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A SUMMARY OF THE TALKS/EVENTS IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS*by Myra Kestner***1998**

- 27th May Annual General Meeting.
- 11th June Building and Eighteenth Century House in Suffolk Dr Alan Mackley
Henham Hall and its extensive archives were used as an example.
- 18th June Visit to the Bloodmoor dig to see the excavations, including a Saxon burial which had just been found.
- 27th June Outing to Walpole Congregational Church and Laxfield Museum and Church, with lunch at Laxfield.
- 9th July Annual Round Tower Church outing, visiting Frostenden and Theberton Churches and led by Bill Goode.
- 10th Sept. Topographical development of Lowestoft 1100 to 1700 David Butcher
The 12th to 14th century movement of the town to its site on the cliff was described, and its subsequent development shown on maps, both original and reconstructed.
- 24th Sept. Bottles of my Collection Mike Fuller
A large collection of bottles, bought at car boot sales or dug up from dumps, was displayed and described.
- 8th Oct. English County Maps, Saxton to the Ordnance Survey R Grant Coleman
Old maps were shown, the earlier ones made for military purposes or to mark estate boundaries. From the seventeenth century, road maps for travellers were produced.
- 22nd Oct. Pakefield Coast Erosion 1895 to 1950 Bernard Cook
Slides of Pakefield showing the changes that have taken place during the period.
- 12th Nov. The Trial of the Lowestoft 'Witches' Ivan Bunn
Two unfortunate Lowestoft women were hanged for witchcraft in 1662 after prominent townsman, Samuel Pacey, accused them of bewitching his daughter.
- 26th Nov. The History and Work of the Fishermen's Mission Ian Munro
Founded in 1881, the Mission built a fleet of hospital ships, which looked after the health, and encouraged the sobriety, of fishermen in the North Sea.

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- 3rd Dec. Annual Christmas Social at the Yacht Club
Another successful event, with a magnificent buffet and an antique valuation session by James Comyn.
- 1999**
- 28th Jan Archaeology and Metal detecting Jimmy Woodrow
Skilled metal detectorists can work with archaeologists, leading them to interesting finds.
- 11th Feb. Land of the Iceni Dr John Davies
Quantities of Iceni coins of stylised design (often with horse symbols) have been found by metal detectorists or are the subject of Treasure Trove procedures.
- 25th Feb. History along the Coast to Coast Walk Dick Collins
A walk from St Bees in Cumbria to Robin Hood's Bay in Yorkshire, revealed old mine workings and a memorial to Wordsworth's brother (among other things).
- 11th March The Old Drovers Janet Smith
Cattle over many miles from the remote and mountainous regions to the Waveney Marshes, where they were fattened for the southern markets.
- 25th March Old Lowestoft at Work Derrick Ingles
Old trades, such as basket making were recorded on film, during the early 60's, shortly before they disappeared.
- 8th April Railway Posters Peter Larter
Today, the art work and the record of the past are interesting, but the original intention of the posters was to attract passengers to visit places of interest by train.
- 22nd April Restoration and Sailing of the Old Smack 'Excelsior' Paul Allerton
The Excelsior was discovered as a wreck apparently beyond repair. Dedicated volunteer craftsmen and funding from donations proved this first assessment wrong.
- 13th May Anglo-Saxon Landscape and Society Kenneth Penn
A very interesting and revealing picture of how people lived after the Romans departed, giving rise to most of the place names in use today and the land boundaries.
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STATION X - POSED

JB interviewed by Tricia Cuming

Were you totally absorbed by the Station X programmes on TV at the beginning of the year? As a post-war baby, I was fascinated by the extreme measures taken to keep the whole lifesaving process completely unknown to outsiders.

So, when doing a friend a good turn, I was introduced to J.B. - a man in his mid-seventies, who still, after all these years was very reluctant to give too much away about his involvement with Station Ten, since he had been sworn to secrecy for life - and thus amazed when so much fuss and coverage appeared in the media, I was full of admiration. His story was so interesting, I thought the LALHS membership might like to read a fragment of it, too.

Though LB. has given his permission for these anecdotes to be published, as I've already stated, his vow to keep his involvement and work secret for life still fights to the surface, which is why only his initials have been used.

Aged 21, J.B. was among the unsung heroes working for Station X - not at Bletchley Park - but at the interception/feeder station based at Hanslope Park - 14 miles from Bletchley Park.

And how did a young draughtsman earning fifty bob a week from Nottingham become involved in the challenge to decode the messages sent by German Enigma coding machines at the now celebrated Bletchley Park?

Well - by responding to an advert in a "Draughtsman" professional newspaper, of course!

His "interview" was at Arkley Lodge, the lodge house of a Country Park House, near Barnet, London. He was told he'd be hearing from them in three weeks' time.

Three weeks later, almost to the day, he was asked to report back to the same location, and invited to join the Royal Corps of Signals.

Then he was whisked away by Staff car to Hanslope Park.

AB64 - Army Book - pocket-book identity pass - with one side displaying owner's details - identity and rank - with an insert, an uncovered pay account - (which Station X personnel did not possess - because they were not paid from Army Funds - in fact they were paid from the "secret fund" which is voted through Parliament with no questions asked, every Budget day).

After being issued with a uniform, an AB64 and the hut he was to sleep in, (his office was in Hanslope House), he went to the Mess Hall for some tea. Whilst being introduced to some of the others there, somebody asked him how Mavis was!

The name of his girlfriend, who lived in Leicester, and later, of his mother and other friends and family surprised him, and it swiftly dawned on J.B. what the Intelligence service had been doing during those three weeks between the interview and invitation to join, and that officials knew more about him and his family (and his girlfriend) than he knew himself!

Since the authorities were using the Army as a cover, J.B. was expected to behave as an ordinary soldier - wearing battle-dress for instance - but he had not been told or taught conventions and etiquette of such positions, i.e. that people of higher rank with "pips", for instance should be greeted by a salute.

In fact, not having Officer status proved very difficult during the months to come, and a lot of J.B.'s anecdotes are related to this mismatch in status and knowledge.

He was happy to be earning £5 a week though, - twice what he was earning in civvy-street, but had no idea what went on in other huts - they didn't mix or talk.

At Thurso (north Scotland), in 1940, there was a tracking transmitting/receiving station with aerials potentially important for use by Station X, since we had troops based on Scapa Flo across the North Sea - and J.B. was sent to check the aerial orientation and switch gear etc.

He came back on the train - which at that time was crammed full of personnel from all three services -

and some WRNS, too!

J.B. told me that the second topic of conversation when Servicemen get together was Pay - but of course he had no idea what "ordinary" Signals squaddies earned - and was forced to continually attempt to avoid getting into conversation, not easy when not only the carriages were full to bursting, but also the corridors and the vestibules at each end of the carriages.

One of his colleagues, however, had an even closer shave.

Armed only with Movement Orders - he was sent on a secret mission.

When challenged about travelling without escort, he was required to produce his AB64 - with its empty slip-case.

He was unable because of secrecy to forward any information about his unit, where he was stationed - in fact anything - or why he had no pay slip.

Eventually, a CSM was summoned to question him - and still no information could be given -so, with the risk of insubordination charges hanging over him like the sword of Damocles, he was finally allowed to ring his "unit" personally - and luckily the Officer in charge that day was a real Warrant Officer - 1st Class - of higher rank than the 2nd Class of the Warrant Officer who was the CSM. He was also well experienced in Army matters, having already served for 22 years, so after tearing a strip off the CSM holding our unfortunate man, and admonishing him for putting a secret mission at risk by his insistence, the colleague left with his head held high - with the CSM's apologetic "Sorry Sir, a mistake has been made!" ringing thankfully in his ears.

After this incident - and doubtless many others of a similar nature - all pseudo-army personnel were issued with a slip to insert in their AB64 - stating that the holder was on a special mission, allowing them the option of being discharged at the end of their involvement and the right to wear civilian clothes.

