farming methods lapsed and by the end of the 19th century the industry had adopted less intensive methods of production. With the Great War the country required food and agricultural production increased, as it had done a century before, to meet this need. With the end of the Great War and the World Depression of the 1930s agriculture slipped back. The outbreak of World War II and the need for a greater self sufficiency in food production again saw a change in land use, with every available acre being brought into food production. In 1941 the whole industry was surveyed, all farms were classified and graded for both management and productivity. With greater mechanisation in the 1950s and 1960s the population working in agriculture dropped again but changes in farming practice increased crop yields.

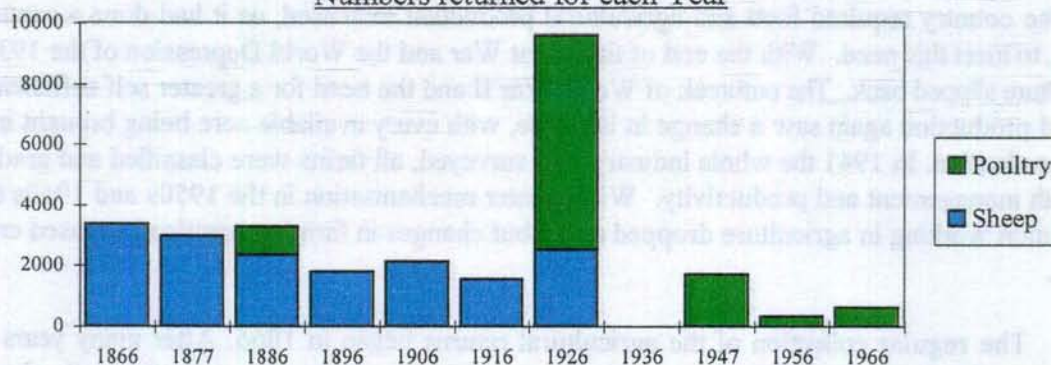
The regular collection of the agricultural returns began in 1866. After many years of experiment the government of the day was finally persuaded to collect returns by the cattle plague of 1865. This was at first done in two stages with livestock returned in March 1866 and the acreage of crops in June 1866. The collection of both returns was changed to June in following years. The number of items for which returns were asked increased steadily with the addition of further crops and by the subdivision of existing categories. Comparison of these records over a number of years can give a valuable insight into land use in the late nineteenth and the first two thirds of the twentieth century.

Cereal crops of wheat, barley, oats and rye are by far the largest area under production in the village throughout the period that the returns cover. Wheat acreage falls in 1896 which coincides with the agricultural depression of the late nineteenth century. This may well be due in some part to the imports of wheat from America and Canada in the late nineteenth century causing prices to fall, and poorer land to be switched to more profitable crops. It rises in the second quarter of the twentieth century between the world wars and declines in 1966. In contrast barley acreage remains constant through the nineteenth century and up till 1936. The area increases by more than 50% during the war years and remains at this high level to 1966. High quantities of quality grain

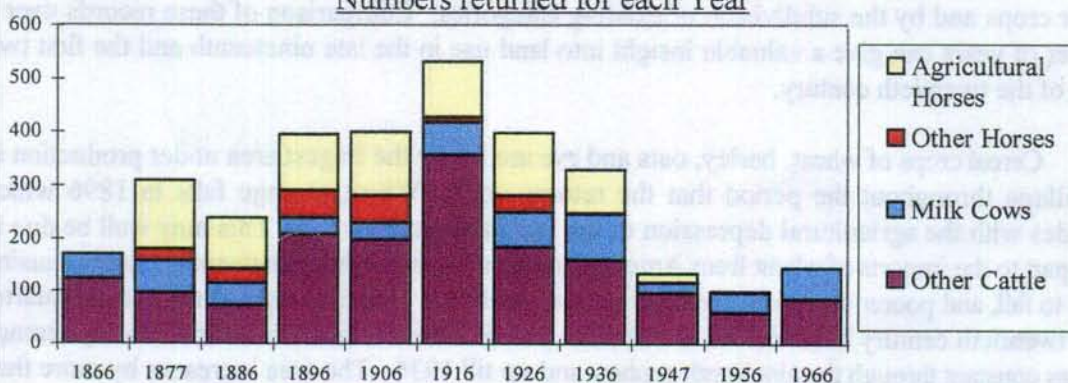
Crops grown in Sedgeford 1866 - 1966
Numbers of Acres returned for each Year



