

PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
CAMBRIDGE ANTIQUARIAN
SOCIETY

(INCORPORATING THE CAMBS & HUNTS ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY)



VOLUME LIX

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WATERBEACH ABBEY

MARY D. CRA'STER, F.S.A.

THE site lies in the field just to the south of the parish church, and within the triangle formed by the junction of the River Cam and the Car Dyke (Pl. IX). It was occupied between 1293 and 1359, by which time it had been deserted in favour of Denny Abbey, because it was insufficient and subject to flooding.

At the present day, the eastern half of the site is protected on two sides by a fairly substantial moat, and a second ditch runs across the middle through a shallow circular depression into the moat (Fig. 1). Within these ditches the ground is comparatively flat. To the west is a cart-track, which (though now diverted into a farmyard) formerly ran due north, continuing the line of the road leading from the church to the village green; the older line of this track could clearly be seen as a crop-mark in the grass.

West of the track lies a roughly rectangular area, surrounded and crossed by low banks. These were threatened with bulldozing, and accordingly the Ministry of Public Building and Works undertook a trial excavation in the summer of 1963.

HISTORY OF THE ABBEY¹

Denise, daughter and heiress of Nicholas Anesty and widow of Walter, the brother of Archbishop Stephen Langton, subsequently married Warin Munchensey. Some years after the death of her second husband, she received in 1281 royal and papal approval of her plan to grant her manor of Waterbeach to found a house of Minoresses. These nuns of the Second Order of St Francis had been founded at Longchamps in 1255 by Isabelle, sister of St Louis, king of France; it was for ladies of noble birth, and they were known as *sorores minores*. There were never more than four houses of Minoresses in England.

Denise Munchensey's sister was a nun at the Longchamps house, and the first nuns to arrive at Waterbeach were French. This was not until 1294, by which time it appears that a church and other buildings had already been made ready to receive them.

The house was exempt from episcopal jurisdiction, and difficulties arose with the Priory of Barnwell, who owned the parish church at Waterbeach and feared for the loss of tithes and other revenues through the grant of the manor to the Minoresses.

The secular servants who lived permanently within the abbey, employed in kitchen, cellar and so forth, were also exempt from tithes. An agreement was reached whereby a yearly sum was to be paid by the nuns; but by 1299 they were trying to

¹ V.C.H. Cambs., II, pp. 292-5.

evade payment. They were supported by Denise Munchensey's grand-daughter and her husband, Hugh de Vere, but the case was finally taken to Rome and decided in favour of Barnwell.

It is evident that the Waterbeach site was never satisfactory. The papal letter approving the original foundation provides for enclosure against inundation, and allows for the removal of the community elsewhere, if necessary.