In fact J.B. was asked to stay on at the end of Station X - but in the Army, not as a civilian - so he declined the offer and was issued with his discharge papers.

By now his girlfriend was his wife and in the ATS - working for the Army Post Office - so aspects of her work were also of a secret nature - locations of units and bases etcetera. - so thank goodness there was something else to do and talk about when they eventually met up on leave!

The messages that had been intercepted at Hanslope Park were couriered by car - and sometimes by motorbike - at the close of the working day to Bletchley Park - where the code-breaking process began in earnest.

Alan Turing made regular visits to Hanslope Park - riding his musty bike the 14 miles from Bletchley Park, waving and weaving across the countryside, deep in thought. He spent about half a day once or twice a week in the big house at Hanslope, sorting out mathematical problems and was a curious sight with his broad-striped school-boy tie holding up his trousers and, when his buttons fell off his raincoat, a piece of string tied round his middle!

He was very popular among the workers, who would shout "Hi, Prof.!" as a greeting, always answered by a beaming smile.

On one occasion, as he was preparing to leave, he was asked if he would like to have a look in one of the huts, to see what exactly went on there, and he distractedly agreed.

In one of the workshops, he was introduced to a thermionic valve, and its potential properties. His face immediately changed expression as he listened. "I could make a computing machine out of these!" he exclaimed.

And he did! The resultant "Colossus" was arguably the first computer - and though destroyed at the end of the war - don't believe those who would say the Americans were the inventors of the computer!

There were a number of unanswered questions at the end of my meeting with J.B. though when I showed surprise at the total destruction of the operation and wondered why Churchill had ordered the burning of all evidence of Station X at the end of hostilities, J.B. smiled. Apparently as soon as the code-breaking work was finished, all the aerials were relocated to pick up more Enigma signals - this time - from Russia.

You can visit Bletchley Park (Britain's Best kept Secret) this year between 10.30 am - 5.00 pm, last admission 3.30 pm on:-

May 29th/30th/31st

June 12th/13th, 19th/20th, 26th/27th

July 10th/11th, 24th/25th

August 7th/8th, 21st/22nd

September 4th/5th, 18th/19th

October 2nd/3rd, 16th/17th, 30th/31st

November 13th/14th, 27th/28th

December 11th/12th

Tours on the hour 11.00, 12.00, 1.00, 2.00, 3.00

Entry £3.50, concessions £2.50 - charges may be varied for special events. Tel: 01908 640404

Bletchley is off the A5 south of Stony Stratford. You can also get there by train or buses from Milton Keynes. If you need more details Tricia has the leaflets. Also details on the Web, at:-

www.cranfield.ac.uk/CCC/BPark

LOWESTOFT PORCELAIN FACTORY 1757 - 1799

Johnnie Johnstone

So runs the wording and dates on the hoard above the entrance to the Bolster Room in the Museum. It is in this room that the Lowestoft Charter Trustees collection of Lowestoft Porcelain is displayed.

1799 - 1999 - two hundred years since the Lowestoft Porcelain factory closed. Perhaps we should put a circa against the 1799 date as there is no full agreement as to the actual closure date. Nonetheless, as some evidence and some conjecture support the 1799 date above any other, the Museum Management Committee decided it would be fitting to observe the bi-centenary of the closure of the factory.

The Museum's Honorary Curator, Jon Reed, approached the members of the Porcelain Group (7 or 8 people with a common interest in Lowestoft Porcelain) to see if they would set up a display to commemorate the bi-centenary. The reaction was strongly positive and it was decided that the display should concentrate on two aspects -

- 1 Material concerning the Factory itself;
- 2 The production in the Lowestoft Factory of the earliest known "holiday momentos" on gifts usually inscribed - "A Trifle from Lowestoft"

The credit for these proposals must go to David Sturman who has long crusaded for recognition of the Factory's importance as part of the heritage of Lowestoft. He also felt that it was about time that it was recognised that the earliest holiday souvenirs had originated from and had been made in Lowestoft.

Also to David must go the idea of producing (alas not in Lowestoft) a latter day "Trifle" in the form of a miniature teapot with the "Trifle" inscription. These teapots, now on sale in the Museum, are proving very popular with our visitors - a snip at £5.00. a teapot and almost as popular as the original product - copied by holiday resorts world-wide. The entrepreneur businessmen, who set up and ran the Factory, would surely have approved.

The display on the ground floor of the Museum contains photographs of the Factory buildings before it was demolished.

The demolition itself revealed many "wasters" (broken pieces of porcelain) which gave us a great deal of information as to the type of articles the Factory produced. Also found then was the "colour stone"

on which decorating pigments were ground and mixed. The stone itself is part of the display.

Aerial views of the site of the Factory were disappointing and we have had to revert to hand-drawn maps to show the Factory sites now and two hundred years ago. The Factory site is now incorporated into the Crown Artists Brush Factory and, as far as can be assessed, no part of the original porcelain factory building exists today.

The maps were drawn by Michael Chester who also contacted the Curator of the Royal Worcester Museum and obtained from him copies of that Factory's wage lists for the end of 1799 and beginning of 1800. These lists show the names of a number of skilled craftsmen who had worked at Lowestoft. They had migrated, with their families, to Worcester to find work now denied them in a Lowestoft factory which could no longer employ them.

A number of reasons have been suggested as to what caused the Lowestoft Factory to close, but it is now commonly accepted that its geographical position made it difficult for it to compete with the more advantageously sited potteries in the Midlands.

History does repeat itself.

The wage lists are interesting as they show the wages enjoyed by these skilled craftsmen and their wives and children who were also employed in the factories.

On the back of the display boards there are the family trees of some of the people best known as being connected with the Factory. If they did not all move to the Midlands, their descendants may be living in or around Lowestoft. Visitors, especially those with a local connection, are invited to check their family trees. We would be interested to know of any family relationship.

After learning about the Factory, visitors can visit the Bolster Room to view the collection of its finished products (none now less than 200 years old).

There is a "Special Display" of four "Trifles from Lowestoft" and one "Trifle from Lynn". The pounce pot Trifle belongs to the collection, but the others have been loaned specially for a bi-centenary display. We think that this is likely to be the largest display of "Trifles" in any one place in recent years.

It is our hope that the visitors having learned something of the history of the Factory and viewed its finished products, will, like earlier visitors, purchase a "Trifle" souvenir as a reminder of Lowestoft and its place in the development of porcelain manufacture.

The drawing on the cover of the report is by Paul Durbidge and shows part of the old factory in Factory Street where Lowestoft China was made.

EXCAVATION OF AN EARLY/MIDDLE SAXON SETTLEMENT AT BLOODMOOR HILL, CARLTON COLVILLE, SUFFOLK

R. Mortimer & J. Tipper

INTRODUCTION

An early Medieval settlement and cemetery has been excavated at Bloodmoor Hill, Carlton Colville, near Lowestoft, Suffolk (TM5208 9002). The excavation area covered approximately two hectares and was carried out by a team from the Cambridge Archaeological Unit between January and July 1998. The excavations were funded by Bovis Homes Ltd. The site lies on sand on the southern slope of a broad valley at between 8 and 10 metres AOD.

The site produced material of two main periods: 1st/2nd century Roman, associated with a ditched field and track system; and 6th/8th century Saxon associated with dense settlement remains including SFBs, post built structures, middens, pits, a cemetery and evidence of industrial activity. The Saxon features both overlie, and are in parts contained by, the Roman system. The valley bottom lies some 300m to the north and it is likely that further settlement features and activities (specifically those requiring access to water) would have been situated further down the slope. The western limit of the site is at

present undefined and to the south and east early medieval features end, seemingly bounded by the Roman field system.