Poultry & Sheep in Sedgeford 1866 - 1966
Numbers returned for each Year



Horses & Cattle in Sedgeford 1866 - 1966
Numbers returned for each Year



production would be readily used by the malting industry and be a source of much needed cash during the agricultural recessions, with lower quality used for rolling for animal feed. Oats were produced throughout the period studied with a peak in production during the first world war. The area reduced by half immediately after the war and stayed at this level until 1966 when it was no longer produced. Oats would be used for both human and animal consumption and with the reduction of horses the requirement dropped. Rye is only found in two of the returns for the village, in 1877 and again in 1966. These areas could have been sown as grazing or grain production.

Peas and beans were in production in the village throughout the period studied in low levels with a rise in production in 1906 and then falling during the inter-war years. A massive increase can be seen during the second world war falling back in 1956. The returns for 1956 have a new category of "Vegetables for human consumption" and this may well have re classified a proportion of the area down to peas. Beans only appear in very small areas twice, once in 1877 and again as a combined area with peas in 1966.

Root crops (potatoes, turnips & swedes, mangolds, carrots, cabbages, mustard and rape, sugar beet, vegetables for human consumption) can be separated into three main categories, the first of these being used for human consumption such as potatoes, carrots and cabbages. Potatoes have been grown in very small areas throughout the time of the returns with an increase during the second world war. Carrots appear only once in 1947. Cabbages, mustard and rape are shown in the late nineteenth century, they increase from 1926 with a larger area in 1936, then reduce again after the second world war. The second category of root crops are turnips and swedes, mangolds. This group was mainly grown as livestock feed and a large reduction in the area under production coincides with the fall in sheep, cattle and horses in the village. The third category of roots is sugar beet. This was introduced into the cropping in the 1920s with its area dramatically increased in 1936 and remaining at a similar level from then on. Sugar beet is an important cash crop giving a break in cereal rotations and a guaranteed market through a quota system.

Vetches and tares were in production in the village between 1866 and 1936 in small areas. This would be used for fodder and was often drilled with rye, winter barley or oats. Lucerne was first grown in 1926 in small quantities with a gap during the second world war. In 1956 there was a massive increase in production at 524 acres and a further increase to 673 acres in 1966. A most valuable fodder crop, it can be cut up to three times per season, and then dried to produce feed nuts for livestock and, although the livestock in the village had all but vanished by this time, a local industry had developed to service markets outside the local area.

Permanent pasture increased during the late nineteenth century, dropped in 1896 and then increased again to a peak in 1936. After the second world war it declined again. Clovers and grass under rotation was quite a large area in 1866 at 865 acres but this steadily declined over the following 70 years to 433 acres in 1936. There is then a massive increase to 1100 acres in 1947 and then a drop to 157 acres in 1956. This anomaly in the trend must be looked at in relation with the agricultural returns classification. Lucerne was classified with temporary grass, clover and sainfoin in the 1947 return only, by 1956 it was again classified separately. Since an industry was created in the village after the second world war around lucerne one must ask was this greatly increased area in grass masking the start of the production of this crop? Bare fallow or uncropped arable land appears in the returns in 1877 and 1936 which mirrors the years of agricultural decline and world depression when land was taken out of production and left to fallow. Heath and common land was not recorded in the early returns and first appears in 1896. This disappears during the first world war as most land came under the plough. Through the inter-war years a small area returns and it is only in 1956 and 1966 that it increases again as poor land is abandoned.

Livestock including cattle, sheep, pigs, horses and poultry were also recorded. Cattle were recorded throughout the period covered by the returns and their number remained quite constant with an increase only in 1926. The returns show that this was an increase in cattle of two years and

above but not milk cows. This suggests beef production was taking place as the milk cows remain constant throughout. Sheep, a major factor in the prosperity of the local area in the first half of the nineteenth century, are from the first return in 1866 on a decline. This trend is reversed on the 1926 return but by the 1936 return they have completely disappeared. The decline in sheep production was caused by cheap imports of wool and meat from Australia during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. The reversal of this trend in the 1926 returns could be due to the first world war and the country's need to produce from the home market. The numbers of pigs have fluctuated during the period from 1866 to 1966 with low periods in 1926 and again in 1947. On the 1966 return the number increases dramatically which was caused by the introduction of an intensive pig unit located in the village in the early 1960s.