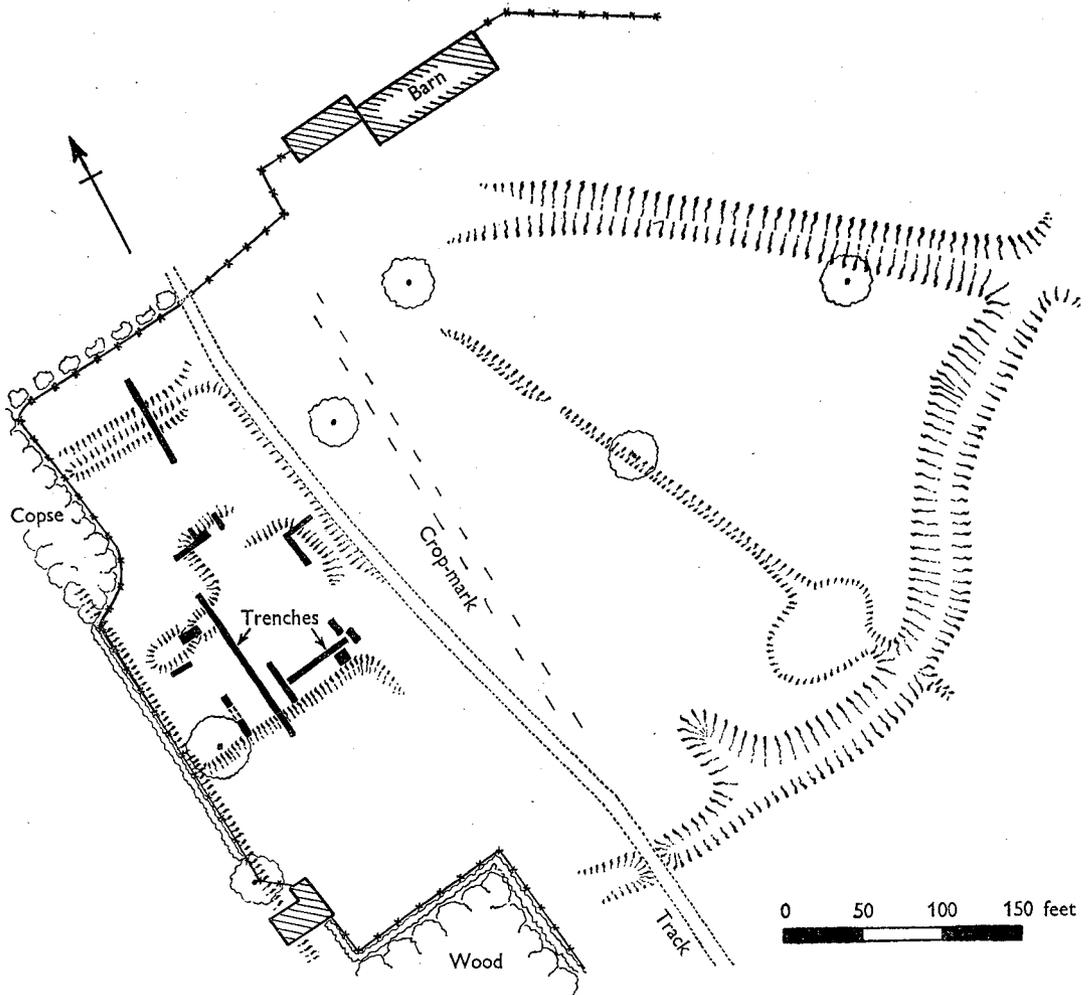


Fig. 1. Waterbeach Abbey: plan of site.

In 1336 Mary de St Pol, Countess of Pembroke, granted her manor of Denny, two or three miles to the north of Waterbeach, to the Minoreesses. Three years later, she got permission to transfer the whole community to the new site, but the two were not finally merged until 1351, since a section of the nuns showed great opposition to the move.

The abbess and some sisters moved to Denny in 1342, but the unwilling nuns were left at Waterbeach for another five years. In 1349, the Pope granted the Countess of

Pembroke's petition to be allowed to compel the remaining nuns to follow their abbess to Denny. But they seem to have broken into open rebellion, refusing to leave Waterbeach, setting up their own abbess, and preparing to receive new sisters into their community.

One reason for their reluctance to move was said to have been fear of their abbey falling into lay hands. An attempt was made to replace the sisters by twelve friars, who were to be supported by Denny Abbey. In spite of all orders, no friars ever took up residence—which may speak ill for the condition of the buildings by this time. By 1351 only four or five sisters were still holding out at Waterbeach, the rest having remained at Denny after their forcible removal.

In 1359 the Pope licensed the removal to Denny of all burials at Waterbeach Abbey. At that time the buildings were described as well-nigh desolate.

Nothing more is known of what became of the ruins of Waterbeach, but in the mid-nineteenth century, W. K. Clay reported that big stones were occasionally found in the field and dug out for road mending.¹

THE EXCAVATION

The site is interesting, since there must have been fairly substantial buildings, despite its short life. Any finds associated with it are closely dated to the first half of the fourteenth century by the documentary sources.

Only a trial excavation was attempted, and has not been followed up, since the threat of bulldozing has for the present been withdrawn. In view of the heavily robbed state of such remains as were found, only the excavation of an extensive area would be likely to yield satisfactory results.

Several trenches were dug to examine the surface irregularities in the western half of the field (Fig. 2). None of these banks seemed to correspond at all exactly with any underground feature; consequently it proved difficult to know where to dig, since the banks were in fact irregular robber-trench spoil-heaps, and nearly the whole of the walls had been removed.

Because of these difficulties, it was not possible to get much idea of what the ground-plan had been; but several clunch and stone foundations varying between 4 and 2 ft. wide were found, and one section of a 2 ft. 6 in. wide wall of large limestone blocks.

In several parts of the site large quantities of painted wall-plaster were unearthed (Appendix 1). This was in a very fragmentary condition, having been scattered during the robbing of stone from the walls. Underneath it, in layers which lay against the base of the wall foundations, was a fair quantity of medieval pottery. This is of a date which fits well with that of the known life of the abbey, and includes some pieces of French origin (Appendices 2 and 3). Other finds from these layers included fragments of window-leading, a pair of small bronze tweezers and a double-ended bronze spoon.