Significant quantities of Romano-British and Anglo-Saxon pottery have been recovered (approximately 6000 and 4500 pieces respectively) and large quantities of metalworking debris were found in both above-ground and sub-surface dumps. The faunal assemblage, though large, has suffered in the soil microclimate and there are great differences in preservation across the site, the assemblage includes large pieces of whale vertebrae.

Dating

Initial indications suggest that the early medieval element of the site spans the 6th to early 8th centuries. However, the material from the site has yet to be fully assessed and thus at present there is no attempt at finite dating. The pottery assemblage is of hand-made plain sherds, a small component of which has stamped and incised decoration, (typically 6th century). The upper date range is not yet clear, although, no Ipswich Ware pottery has been identified. Recent work on Ipswich ware suggests that it did not emerge from Ipswich until 710 or 720 AD (P. Blinkhorn pers. comm.) and it seems likely that occupation had already ceased, or was on the decline before Ipswich Ware reached the area. Only one early Medieval coin was recovered from a stratified context, with a production date of 690-710 AD.

ROMANO-BRITISH SETTLEMENT AND FIELD SYSTEM

An extensive and multi-phased Romano-British field system underlay the Saxon settlement. The system consisted of small fields set out along both sides of a ditched and banked trackway. The track follows the contour of the hill east-west with enclosures to both sides. While the ditch fills were virtually devoid of finds material, a large and varied Roman assemblage was recovered from the site. Both the quantity and make-up of the assemblage suggest close proximity to settlement and aspects of this activity may be identified during post-excavation.

Much of the Roman material is residual within Saxon features such as the SFBs and midden heap, but a significant proportion came from apparently *in situ* deposits. These contexts were principally truncated waste heaps and spreads of dark, finds-rich material, often over and adjacent to the ditches. The surviving dumps or spreads were confined to a narrow strip within the inner boundary of the field system and elsewhere there were scatters of finds within a relatively clean buried soil.

ANGLO-SAXON SETTLEMENT AND CEMETERY

The Cemetery

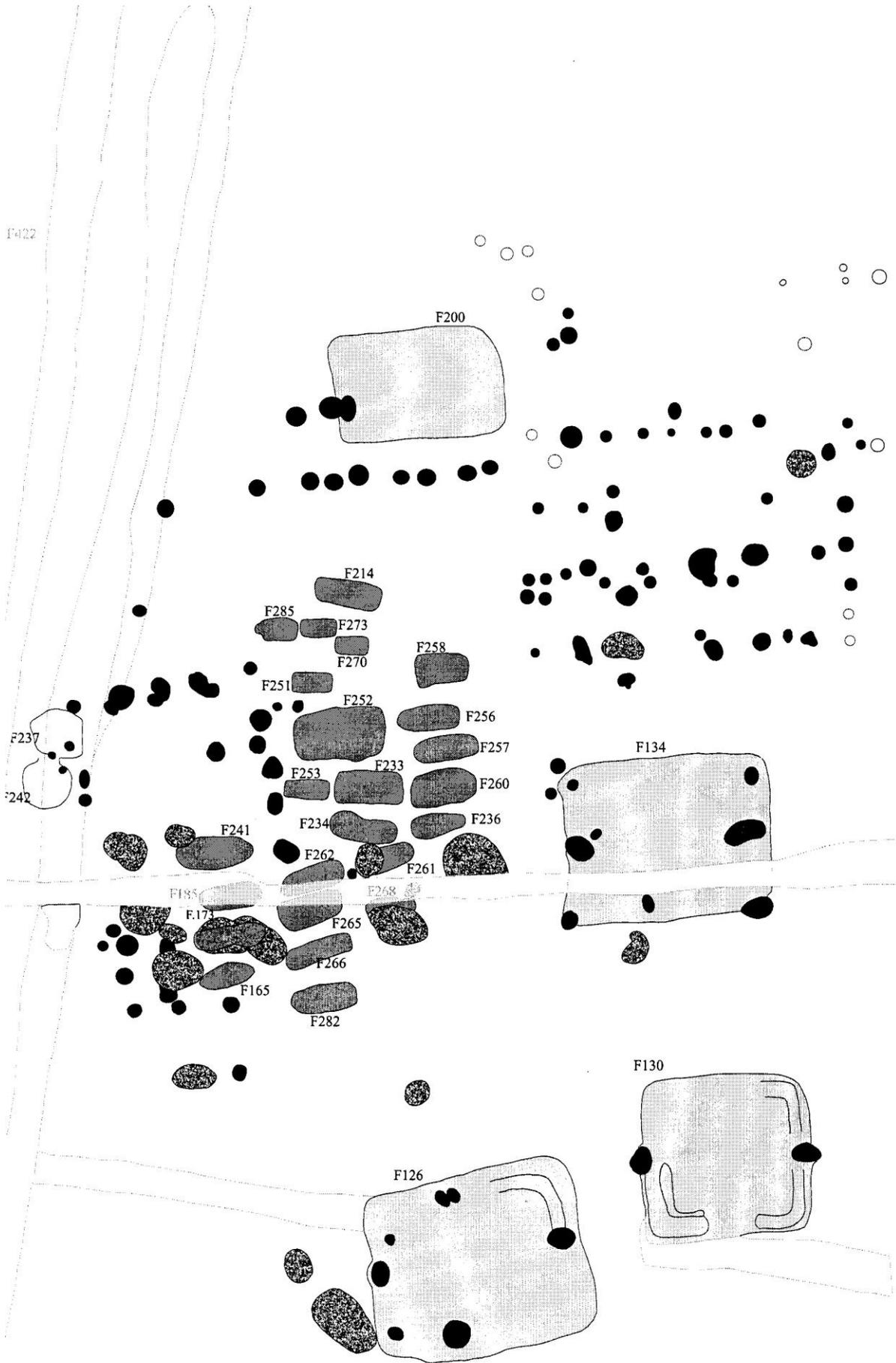
A cemetery of twenty-four west-east aligned graves lay within the settlement, with two further graves (one a double burial) 50m to the east but still within the settlement zone. Seven graves were furnished and finds include a keystone garnet disc brooch, girdle hangers, bead-in-wire pendants, bead necklaces and the remains of a casket. The positioning and layout of the group, and their likely 7th century date, suggest a Conversion Period cemetery away from the earlier pagan burial ground on the crest of the ridge. The excavation of the cemetery gives an opportunity to investigate not only questions relating to change in social structure but also to changing beliefs.

Sunken-featured buildings

Twenty-three SFBs were identified, along with six smaller hollows, some very shallow, which appear to be an SFB sub-type. There is great variation in both size and structural type, and it is clear that there is no standard Bloodmoor Hill 'type.' The number of posts in the SFBs varies from none to six with some showing clear evidence of internal supports or linings in the form of slots at the base of the pit or ledges around the sides. Some also show additional repair posts. Sizes vary from 3.8 x 3.2m up to 6.4 x 5.1m. No hearths or trampled surfaces on the base of the pits were discovered and the lack of surviving daub may suggest all-timber superstructures.

Post-hole Buildings

Five post-hole buildings were identified in the field and potentially more will be defined during post-excavation. The structures fall within a well-defined and discrete area of approximately 90m x 30m. The main axis of the buildings is roughly east-west with some set at 90° to this - a similar alignment to that of the SFBs. The plan of one complete post-in-trench building, a type of construction normally considered to be a Middle Saxon form, has been defined and was shown to cut an earlier SFB.



Bloodmore site showing details of graves and hut

Metal-working

The metalworking debris consisted primarily of iron smithing slag (130 kg) with associated hammerscale, iron objects/fragments, kiln furniture and crucibles. There is also evidence for occasional small-scale bronze or copper working. The principal slag dumps were within two SFBs and in a mound to one side of, and over, the cemetery. Between them these three areas comprise 75% of the metalworking assemblage. The identification of a workshop area or areas awaits further post-excavation work but further debris at both the far west and south-east of the site may suggest secondary foci of activity.