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Title page of auction catalogue 1905

recorded in different parishes in different years. Crops may also have been double recorded in other categories

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The number of horses which were used in large numbers in agriculture were not recorded on the 1866 return. From 1887 to 1926 their numbers were constant but then started to decline in 1936. By 1947 very few remained in the village and by 1966 their numbers were no longer recorded. This fall in the use of horses on the land markedly indicates the point at which mechanisation, namely the tractor, begins to have an impact on agriculture in the village. During the latter part of the nineteenth century John Anthony of West Hall Farm was held in high reputation as a breeder of Hackney horses. This stud, numbering seven stallion (including the famous Sedgford Duke) and forty-four mares, foals, geldings, fillies and yearlings, was sold by auction in 1905 after Mr Anthony's death.

Poultry was not constantly recorded throughout the returns, therefore making comparisons is difficult but one can see that on the 1926 return fowls increased dramatically and one may presume the introduction of a more intensive type of production.

The total area of land recorded on the returns fluctuates from its lowest in 1916 at 3,587 acres to its highest in 1947 at 4,666 acres. The directories record the parish as being between 4,100 and 4,200 acres during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. There appears to be a wide variation in the areas recorded. This could be due to a number of factors. Farmers had the choice of which parish they registered their holdings in and some of these variations could be due to farms which crossed the parish boundary being

Oysters Natural: an insight into the Saxon river trade and traders

Melanie Van Twest

The first, 1996, SHARP Report featured an article on the medieval use of the Heacham river as a mode of transport between Fring and Heacham, via Sedgeford: 'From at least the twelfth to the fifteenth century, the range of benefits derived from the river meandering from Fring down to Sedgeford, Eaton and on to the medieval market town and small sea port of Heacham was diverse and highly organised' (*Hammond & Barnett 1996, p. 11*) Although pre-Conquest historical sources for the use of the river do not exist, it is reasonable to assume that by the twelfth century the river was already a well-established means of transport for goods and people to the villages lying along its banks. Indeed, it is most likely that access for the original settlement of the Sedgeford-Fring area was gained by travelling along the river, as is known to have happened in many river valleys during the Saxon period.

Evidence for the movement of one type of cargo along the river - oysters - can be well attested by anyone who has worked in the area in and around the Boneyard. The excavation trench has already yielded scores of kilograms of shells, and field walking in the Chalk Pit Field, immediately south of Boneyard, has also revealed high concentrations of shells (*Ames 1996, Figure 7*). Since there is no means by which these could have been deposited without human intervention, oysters are presumed to have been a staple of the local diet. This is supported by John Ames' assessment of the field walking in Chalk Pit Field (*Ames 1996, Figs 4 & 7*), which shows the Late Saxon finds to have the highest representation as well as revealing large amounts of oyster shell overall. Arguably this links the consumption of oysters most strongly with the Late Saxon period. This, with the evidence from the Boneyard, shows that trade in oysters by some means was taking place long before the medieval period.

So we have historical evidence for the use of the river for the carriage of goods, and archaeological evidence for the consumption of oysters at Sedgeford. It would make sense to assume that the oysters were a part of the river trade, as they were most probably available at the Heacham markets and would form a bulky cargo difficult to transport by road. If we believe that oysters were transported along the river, by what means were they carried? The exigency of small river navigation implies that small craft would have been utilised, and it is sensible to state that flat-bottomed craft - such as barges and punts - are better suited for the carriage of cargo than round-hulled vessels such as rowing boats, as well as being easier to manoeuvre by a single boatman in a narrow channel. The use of punts on the Heacham river to Fring is supported by the existence of the Fring Harbour, described as a 'barge basin' and though less reliable, local legend of river use describes the traffic of flat-bottomed boats to Fring until comparatively recent times.

The above picture of ancient river use has influenced the post-excavation research carried out with respect to one of the burials from the Boneyard. Skeleton 0034, or 'Findus' as he has come to be known, caused a considerable stir in 1997 when it was noted that his grave was covered by a scattered, but unmistakably deliberate, layer of oyster shell placed on the soil immediately above the body (*Figure 1*). At the time of excavation it was dubbed 'the shell burial' and various theories were raised about the reason for this special treatment, to date unique in Boneyard. The most popular idea was that the laying of shells over a burial was a ritual which had hung over from pagan practices, though the reason for the singling out of this particular burial - which was not in any other way remarkable - could not be identified.