¹ W. K. Clay, *History of Waterbeach*, 99.

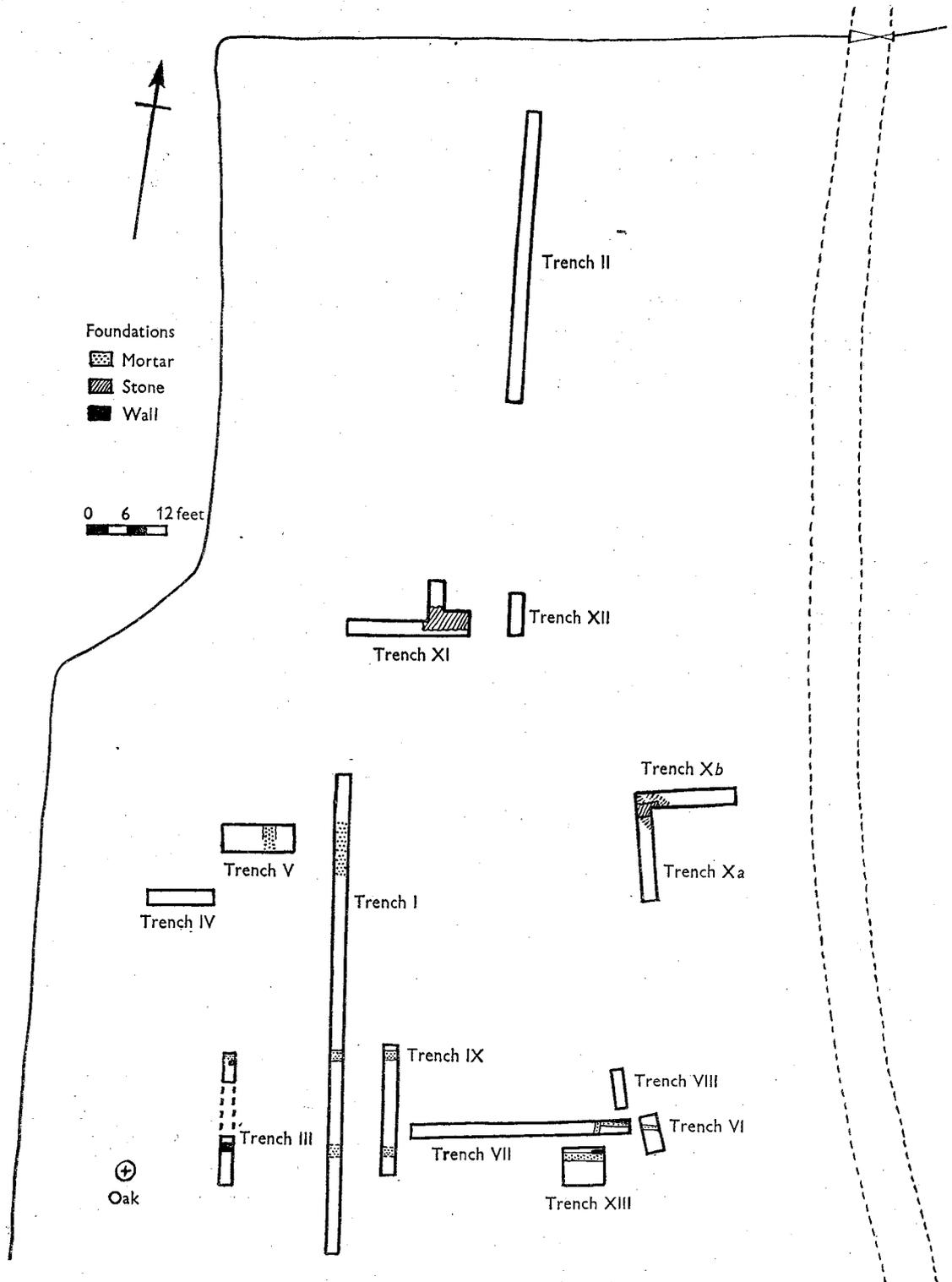


Fig. 2. Waterbeach Abbey: area of excavation.