Middens, surface spreads and other features

There is a high degree of preservation along the northern side of the site, with features protected by a build up of colluvium and by the slight hollow of the Roman trackway. This has aided the survival of midden heaps and surface spreads up to 35cm deep. Five concentrations have been defined along the trackway, each apparently different in character, and these areas have great potential for the study of disposal practices and depositional behaviour across the site.

The site appears unusual in having both a considerable number of pits (approximately 250) and a wide variation of pit types and they represent an important new data-set. A number of pits have a close spatial proximity to the SFBs and may be linked to different activities within them. Four hearths or oven bases have been identified and the function of these, whether industrial or domestic, has yet to be defined.

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

Excavated early/middle Saxon settlement evidence is still rare, with barely a handful of sites having been investigated on a large-scale since the mid 1970s. West Stow and Mucking are the "type sites" both at the regional and national level and are the basic reference points for other excavations no matter how different the natural and/or cultural landscape might be. It is becoming clear, however, that many settlements cannot necessarily be directly compared with these and categorised as shifting groups of farmsteads without clear evidence of spatial organisation. The settlement pattern at Bloodmoor Hill appears to be well organised, with zoning for post-buildings, midden heaps and possibly SFB types and functions.

The opportunity is presented to study a near-complete settlement plan, with associated cemetery, possible industrial zones and with evidence for the differential disposal/deposition of waste materials. Questions are also posed as to the manner and extent to which the early Saxon settlement relates to its Romano-British precursor.

Cemetery excavations are well represented in East Anglia, though many are seen divorced from their associated settlements. At Bloodmoor the two appear to be intricately linked and it should be possible to produce relatively finite dating of the cemetery which in turn, through stratigraphic and spatial relationships, will more accurately date the settlement. There is also the possibility of adding significantly to knowledge of the changing beliefs and burial rites of the conversion period through further study of the burial group.

R. Mortimer & J. Tipper, University of Cambridge, March 1999

THE CONTENTS OF A PAKEFIELD BOTTLE BANK

Paul Durbidge

In many antique and junk shops it is possible to see occasional bottles or stoneware jars and the majority of these originally come from Victorian bottle dumps which are still to be found scattered over a wide area of our countryside. Some of the dumps were quite extensive and contain a wide variety of both glass, stoneware and earthenware with many of the bottles being household products such as inks, sauce bottles and marmalade jars as well as the cure alls such as hair restorer, lung treatment, Mrs Winslow's soothing syrup and gout cure to name but a few. Pickle jars are quite common along with the egg shaped mineral water bottles introduced by William Hamilton which came in general use about 1845. Later, one Hiram Codd perfected a closure in bottles containing mineral water by using a glass marble which was forced on to a rubber ring in the neck of the bottle by gas in the carbonised drink. Children loved this and there was a considerable amount of breakages by children trying to get the marbles out and Codd took out many patents in an attempt to lessen the destruction and even went as far as using an oval marble to lessen the damage rate. Stoneware ginger beer bottles vary in type from transfer marked types designed for cork stoppers to the two toned internal marked forms while other popular ones were the muff and foot warmers. One such dump containing bottles was originally sited in a field just south of Pontins Holiday Camp and as a result of continued cliff erosion this is now slowly discharging its contents down the face of the cliff. This movement has been going on for nearly two years and the small shrubs and rootlets growing on the cliff slopes have caused the discharge to spread over quite a wide area while recent heavy rains have resulted in a mass of material to end up on the beach below in an untidy mess.

My own knowledge of the subject of Victorian bottle dumps is very little but over the last year I have been shown quite a number of bottles that have come from the spill and the thing that struck me was the range and types involved and also that they were once familiar to most households.

Subsequently I have compiled a short list of around forty different types of bottles and jars that I have seen along with some of the small metal remains, there are undoubtedly many more still buried in the clay. Quite a number of the small bottles are not marked and thanks are due to Adrian Charlton for identifying these and it would appear that as a subject it is quite extensive. In conclusion it would be interesting to find out where the location was that produced the bottles with the embossed WILSHAK name. Beccles, Gt. Yarmouth and Lowestoft were all production sites and I would be interested to hear if anyone knows as to where the Lowestoft premises was situated and how extensive the works were.

Below are some of the contents that I have actually seen from the dump but obviously there are many more than just single examples along with a vast amount of broken remains that still lie embedded in the grey clay.

Whisky flask	Blue Anchor, Lowestoft
Whisky flask	Royal Oak, Lowestoft
Pointed Hamilton bottles	
Venos Lightning Cough Cure	
Owbridges Lung Tonic	Hull
Mineral bottles	Youngman and Preston
Cod's Laurance	Beccles
Early Bovril bottles	
Green and light brown sauce bottles	
Blue poison bottles	
Champaign ginger beer bottles	
Early Hunt's bottles	Gt. Yarmouth 1890
Plain ginger beer bottles 1890	
London medicine bottles	
Screw beer bottle 'Wilshak'	Lowestoft – Gt. Yarmouth

Stoneware ginger beer bottles 'Wilshak'	Lowestoft – Gt. Yarmouth
Dandelion Coffee Essence	Symington & Co Edinburgh
Mason Essence of Coffee and Chicory	Nottingham
Eiffel Tower Fruit Juice	G Foster Clark and Co Maidstone
Pure meat extract	
The Cambridge Lemonade	Chivers and Sons Ltd Histol, Cambridge
Laurance and Sons Stone Ginger 1886	
Steam Works	Gt. Yarmouth, Beccles and Ipswich
Behrmann and von Spreskelsen	Hamburg
Boat ink bottles	
Pot lids Co-op Stores	
Plain white grease jars	
Brown ink bottles	
White Baby feeder	Cambridge 1920 – 25
Dundee Marmalade jars	
Beer bottles Deveroux & Spalldings	Norwich
Ellimans Embrocation	
Flat bottomed Hamilton, D Drake	Norwich & Lowestoft
Beer bottles Hogge and Sepping Ltd	
Setch Brewery	Norfolk
Chicken and Ham Paste R Seager	Ipswich
Sweet jars	
Boots Cash Chemists	
Mellins Food Limited	London
Scent bottles	
Pepper Powder sauce bottles	
Metal Remains	
Small purse frames	
Hat pins	
1855 copper farthing	
Union Jack metal badge	
Various metal buttons	

Paul Durbidge March 1999

IRON AGE POTTERY FROM COVEHITHE

Paul Durbidge

Small sherds of very early pottery have been picked up along the cliff line at Covehithe Suffolk for well over ten years and they usually consist of body sherds often dark brown to light orange in colour and reinforced with either quartz grits or crushed flint in an attempt to stabilise the clay.

So far the pottery encountered has been handmade and is thought to have come from either Bronze Age or Iron Age pots while other sherds could equally be attributed to an early Saxon date.

During the latter part of September 1998 after a number of fresh cliff falls a small cache of this early pottery was observed sticking out of the cliff face and also out of a large chunk of cliff that had recently fallen. In removing some of the sherds it was noticeable that these too has been stiffened

with quantities of small white grits while the general texture of the pottery was quite smooth.

The colour of the pottery lay between dark grey to a brown buff and the overall impression was that these were body sherds from an Iron Age vessel. There were however two sherds which were quite different, firstly they were thicker being over ½ inch and they were also quite irregular with their reddish brown surfaces crudely decorated by finger nails to create simple vertical and horizontal lines. Small white fractured grits were again present in the clay and the camber of the sherds indicated a diameter in the region of between nine to ten inches. Whether these two sherds can be attributed to the Iron Age or Late Bronze Age is yet open to opinion.

The remaining seven sherds embedded in the cliff face included part of a miss shaped base and a small well battered hammerstone in grey flint. Like the previous finds the remains appear to be Iron Age while two very crumbly pot sherds recovered close by are clearly of Late Bronze Age date.