During the 1999 excavation season the opportunity to analyse Findus for post excavation recording arose. This revealed a male of about 30 years of age at the time of his death with no signs of malnutrition, traumatic injury or disease. Only two abnormalities, both of them minor, were identified. The first was a very slight, but nonetheless significant, curvature - or scoliosis - of his lower back, suggesting that he had for some reason habitually leaned to his left. This would have been the end result of years of a consistent stance or activity, the bones gradually remodelling themselves in response to the physical stresses being placed upon them. Although the scoliotic curvature was diagnosed in the skeleton it was not in any way disabling, and would probably have been unnoticeable when looking at the living man.

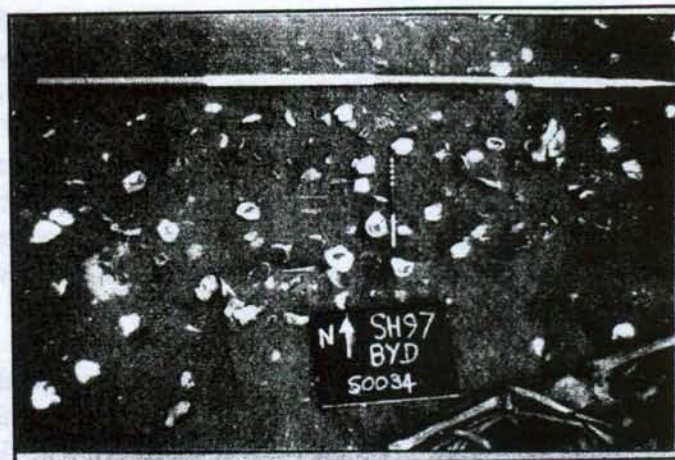


Figure 1: S0034 prior to excavation - the shell burial

Other signs of bony response to stresses were the enlarged areas found on two of the left lower ribs close to the side of the body, where it appeared that the bone had once again changed its shape to cope with physical stresses above normal levels. These two areas were together, and so the same cause would apply to both.

Although these observations were interesting, they were insufficient to shed very much light upon Findus' occupation in life, as a number of other individuals from Boneyard have similar skeletal changes, in varying degrees of severity. What was significantly more illuminating was the identification of a bone lesion on the upper part of the left arm, close to the shoulder. The rounded edges of this area of injury clearly showed it to have occurred during life and to have partly healed at the time of his death. Its size and depth, however, strongly indicate that it was a long-term injury: the nature of bone is such that an appreciable length of time is required for a soft-tissue injury to make a lasting impact on the skeleton through remodelling of bone tissue.

The location and nature of the lesion is consistent with tendon damage occurring at the insertion point of a major muscle of the upper body, latissimus dorsi (Figure 2). The 'lats', as they are popularly known in the bodybuilding world, are the primary source of power for a pulling down motion, such as chinning. The injury which Findus had suffered implies that he was habitually using this muscle with some force, favouring his left side, and that constant use of the muscle had prevented the complete healing of the injury site. At its other end latissimus dorsi originates along the length of the middle and lower spine and along the edges of the lower ribs, and so its constant use was probably in part responsible for the observed curvature of the lower back and the enlarged areas on the ribs.

So how does this diagnosis contribute to our knowledge of this individual? It was quite an exciting moment when the researchers working upon Findus realised that his arm injury, his back curvature, the deformation of his left lower ribs and the shells upon his grave combined to form the following picture: of a left-handed boatman employed in the river trade, leaning always over the side of his punt as he manipulated the pole in a pulling down motion, bringing fresh oysters to the community living at Sedgeford, and probably to Fring as well. The daily trip to and from Heacham, presuming it was as frequent, undertaken over the ten to fifteen years of his working life, would have been quite sufficient to induce the skeletal changes observed. And, finally, at the time of his burial the community who had appreciated his services laid the most

obvious product of his calling - oyster shells - over his grave.