SUMMARY OF FINDS IN THE TRENCHES

Trench I (Fig. 3b)

Three wall-footings were found, running east-west across this trench. The northernmost was the least convincing, consisting of a spread of rubble and mortar of no depth, but with fairly well-defined straight edges 13 ft. apart. It was approximately in line with the robbed foundation in trench V, but the layers of rubble and plaster fragments rose over it to form a slight bank and there was no sign of a robber-trench. To the south of this feature was a large quantity of broken painted wall-plaster.

The second wall, 37 ft. south of the first, was definitely marked by the outline of the robber-trench in the section, descending to a solid clunch and mortar footing 2 ft. thick. The part of the trench between this wall and the third, to the south, showed a greater degree of incident in differing layers of dark earth, interspersed with sand and rubble. Most of the medieval pottery also came from these levels. Above them, at the height of the top of the wall-footing, and as it were spreading out from it southwards, was the greatest concentration of painted wall-plaster. This at first caused confusion, since it appeared to be just like Roman painted plaster. But it conclusively overlay the bulk of the medieval sherds, which were in the layers lying up against the wall-footings.

Eighteen feet south again, lay the third wall foundation. This had been thoroughly robbed, and presented the same rather inconclusive appearance as the northernmost of the three foundations, although the mortar spread was more definitely concentrated and only 4 ft. in width.

Trench II

Blank.

Trench III

Rubble and mortar wall-footing at northern end, with one block of stone still in position. Approximate line continued through to trenches I and IX, but not as far as trench VIII.

At the southern end, parallel to the first foundation line, was the only piece of actual wall found on the site. Its foundation line continued through trenches I and IX to trench XIII. The wall rested on a mortar and rubble footing, projecting 6-9 in. out from the stone on the southern (presumed outer) side; it was impossible to examine in between the two walls in this trench, because of the roots of a large oak tree. The actual wall was 2 ft. thick, built of flat blocks of stone, roughly squared off on the outer edge to a rectangle of about 4 by 12 in.; it still stood about four courses high at this point, and was solidly mortared. The footing of the wall lay about 2 ft. below the modern ground level, the present top of the wall being only about 6 in. underground. [The stones were subsequently removed, at the farmer's request.] The stone is a Jurassic limestone, though not oolitic; it is similar to that from Grayhurst, Bucks., on the Great Oolite horizon.¹

Trench IV

No features, but a fair amount of broken wall-plaster.

Trench V

Dug across a gap in the low bank here, which proved to be the throw-out from a robbed wall, of which only the slightest rubble footing remained. It is in a line with the possible foundation at the northern end of trench I. Above and on either side of this footing, but not across the top of it, was an extensive spread of fragments of painted wall-plaster.

¹ Information kindly provided by Dr C. L. Forbes, Sedgwick Museum, Cambridge.