All of the pottery and the hammerstone was originally located in a small pocket approximately 21 inches down from the present ground level and while a close examination of the find spot revealed two small smears of carbon there was no signs of either soil burning or discoloration that may have indicated any further involvement at the location.

EROSION MEASUREMENTS AT COVEHITHE

During late March of this year the yearly erosion measurements at Covehithe were taken; these being originally started in 1978 at the suggestion of the late Professor Alfred Steers, and they consist of twelve fixed points stretching from Benacre in the north to Easton Wood in the south. This year two points at Benacre show a sharp increase in erosion, as do two points set up close to Long Covert, while a further 38 feet has been lost at the end of the metalled roadway leading from Covehithe Church. To the south, Green Heath remains steady, but just before Easton Wood begins there is a pronounced hollowing out of the cliff line where much material has fallen, a fact confirmed by a loss of eighteen feet. In trekking through a mass of dead bracken towards the end of Easton Wood, I was puzzled that I could not find where last years marker was sited, and it turned out to be virtually on the cliff edge, which in turn revealed a loss of 14 feet. Subsequently another fixed point was set up for future monitoring.

While drawing up the Covehithe measurements Adrian Charlton pointed out to me a small thick piece of heavily gritted Bronze Age pottery embedded in the cliff face south of the present road. The sherd was very soft and ill fired and originally came from one of the large bucket type urns of the period. It was also an isolated find with no indication of any other associated material at the find spot.

Paul Durbidge March 1999

A REVIEW OF FIELDWALKING FOR 1999

Paul Durbidge

The fifth season of the archaeological survey on the Somerleyton estate began on January 17th and concluded on March 21st, and this year search areas were at Ashby, Blundeston, Flixton and Somerleyton. Mostly the weather was good with only three mornings lost to bad weather, firstly there was snow so we could not see anything, then it was frost so we could not pick up anything and finally it was rain which made things too unpleasant. In fact the last search was carried out between heavy showers at Ashby on a well weathered field which later yielded a good cross section of flint implements. During the dry summer of 1975 air photography showed two large rectilinear field systems on two fields at Somerleyton and Blundeston and it was hoped that if surface material was recovered from the particular locations it might indicate a possible date for the features. Prior to the start of this years survey I also had a long conversation with a tenant farmer about one of the features and he told me that over the years he had also seen several markings though smaller in size on the adjacent field which had shown through the crops and is hoped at sometime to look further into these unexplained markings. Overall it has been an interesting season with varied returns but with a lack of early coinage, this may be due to the fact that more heavy land and mixed soils were involved this year making detection more difficult compared with the lighter ground.

The presence of heavy near clay conditions can be very punishing both to walk on and usually search especially if the ground is well ridged up and the fields are large, and previous years have confirmed that returns in these conditions tend to be very sparse.

Like the previous year flakes or tools appeared virtually on every field with grouping in three areas which also produced cores. The period is probably Late Neolithic and finds varied from a small bifacially worked leaf arrowhead to a honey coloured core axe head found in association with worked flakes and scrapers.

An unusual nondescript implement was picked up at Somerleyton while at Ashby good quality scrapers and the upper part of a flint Beaker dagger were retrieved after heavy showers.

Most of the pottery was of Medieval date and some had traces of green glaze or soot present and there were also segmented remains of strap handles in two of the fields.

Romano British pottery was in a minority although part of a flue tile with combed surface was an isolated discovery in a ten acre field.

Metal remains in the form of lead were well in evidence with both patinated sheet and molten lead being found extensively. Lead musket shot and pistol shot came from an area that also produced spindle whorls which again were patinated but the most interesting of the lead finds was a small parallel strip with an impression of a braided or knot pattern which came from one of the fields showing a field system.

Additional metal finds consisted of remains of various buckles including part of a large one with traces of inlaid silver, a small bronze mount, a bee hive thimble, abraded token dated 1727, Nurenburg jetton, silver sixpence of 1895 and a large croatal bell.

The finds are :

Neo Bronze Age

Leaf arrowhead, fabricators, core axe head, scrapers, flakes, cores

Iron Age

Body sherd and rim

Romano British

Part base with rim – part of red tile with combing on one surface

Late Saxon

Two rim sherds and possible body sherd

Medieval

Body sherds including base and rim, also part of jug handle

16th 17th century

Westerwald, salt glazed body sherds and rim from belamines

Remains of medieval buckles

Nurenburg jetton

Two abraded tokens

Lead spindle whorls

Lead with impressed knot pattern

Lead musket and Pistol balls

Lead pewter buttons

Croatal bell

Post med pottery and modern buckles

Two objects sent for further information

Last year four items from the 1998 season were sent for further information the results are as follows :

- 1 Large circular mount with centre boss (dished in middle) and scalloped decoration around the edges. Traces of gilding on the face, two large bent over attachments spikes on the reverse. Early

post medieval.

- 2 Bronze pin head or finial from cosmetic implement, globular head with broken pin or point, deeply grooved under collar. Roman
- 3 Almost complete double hooked dress fastener with one hook missing, thick central shaft with central pierced hole shaft moulded with incised diagonal lines. One hook remains tip missing. Post medieval
- 4 Disc from cloth seal stamped on both sides $\frac{1}{13} \frac{1}{2}$ // illegible, the numbers (letters?) are in relief and could refer to the length of the piece of cloth. c1600 – c1800

In conclusion I would once again like to express my sincere thanks to Lord Somerleyton for allowing the continuation of the survey and thanks are also due to Mr Chris Lockhart for his continued help.

Finally my thanks to all the fieldwalkers for giving up their time and supporting this seasons work and these are :

Ron Ashman, Adrian Charlton, Richard Gibson, Keith Harris, Myra Kestner, Phillip Offard, Trixi Preston, Jon Reed, Janet Wickings and Alan Weller.

In compiling this report I would also like to mention the late Ted Middleton who gave me so much support during the early years.

THE CONTINUATION OF ROMAN AND MEDIEVAL ACTIVITY AT PAKEFIELD

Paul Durbidge

Like the previous year there has been comparatively little serious erosion along Pakefield cliffs in the vicinity of the holiday camp apart from a stretch further south where in early October 1998 north westerly winds combined with high tides brought down parts of the cliff resulting in number of clay boulders ending up on the beach with other debris. To the north the high water did reach the buttress of fallen sand protecting the base of the cliff and subsequently a sizeable amount of material was removed, while later tides removed much beach sand uncovering army defences which in turn yielded lava millstone, medieval buckles and occasional coinage. Several large pieces of animal bone from Rhino and Elephant were collected as a result of this action, as were deer antlers with one still attached to part of the animals skull, also for the first time a small section of hyena dropping has been confirmed, the first to be found at Pakefield. Adrian Charlton continues to find Jurassic vertebra from the location and produced a fossilised spine from a small shark call ASTEROCANTHUS which is derived from Jurassic or Cretaceous deposits from Lincolnshire or Yorkshire during the Ice Age. A previous find had been made at Corton and it is thought the spine was probably located in front of the dorsal fin something like the modern spiny sharks such as the spur dog.

The October storms also produced the lower part of a small pike jaw bone with several of the teeth still in position while in January of this year another much smaller jaw was found at the same place, originally both objects would have been stained black as a direct result of being embedded in the Moorlog deposits on the sea bed many thousands of years ago.

On the archaeology side things over the last year have been reasonably quite although some material was recovered from both the Medieval and Roman features after a spell of prolonged rain caused some of the ground levels to collapse. With sea action reaching the lower part of the cliff we were able to recover second and third century greyware and part of a Samian dish directly beneath the Roman ditch and in trowelling through the mixed soils part of a broken bone pin was found.

On the sand covered slopes near the medieval feature a second well used flint hammerstone was found by Charlton although no additional flint industry was encountered this time.