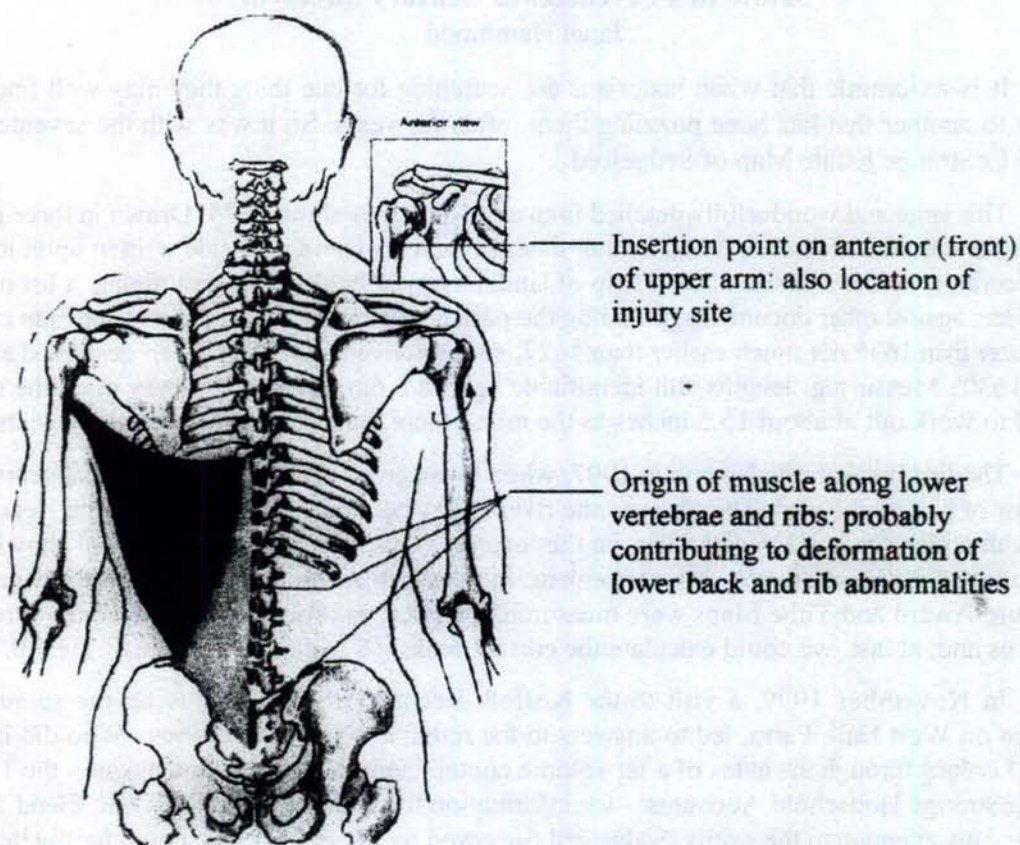


Figure 2 Insertion and origin of Latissimus dorsi with location of the injury site
(Floyd & Thompson 1998 p. 49) © McGraw-Hill 1998

Although it can never be proven, the evidence is strong enough to make this interpretation plausible and reasonably confident. It is encouraging to see that archaeological research, historical knowledge, and particularly a study of the people themselves, give us considerable information about their community, their lifestyle and economy from the grave.

Melanie Van Twest

October 1999

Acknowledgements

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**Serendipity -or
Salute to a Seventeenth Century Surveyor
Janet Hammond**

It is axiomatic that when historians are searching for one thing they may well find the answer to another that has been puzzling them, often for years. So it was with the seventeenth century LeStrange Estate Map of Sedgeford.¹

This large and wonderfully detailed map and I first met about 1974. Drawn in three parts on separate parchment sheets, it had neither date, surveyor's name nor scale written upon it, but it did record the holder and size of each strip of land, however small. From examining a list of the landholders against other documents, including the parish registers, it was clear that the map could not be later than 1635 nor much earlier than 1627, so for convenience it has been described as 'of about 1630'. Measuring lengths still identifiable against a 6in Ordnance Survey map, the scale seemed to work out at about 15.5 inches to the mile - there the matter rested for many years.

The first breakthrough came in 1997, when I was given photocopies of what appeared to be a copy of part of the map. This showed the river valley between Eaton Farm and the Heacham road, with a plan for a drainage system on the reverse.² This map had a scale marked showing 1 inch equalled 20 perches, not very convenient, but better than nothing; after all the Sedgeford Enclosure Award and Tithe Maps were measured in chains, so obsolete measurements were not new to us and, at last, we could calculate the correct scale - 16 inches to the mile or 1:3960.