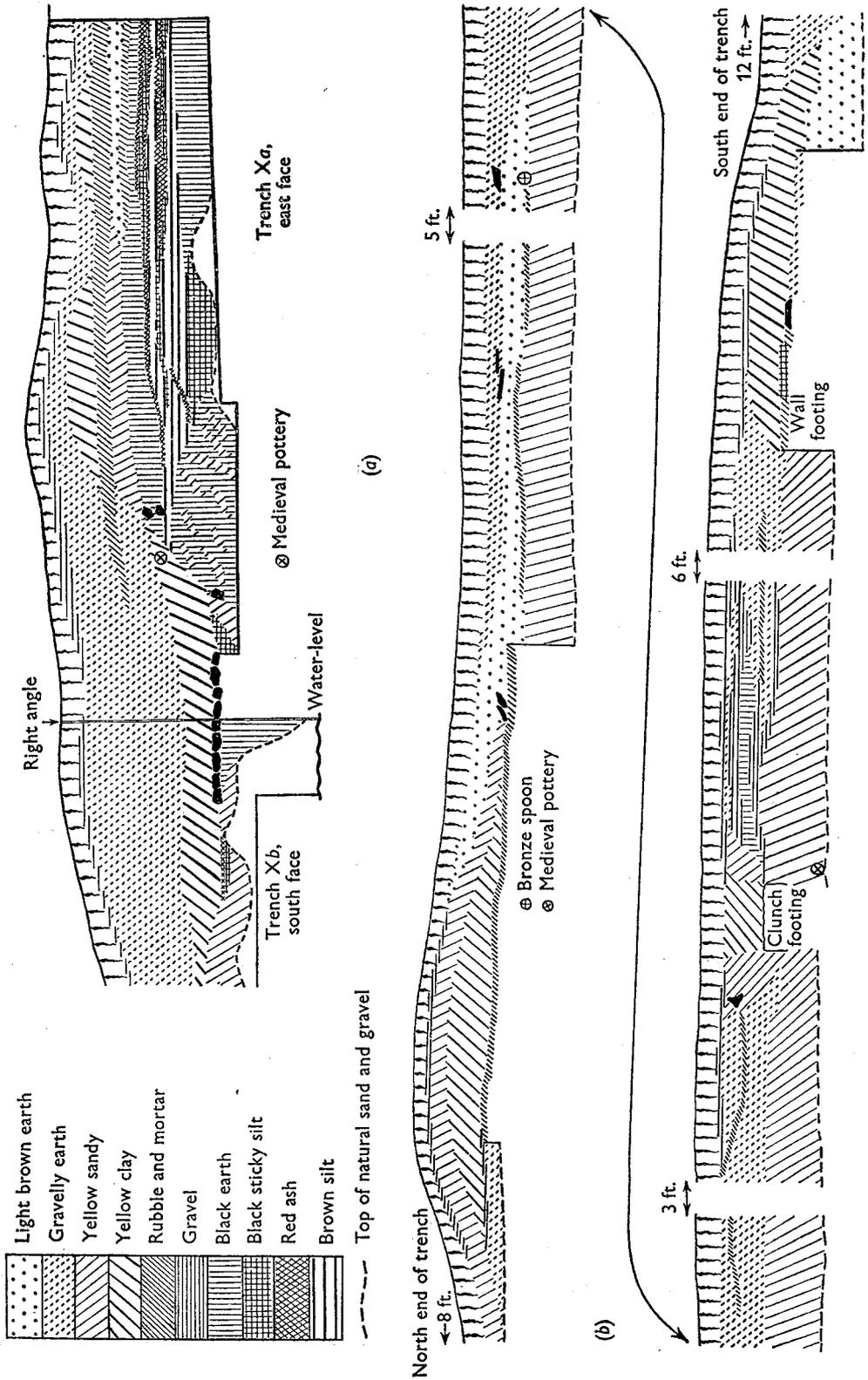


Fig. 3. Waterbeach Abbey: (a) trench X; (b) trench I, east face.

Trench VI

Dug to trace the continuation of the partition wall found in trench VII. The only remaining trace here were some fragments of wall-plaster in roughly vertical positions on either side of where the wall would have run.

Trench VII

Showed no particular features, except at its eastern end. There were occasional chalky or rubbly layers, but no visible occupation level. Half way along the trench was a pit or water-channel, cutting into the surface of the natural sandy gravel subsoil. The bottom of this hollow was 6 ft. below ground-level; it contained nothing in the way of occupational rubbish, except a cow's skull, at a depth of 5 ft. The fill was the same dark silty layer which overlay natural elsewhere, the surface of which, although irregular, occurred at about 4 or 5 ft. below modern ground surface throughout the site.

It is possible that this and other similar channels or depressions found on the site, e.g. in trenches X and XI, may in fact be natural features caused by flooding. All were cut into undisturbed subsoil and lay well below the level of any wall foundations that were found; nor did any contain any rubbish such as is normally found in artificial pits. It is known from the historical sources that the site was liable to flood.

At the eastern end of trench VII a foundation was found; nothing remained of the wall, but it had been faced on both sides with plain plaster, some fragments of which remained in a more or less upright position above the mortar foundation, as if the wall had been drawn out vertically from between them. This wall ran east and west, but had abutted, with a straight joint, against another north-south wall, again with both faces plastered. Both walls seemed to be of similar construction, much slighter than any other foundations found, being only 9-12 in. thick. They gave the appearance of being internal partition walls.

Trench VIII

No sign of the wall in trenches I, III and IX continuing as far east as this, but broken tiles were found.

Trench IX

The double line of wall foundations found in trenches I and III were picked up here. Lumps of plaster were found, showing signs of having been attached to shaped structures, such as chamfered corners, and others that had covered a lath-and-plaster wall.

Trench Xa (Fig. 3a)

At the southern end was a 5 ft. deep build-up of layers of ash, burnt earth and mortar rubble, separated by sand and earth. One, or possibly two, pits lay below these layers and sealed by them, but contained nothing but silt.