Close by a thin band of intense burning stood out clearly in the yellow sand after a small cliff fall and further investigation revealed the remains of a small clay oven along with sherds of medieval pottery. On the strength of this it would seem that a more domestic situation is now beginning to appear in conjunction with the infilled pits and that the presence of small pieces of baked clay would now indicate a need to watch the location more carefully for signs of shallow footings or post holes that may appear in the cliff face.

1 Material from the Roman Ditch

There were a number of broken tile and brick remains and in each case they have all been broken down to small pieces and probably for another purpose. Four pieces of brick had average thickness of 1½" - 2" while nine small pieces of broken down tile came under the description of TESSARA.

TEGULAE

There were the remains of nine roofing tiles and on four the upstand was present, on two remains of a half round impression is visible with the remaining pieces being plain.

IMBRES

Five small sections of ridge tile with finger lines on the outside surface.

POTTERY LID

Small pieces of a light greyware lid with rounded upper edge.

DECORATED SHERDS

Two gritty greyware sherds have been decorated with cross hatching. There was also one body sherd of rusticated ware.

RIM FORMS BROADLY CLASSIFIED

There were 13 rims from straight sided bowls. Four had flattened rims and were in a very dark grey fabric containing mica, two others were again in a very dark micaceous fabric with thinned rim.

Four were in a coarse light grey fabric with flattened rims while another had a single groove with a thinned rim.

Two others had double grooves with thinned rims.

Shallow platter in grey buff fabric with nosed rim.

Small greyware rim from a beaker.

Everted rim in grey fabric from a wide mouthed jar.

Four thickened coarseware rims from large jars.

One small hooked rim in grey buff fabric.

One small coarse gritty rim form.

BODY SHERDS

There were 73 body sherds from the ditch and scree with fabrics varying from light to variations of dark grey, from the wall thickness of ten sherds it would seem they came from quite large jars

BASE

One light buff form probably came from a 2nd century wine flagon and another is thought to have come from a beaker. Diameters of the remaining nine vary from the largest at nearly 4 inches to approximately 1¾" respectively.

COLOUR COATED

Cornice Rims Colchester mid 2nd - early 3rd century

Nene Valley or Gaulish end 2nd, early 3rd century

AMPHORA

Two thickened body sherds hard pale orange fabric with strong internal grooves.

SAMIAN

Part shallow dish/bowl Central Gaulish

Decorated body sherd, bead rim, medallion leaf Central Gaulish

Foot ring dish bowl Central Gaulish

Foot ring dish bowl Central Gaulish

Abraded body sherd Central Gaulish

ASSOCIATED COINAGE

- 1 House of Constantine 354/64
R FEL TEMP REPARATIO
FALLEN HORSE MAN
- 2 CONSTANTINE II MINT 335/337
IVNNOBC LYONS
- 3 WOLF & TWINS MINT
LYONS 330/337
- 4 CARACALLA
REV REV P M TR PXVIII COS IIII PP 211/217

OYSTER SHELL

A number of large oyster shells have come from the feature and still remain in it.

CREMATED BONES

Two pieces of a bone pin were found at the foot of the cliff several feet apart, it measured four and a quarter inches long and appeared to be more oval than round in section. One end was tapered in its length, the opposite end being cut off square, probably trimmed with a knife. A shallow ring had been cut around the top possibly as decoration.

ANALYSIS OF THE BONE REMAINS FROM THE DITCH

A BOVID

CATTLE Ten bones including leg knuckle and molars

B OVIS

SHEEP Part of jaw bone, leg and molars

C PIG

SUIDAE Part jaw bone and molars

Small jaw bone, fox? and six unidentified bone remains.

2 Flint Industry

There were seven secondary flakes and two burnt flints found with Romano British pottery and while there is no reason to say they had not been reused during this period, their origins more likely belong to either the Neolithic or Bronze Age, three reasonable size pot boilers were also found.

MINERALS

A piece of buff sandstone four inches wide has rounded sides and compares with a similar decorated bone found near the corn drying situation a few years ago. The present example is broken in its length.

IRON

Four iron square nails with flattened heads were recovered with part of a probable horseshoe, again in conjunction with Roman body sherds.

There were also two other heavy irregular pieces of iron each measuring nearly five inches long found beneath the ditch feature though whether these are of ancient date is as yet unknown.

FOSSIL

Two small pieces of ammonites and a gryphaea were found in the mixed boulder clays amongst a number of modern oyster shells.

GENERAL

Three greyware sherds of Roman date and a large boar tusk were discovered together laying on the scree close to the site of the corn drying kiln and it is thought they originally came from a small infill observed in the cliff line during May 1998. Also at this location a thick piece of lava millstone with wide angled grooves cut into the side was recovered with the corner of a thick red

brick, the upper part being trowelled with the underside left roughcast, both items are of Roman date.

Bearing in mind the closeness to the ditch feature it is probable that these finds are part of a much wider distribution of Romano British activity within the area although it will be some years before we will have a more complete picture of a highly productive location.

3 Time Team

During early November of last year as a direct letter from Jon Reed I was contacted by the researcher Pippa Gilbert of the popular archaeological programme Time Team. Each year Time Team compile a list of possible sites to be considered for future series and at that time the Pakefield site was on the list.

Maps, photographs and reports were all requested and sent on to Time Team and they also made enquires with the Archaeological Unit at Bury St Edmunds as to the suitability of the location which was duly confirmed.

In a later letter of Pippa she did mention enough room between the cliff edge and the golf course for potential excavation and subsequently the project has now been put on file for the time being, much to our disappointment.

4 Contents of P5

The medieval infilled feature known as P5 was first observed in February 1996 after high seas brought down large amounts of cliff. It is still visible in the cliff face.

BASE FORMS

There are three base forms and all from cooking pots, one being a very hard reddish buff material with very irregular internal surfaces, small spots of yellow glaze are present on the underside.

GLAZED SHERDS

Alight green glaze is present on two sherds and on the base of a pitcher, a dark green pitted glaze has been applied to the inside of a sherd from a shallow dish while a body sherd attached to a pottery foot has also been glazed internally in a rice brown glaze.

There were also five body sherds in a hard buff material with a cheesy green glaze and decorated with brush strokes of iron oxide.

DECORATED POTTERY

Two grey body sherds have been decorated with a ¼ inch band of applied strip while another has been decorated with parallel finger impressions.

BODY SHERDS

Thirty eight body sherds were recovered, the majority in a hard gritty fabric containing mica and with colour variations from dark grey to brown buff. Soot is present on most sherds.

ANIMAL BONES

PIG

SUIDAE Few bones including jaw and tusk.

DOMESTIC CATTLE

BOVID Remains of leg bones, some with cut marks.

DOMESTIC SHEEP

OVIS Six bones including leg and molars, there were also a number of bone splinters.

IRON REMAINS

Six square shanked iron nails, three had been clenched.

Part of a small knife blade with the tang.

BRONZE

Dribble of molten bronze. A small piece of what appears to be some form of fabric with a core of very thin patterned bronze wire has been submitted for further information.

CLAY LINING

There were three irregular pieces of sandy brown fired clay with odd flint and chalk inclusions, a small piece of trowelled clay has probably come from a kiln or oven.

TILE

Corner of a thick tile with tapered edges and traces of cheesy yellow glaze on the upper surface, spots of yellowish glaze on one edge of a very hard orange fabric.

5 The Infilled Situation at P6

To the south of P5 and only fifteen feet away is a smaller infill which was first seen after cliff fall during December 1997. The disturbance was roughly twelve feet across and sharply pointed as it extended downwards to nearly seven feet where it penetrated through boulder clays and into the sand that forms the middle part of the cliff. Eighteen inches down from the top the enclosed fill shows several slumped layers of mixed carbon which retain irregular large flints and pieces of chalk. Some parts of the fill have fallen away and these contained some animal bone and coarseware pottery which compares with previous material recovered from P5. During late January 1999 there was another significant collapse of the content and an examination of the discharged material was as follows :-

POTTERY

Rim forms

Four were recovered and all from cooking pots, two were typical square medieval profile with the others having rounded thickening under the rim overhangs, all were soot stained.