In November 1999, a visit to the Norfolk Record Office to follow up the summer's research on West Hall Farm, led to answers to the remainder of the questions. Who did it and when? Looking through the index of a fat volume containing two books bound as one - the 1615-1645 LeStrange Household Accounts³ - for information towards her own thesis, the friend I was with drew my attention to the words 'Sedgeford Surveyed by Mr Fisher.' We could hardly believe our eyes and hastily turned to folio 8 of the second book 2. There it was! Probably the last piece of information we had expected to find that day, if ever:-

July 1631 To John Fisher for Survey of Sedgeford £10.

That wasn't all. From the next three entries we learned that Ralph Hargate was paid £1.10s (£1.50p) for '22 days going with John Fisher at the surveying' and 'Lawes his boy'. (Hargate's) 13s 4d (67p) 'for 20 dayes carrying the chayne.' William Guybon, the tenant of West Hall Farm received £1 10s 'for John Fisher's dyett 6 weekes'.

So there it is, our map was probably made between April and June 1631, the surveyor was John Fisher, who spent six weeks in Sedgeford, lodging at West Hall Farm with William Guybon, while he surveyed the estate and drew the map. Ralph Hargate, member of a local yeoman family, who knew the parish intimately, together with the boy Lawes, went with the surveyor to help with the measurements and carry the chain. The result was a map of Sedgeford unequalled until the Ordnance Survey maps of the nineteenth century. Neither the Enclosure Map of 1797 nor the Tithe Map 1840 match it for accuracy, and of all the documents relating to Sedgeford in the Dean and Chapter and LeStrange archives in the Norfolk Record Office, it is **the** one which helps us to put all our other findings into place on the ground; particularly as we are now able to make copies of it at any scale in transparency form which can be overlaid on the appropriate Ordnance Survey Map to ascertain and mark positions. Sedgeford historical research owes an immeasurable debt to Mr John Fisher and his employers, Sir Hamon and Dame Alice LeStrange.

Footnotes

1 Norfolk Record Office (NRO), LeStrange Map OC1

2 NRO, LeStrange Map NR

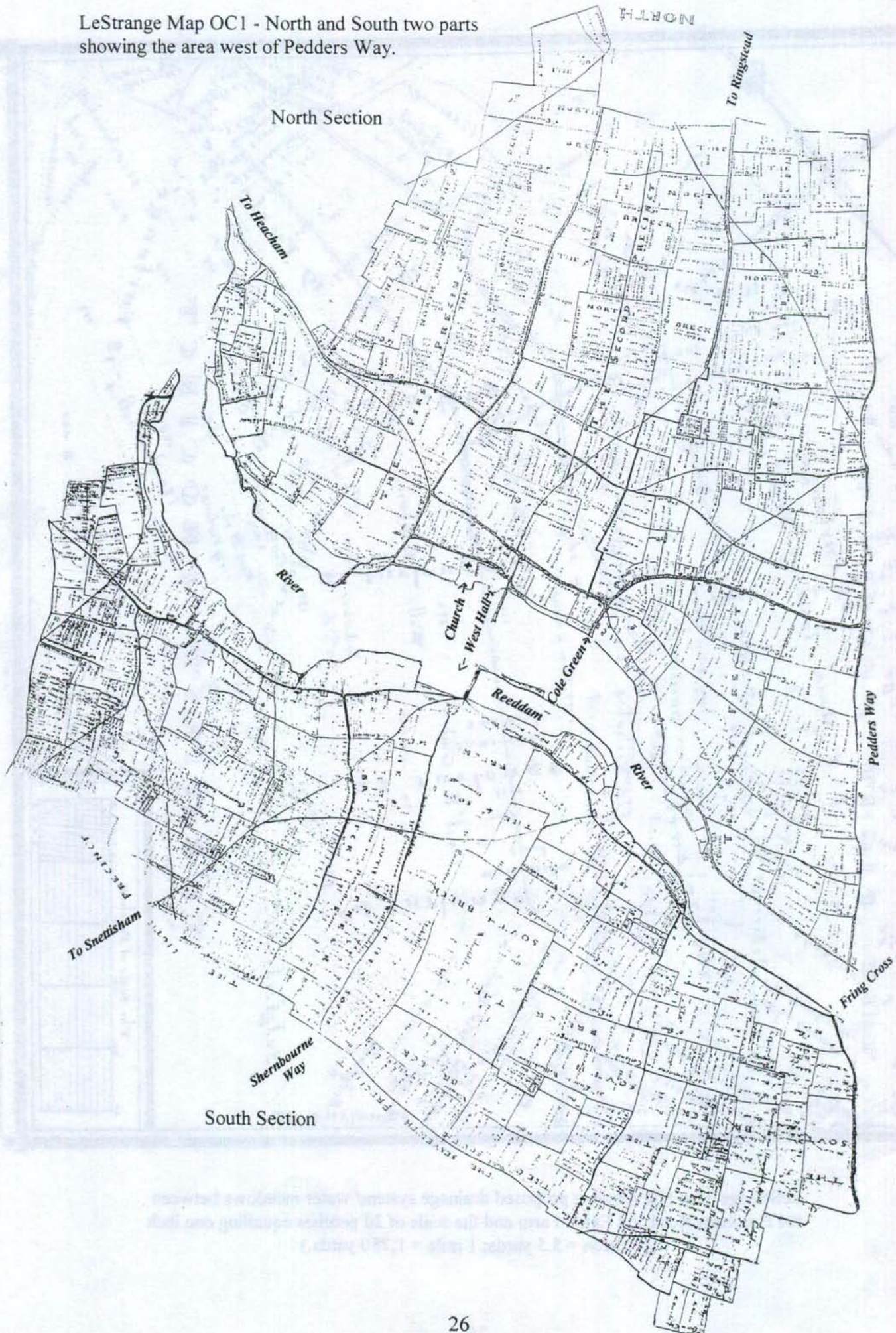
3 NRO, LeStrange P7. Household Accounts 1615-1645 - Book 2 (1630-45) folio 8