Trench Xb

Two pits or ditches, filled with black, silty earth, but no rubbish in the way of potsherds, crossed this trench at a depth of about 4 ft., just above undisturbed natural and the present water-level—which here lay at 7 ft. below modern ground-level. The layers sealing them, though containing rubble and ash, yielded no finds. The pit at the western end of the trench had caused quite a sharp subsidence. Perhaps in order to counter this, a layer of stones had been laid part way across it at a higher level. This could perhaps have been a wall foundation, although it contained no mortar and there was little sign of robbed wall above the stone layer.

Trench XI

The eastern end of this trench was occupied by a 4 ft. broad stone foundation, lying on a very slight bed of mortar, a mere 1 or 2 in. thick. The stones were unshaped and not mortared together at all. They were overlain by a clayey layer, on top of which was an irregular spread of lumps of clunch and chalk. To the north of the foundation, a layer of grey clay, 6 in. thick, apparently rested against the edge of the stones.

The stone foundation came to a neat square end about half way along the trench; beyond to the west was a ditch or pit, at a lower level, and probably unconnected with the stone layer. The western edge of this depression seemed to have been cut through a layer of mortar and rubble, overlain by a certain amount of fragmentary wall-plaster.

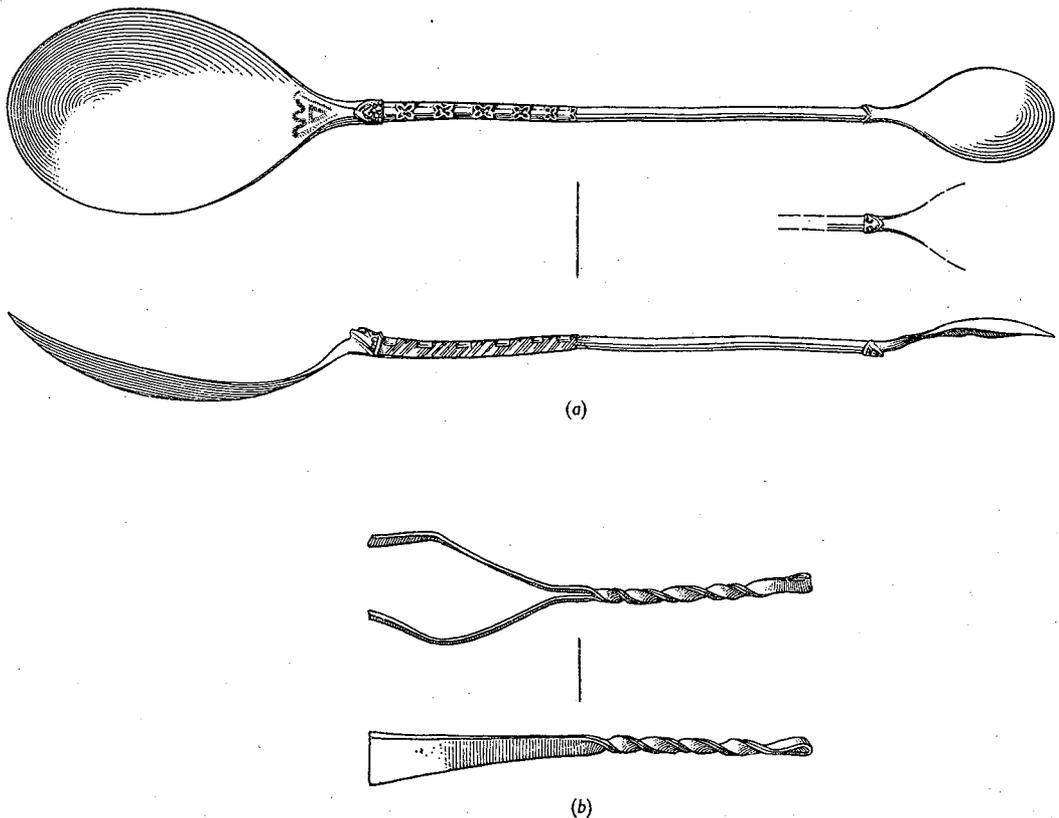


Fig. 4. Waterbeach Abbey: (a) bronze spoon; (b) bronze tweezers. Actual size.

Trench XII

There was no sign of the wall foundation in trench XI continuing as far as this. Fragmentary floor-tiles were found.

Trench XIII

This trench picked up the continuation of the southernmost wall found in trenches I, III and IX. A solid mortar and rubble foundation, 2 ft. broad, was found, with one squared stone only still in position. The débris resulting from the robbing of the masonry contained a quantity of painted wall-plaster.