Body sherds

Some 44 body sherds of a gritty sandy buff to dark grey fabric were recovered with nearly half showing soot staining.

There were three glazed sherds, one from a shallow dish, the dark green speckled glaze being on the inside surface while the remaining sherds were from the green glazed jug decorated with brush strokes of iron oxide and previously encountered in P5 last year.

Base remains

There were seven cooking pot forms in fabric identical to the body sherds, the only exception being in pale orange with strong finger nips to the base, a pot of light green glaze was usable on the underside of the sagging base.

SHELL

There were four very small oyster shells and one whelk.

ANIMAL BONE

DOMESTIC CATTLE

BOVID Twelve bones including rib and fractured leg bones, jaw bones with one having butchering cuts, three molars.

DOMESTIC SHEEP

OVIS Three leg bones, part of a fire blackened rib and three molars.

SMALL MAMMAL

Three leg bones probably from rabbit.

LAVA STONE

A large irregular piece of lava stone found with the pottery is thought to be waste material as there are no dressed surfaces, the weight is 3½ lbs.

BUILDING MATERIAL

Two pieces of irregular shaped fired clay with chalk inclusions compares with pieces found in the adjacent feature P5 and could have come from a kiln or oven.

6 Remains of a Clay Oven

During May 1998 a clear fire stain was observed in the sandy cliff after a collapse of some of the sandy cliff. It showed as a band nearly 2" thick and nearly three feet across, the middle showing as a pronounced slump. The depth of the feature was 2' 9" down from the top of the cliff and after clearing some of the soil overlaying the stain it was possible to see an area of irregular baked clay approximately 2' 6" by 2' 3". The flow of the clay was slumped just as the stain. Apart from very crumbly edges there was no indication that the oven had collapsed as only a irregular base and suggestion of edges were visible, however from the smoothed burnt clay it appeared it had been used several times before being discarded.

Pottery was found close to the remains and in some of the upper soils and all was cooking pot type with material date which compared with the adjoining feature know as P5.

The collapse of another feature known as P6 which is approximately 16 feet away produced a couple of smoothed pieces of fired clay and they are thought to have come from the oven location.

7 Pottery Found in Association with the Oven

Oval section rim in dark grey hard fabric from cooking pot.

Small base from cooking pot.

Twenty five body sherds from cooking pots in gritty fabrics from light to dark grey and containing mica, one sherd decorated with vertical band of applied strip, wiping is present on some sherds.

Upper part of small strap handle in hard orange fabric.

CLAY LINING

Pieces of baked clay with trowelled surface and second piece containing small flints and chalk and impressions of grass or straw marking.

ANIMAL BONE

PIG

SUIDAE Part of a leg bone.

SHELL

Two very small oyster shells.

METALS

Two corroded square shanked nails, very small rod of bronze, not identifiable.

8 Pakefield Finds at Beach Level

Probable brooch fragment, end of convex section bow with semicircular foot plate, fragment of further plate at apex. Roman, early post Roman.

Two small circular bronze alloy buckles. Medieval

Small patinated lead spindle whorl. Middle Saxon

Silver Long cross, illegible on one face

CIVITIS C CANTERBURY 1247 - 1483

Lava stone with grooved surface and rough hewn underneath 7" x 5" and 2" thick.

Lava stone abraded with no grooving or pecking on working surface. Size approx. 5" x 6½" and 3" thick.

Piece of square Lava millstone with grooved upper surface and rough hewn underneath. Size 1¾" thick and a surface size of approximately 6" x 5", probably of medieval date.

Acknowledgements

Once again in compiling this report I would like to extend my grateful thanks to all those who have contributed and my sincere apologies to anyone omitted.

To Mr W Milligan and Dr John Davies of the Castle Museum Norwich for their continued assistance with the Pakefield material and the additional material recovered from the Somerleyton Survey.

Also my thanks to Dick Collins for his work producing this report from the hand-written text and inclusion again thanks are due to Adrian Charlton for so much sheer effort in the field and who has continuously visited to location often in adverse conditions

Paul Durbridge March 1999

THE LOWESTOFT SCENE 1998 TO 1999

Jon Reed

Last year I reported on the successes of local industry. This year I can continue the story. In April last year the English Cabinet Company, makers of specialist furniture, had a disastrous fire at their works at Browston. They relocated to Oulton Broad and were open only 5 weeks later. Railtrack spent £12,000 on updating the freight yard at Lowestoft and EWS Freight have started freight movements. English Partnerships are reviving the Co-op Cannery site as a major industrial centre; and a 1.5 acre site is being developed in Pinbush Road to provide 21 small business units at a cost of some £700,000. None of these would have happened unless local industry was thriving. Pilot Drilling Control opened a new factory at Harbour Road, Oulton Broad, costing £0.5M. Odebrecht Oil & Gas launched a huge gas rig top structure in August and have another contract for a platform for £45M. This secures the 300 jobs already working and will mean another 100 jobs. Last September Persimmon Homes announced £28M profits, a rise of 20% on 1997. In November Klyne Tugs took delivery of the largest tug to operate in U.K. waters for 20 years. The *Anglian Monarch* has a range of 8000 miles and will operate on North Sea oil and gas rigs. Seaward Safety opened offices in the USA and Australia, also taking 2 more units on the South Lowestoft Trading Estate. In December KYE announced a contract worth £500,000 for ancillary equipment for the Shell Gannet G development.

Of course, all the industrial news has not been good. Shell, for instance, have announced they are axing 140 jobs in Lowestoft, but will be investing £4 billion in the area. They say they are committed to staying in Lowestoft "for at least 30 years". At the end of the year the staff of Zephyr Cams held a second one-day strike in protest at a wage freeze that had existed for 18 months. In March Birds Eye announced the loss of 150 permanent and 120 part-time jobs at Lowestoft in order, they say, to increase competitiveness, but they are stopping pea processing here. And now it appears that Kvaerner Oil are in trouble.

In local trade the headline must go to the Hippodrome, which burnt down in January, also seriously affecting Ananas Dansk, the furniture shop, next door. The Hippodrome dates from 1904, when it was built as a circus. It was then used as a music hall and "bioscope" (an early cinema). It was a cinema between the wars and was taken over in 1940 as the headquarters of the Coastal Patrol Service. In 1947 it was "demobilised" and live shows were put on until 1962. It reopened in 1966 as a Bingo Hall. The owner, Sigmund Greengrass, has pledged to rebuild it but, as Jack Rose says, "Whatever they put up it still won't be the old Hippodrome". We have lost a Lowestoft landmark. The odd thing is that Ditchinghain Mill was burnt out within a week of the Hippodrome. Neither fire was thought to be anything but accidental.

The rest of local trade has had a mixed year. We have seen the usual crop of firms starting up and closing down. Photo Factory opened a shop in the Britten Centre and Lidl opened part of the Co-op shop on the North Quay estate in September. In August Cullens, the butchers in Norwich Road, closed down when the two brothers retired. Adnams Wine Merchants won 2 top awards and 5 runners-up prizes in the International Wine Challenge last September. Smith Bros joinery and hardware celebrated 40 years in December. Bob and Gladys Smith are enthusiastic supporters of Lowestoft Museum. In January Longs Dairy was taken over by Dairy Crest, They promised no redundancies at the processing plant in St. Margarets Road, but they have since been getting rid of Longs roundsmen.

The fish industry has received a much-needed boost by the increase of plaice quotas in 1999.