Acknowledgements.

I would like to thank all the staff of the Norfolk Record Office, particularly Susan Maddock who has given much assistance to me and other members of the SHARP team. David Yaxley for introducing me to map LeStrange OC1. Peter Carnell for finding Map NR with scale and Linda Nudds who drew my attention to the index of the 1615-1645 Household Accounts; without their sharp eyes we might never have known the answers.

LeStrange Map OC1 - North and South two parts
showing the area west of Pedders Way.

North Section



South Section

East section showing East Hall, (the Domesday manor of Gnatingdon)



LeStrange Map OC1

Drawn by John Fisher in 1631 at a scale of 20 perches to the inch (16 inches to the mile)

Reproduced at approximately 3 inches to the mile.

SHARP

Calender Spring & Summer 2000

23rd -27th April	The Easter Experience - Field-walking Polar Breck! (if interested see * below re. details)
Sun. 2nd July	Working parties to finish preparations for summer season
6th & 7th July	Arrival of supervisors
8th July	Arrival of volunteers
9th July to 18th August	Excavation in progress.

Open to all during the period of the excavation:

Tuesdays 7.30-9pm	At <u>Sedgeford Church</u> - Lectures on aspects of archaeology and field history
Tuesday 11th July	Tom Williamson - Centre East Anglian Studies, UEA - Norfolk Origins
Tuesday 18th July	Andrew Rogerson -Norfolk Landscape Archaeology - The Vikings in Norfolk
Tuesday 25th July	John Wymer - The earliest people in Norfolk, before the last glaciation
Tuesday 1st August	Kenneth Penn - Norfolk Landscape Archaeology - Church & Landscape - Houghton-on-the-Hill
Tuesday 8th August	To be announced
Tuesday 15th August	Helen Geake -Norfolk Landscape Arch. - Saxon cemeteries and associated finds.
Thursdays 7.30-9pm	At <u>Hill Farm</u> - A forum for supervisors, volunteers, students and visitors to discuss all aspects of the excavation and courses.
Fridays 3.30-5pm	Site tour starting at the Boneyard
<u>Sunday 13th August</u> 2.30pm	Friends annual guided group visit to site - with tea and cake archaeologist style!

Friends and visitors are welcome on site at all times but, depending on the exigencies of the dig, there may not always be someone available to explain what is happening. We will do our best, so please bear with us.

* * * * *

* If you are interested in joining in the field walking week in April please contact:-
Neil Faulkner,
36 Leyland Avenue,
St Albans,
Hertfordshire, AL1 2BE
01727 834 844 (Home) 07974 679 805 (Mobile)

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