Somebody has said that the whole fish dock will face closure because of new charging methods for sewage, but time will tell.

This brings me on to the saga of the Anglian Water sewage plant proposed for Corton. This has been rumbling on for months. I think we all know by now that SINBY means Sewage In Nobody's Back Yard. I have every sympathy for the Corton residents who live within a few hundred yards of Stirrups Lane. They have petitioned, picketed and protested to such effect that the design has been changed. The latest proposal looks like another millenium dome and the estimated cost has gone up from £27M to £60M to provide disguise and smell-reduction. The latest news at the time of writing is that the proposal has been turned down by Waveney but still has to go to Suffolk at the end of April. Mind you, with Lowestoft losing its Blue Flag due to poor water quality, something needs to be done. The question is whether it should be so near housing.

Housing continues to puzzle me. Why are we having a huge new Persimmon Homes estate on the Beccles Road when there are not really enough jobs for the new inhabitants? The first houses are up for sale and I expect that the same will happen as the previous new estate on the same road. Waveney will have to step in, buy the houses and resell them to housing associations. Last May Waveney offered free central heating to any council tenant who asked for it. They are funding this out of council house sales over the last few years. The offer ends in May this year. The Crown Meadow housing scheme for elderly and infirm residents is virtually complete. Bob Blizzard has called for the reduction of the Council Tax banding of several retirement homes in Crestview Drive from Band D to Band C. There have been many more small developments over the year, mostly by small builders. One group were getting very concerned. The permanent caravan owners on the North Denes were threatened with eviction by the planned Flotilla of Sails. However, their fears were unfounded because the glass statue is not going to be raised; Waveney's £800,000 Lottery bid failed. We are now going to have a more modest sculpture of a herring. No comment on the shape of that! As a footnote, plans were unveiled in January for a sewage pumping plant at Ness Point. What a way to commemorate the furthest east point of the U.K.

Anglian Water and Essex & Suffolk Water have been in the news, apart from the infamous pumping station. Last year we had record rain in April and a very wet summer. In spite of that we had a hosepipe ban. In November Ofwat queried the performance of the water companies and capped their charges for 1999. They have also been criticised because the Blue flag was lost in March due to water quality (after getting approval in November).

The wet weather deterred many visitors from coming here and the local leisure trade reported a bad year. In 1998 Easter was vile, with snow, sleet and high winds. This year it was excellent, with some very warm days. One can only hope that this augurs a nice summer though the weather went back on us after Easter with snow and frosts. Not El Nino this time! This winter brought some snow but the major problem was flooding after it melted. One of the sufferers from weather was last year's Air Show, with several of the "acts" being cancelled. Perhaps it is as well that the Waveney & Oulton Broad Yacht Club have built a new floating pontoon at a cost of £82,000.

Lots of new initiatives have been going on in the town. In May the CCTV scheme was inaugurated. It stretches from Carlton Road to Artillery Row, along London Road, South and North. It cost £300,000 of which £153,000 was supplied by the Home Office and £26,000 by local firms. It has definitely had an effect on petty crime. In June the Triangle Market hosted the first Antiques Fair. They are continuing with, apparently, great success. Also in June the new Marina was opened. This cost £2.5M, of which £1.23M was European money. The following month the new Training Centre was opened on London Road South, in association with the Prince's Youth Business Trust, as part of the Kirkley Regeneration Scheme. In the autumn the *Family Bowl* tenpin bowling centre was opened on Rants Score on the old Karpel Direct site, providing 40 jobs. A new healthcare centre was opened in Lowestoft Hospital. The hospital was said by the head of James Paget Hospital to have a "robust future". At the end of the year the former Seamen's Mission was re-opened as the Harbour View Bistro, also with accommodation for seamen. In January a memorial was raised to 17 airmen killed in 1944, when two Liberators collided over the Henham Estate. Then in March the Antiques Roadshow came and were overwhelmed by the number of visitors. Some people queued outside and inside for as much as 10 hours. The show visited the museum and took shots of the Porcelain. Also in March a

statue of a fisherman was raised on the Esplanade.

On Education, Kirkley High School seems to be looking up. £400,000 is to be spent over 4 years on a vocational training centre and it will have a £1.1M gymnastics centre if the Lottery play ball (!). Lowestoft College opened its new Conference Centre - the £1M "Horizon Centre" - in September to mark its centenary. It has now completed its 400th Navigation course, having had a total of 2000 students from 38 countries. Sadly, the old Gorleston Road School was finally demolished, having been earmarked as a Community Centre but, guess what, the Lottery bid failed. Similarly the Lottery bid by the Civic Society for funds to restore the old school room off the High Street failed. They are going ahead in spite of that. All strength to them.

On the roads, there have been more than the average deaths on the Barnby bends, as well as some other horrific accidents - like the one at Hopton. This, by the way, was then earmarked for the immediate construction of a roundabout, but to date nothing has happened. Beccles Road has been partially blocked all winter by roadworks in connection with the new estate. There are now 2 roundabouts at the Crown, with a spur which is intended, at some time in the unstated future, to be the start of a bypass. In July last year the first draft of plans for the Southern Relief Road were published, with details to follow "early in 1999" - haven't seen them yet! However the Northern Relief Road from Peto Way to the Tesco roundabout on the A12 is complete. Improvements to Yarmouth Road and Battery Green Road are complete. Claremont Road and Waterloo Road are to get a facelift as gateways to London Road South from the beach. Finally, on the railway, Lowestoft Station got the Eastern Station of the Year Award, in spite of having been so severely knocked about. There is no news on the proposed changes to the station site.

On a sad note, the town has lost Trevor Westgate of the Lowestoft Journal, who died suddenly on February 22nd. He was only 63 and was due to retire a month later. I miss him, as do very many others in the town. More cheerfully, I congratulate Lord Somerleyton who was made Knight Grand Commander of the Victorian Order in the new year honours list. This is a personal gift of the Queen and reflects his roles as Lord in Waiting for many years and, later, Master of the Queen's Horse.

Some entirely unconnected happenings. A World War 2 air raid shelter in Sparrows Nest Park was excavated mainly, as far as I can gather, to find out if it really existed. Lowestoft Rotary celebrated their 10th anniversary. A blueprint was published on Kirkley, listing the problems and possible solutions. Covehithe Church and Corton Church tower are being conserved. Over a hundred drawings of life in the fish market over the years, by Bill Finch, were given to the Lowestoft Record Office. The Civic Trustees are to buy two paintings by Victorian artist Thomas Churchyard, to be hung in Lowestoft Museum.

Waveney are due to spend £345,000 on the Air Shows over the next 3 years, supplemented by a grant of £189,000. Having been told so many times that they have no money to spend on the museum. I view this with a jaundiced eye. Waveney happily claimed in October that they had saved £15,000 on the regrassing of the centre of Nicholas Everitt Park by using 4000 tons of top soil from an industrial site. The intention was to have it green again by the end of November. Here we are in the spring with it still an expanse of soil. The winter weather was no help, but things are happening to it now.

And finally - THE MILLENNIUM. Leaving aside the silly dispute over who sees the sun first by a few seconds, Lowestoft or Dover (in any case it will probably be behind the clouds), the town is celebrating in a variety of ways. Wellington Gardens are being restored to their Victorian glory with the help of a Lottery grant of £110,000. East Point Pavilion is putting on a Festival of Light. There will be a Dawn Concert on the actual morning on Royal Green. The Carnival this year will be huge with a strong international contingent. And, of course, our 100 foot herring! Those killjoys who say the millenium is not until January 2001 are being studiously ignored. Meanwhile the millennium bug is being tackled in a systematic way and, cross your fingers, should not be a problem. Whatever the rights and wrongs of the millennium date, it will be quite something and I, for one, am pleased to be part of the celebrations.

Postscript - After writing this report, The Suffolk CC approved the planning application for the sewage works at Corton.