THE FINDS

*Bronze**Double-ended spoon (Fig. 4a)*

Found just below layer of broken plaster, south of the northern foundation in trench I (Fig. 3b).

The spoon has two flat, oval bowls, one about a fifth the size of the other; the bowls face opposite ways from each other. At the head of each is a small mask-like decorative feature, probably a lion's head, holding the bowl of the spoon in its mouth. The larger bowl has a row of five quatrefoils along the top of the handle behind the mask.

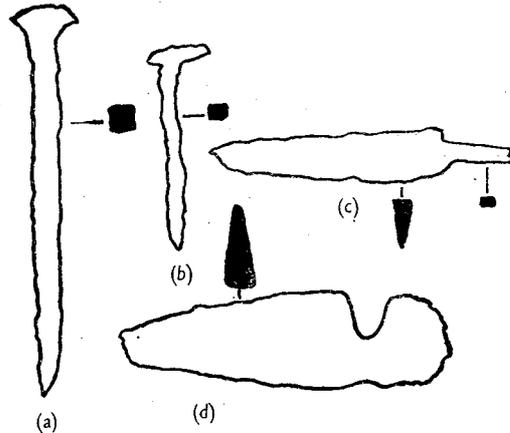


Fig. 5. Waterbeach Abbey: iron objects. Scale $\frac{1}{2}$.

Tweezers (Fig. 4b)

Found just below the rubble layer at the western end of trench XI.

The tweezers are made of thin strip bronze, widening at the tips to square ends. The strip is bent in two and then twisted together for about half its length.

*Iron**Nails (Fig. 5a, b)*

About a dozen were found scattered about the site, in or just below the layer of rubble and broken wall-plaster. They occurred in trenches IV, VI, VII, VIII and XI. They varied in size between the two illustrated.

*Knife (Fig. 5c)**Iron object, possibly the catch of a door-latch, rather than a knife (Fig. 5d)*

Both these objects were found in trench I, in the layer below the plaster rubble, between the southernmost two wall foundations.

*Lead**Window-leading: small fragments only*

Found in the same layer of trench I as the iron knife.

Lead sheet

A small, thin piece, pierced with holes for attachment, folded and rolled up. Trench X.

Glass

A small, circular fragment of green glass, $2\frac{1}{4}$ in. in diameter. Trench XI.

*Stone**Mortar*

For a description and report, see Appendix 4, and Fig. 6*b*. Trench X*a*.

Limestone roofing-tiles

Only one complete example was found, diamond-shaped, but with flattened sides, and pierced with a single hole at one pointed end. Fragmentary ones were common, and all seem to have been from similar tiles to those found at St Neots Priory.¹

All were found in or immediately below the plaster-rubble layer. They were present in trenches I, V, VII, XI and XII.

Stone moulding

Possibly a fragment from a pillar moulding. Barnack stone. Trench X*b* (Fig. 6*a*).

*Pottery**Floor-tiles*

Glazed fragments were found in trenches VII, VIII, X*a*, XI and XII. Most were plain green or brown, but one or two bore traces of much abraded decoration.

Unglazed fragments were also found in trenches I, IV, V, VIII, XII and XIII.

French imported vessels (Fig. 8)

For a description, see Appendix 2. The three fragments of separate vessels were found in trenches V, VIII and IX respectively.

English medieval wares (Figs. 9-11)

For a description and detailed report, see Appendix 3. Most were of a date consonant with that of the abbey. The quantity of sherds was comparatively small, even considering the short life of the abbey on the site. None of the trial trenches struck any area of heavy occupation débris. All stratified sherds were in the layers underlying the spreads of rubble and broken wall-plaster, resulting from the robbing of the walls of the deserted buildings.

Summary of find-spots:

Trench I: between the two southernmost wall foundations, stratified in layers lying against the wall-footings.

Trench VII: at the western end, in the dark silty layer overlying natural.

Trench X*b*: In the layer lying immediately over the stones laid across the pit.

All other trenches (except trench II) also produced pottery, but not clearly stratified.

¹ See Mr Tebbutt's article in this volume, p. 47 and Fig. 2.

Roman pottery

Two much-abraded sherds—one Samian—were found; both came from just below the topsoil. Their presence is not surprising, in view of the proximity of the Car Dyke and several Romano-British settlement sites. Their very scarcity in such an area precludes the likelihood of any Roman occupation of the site.

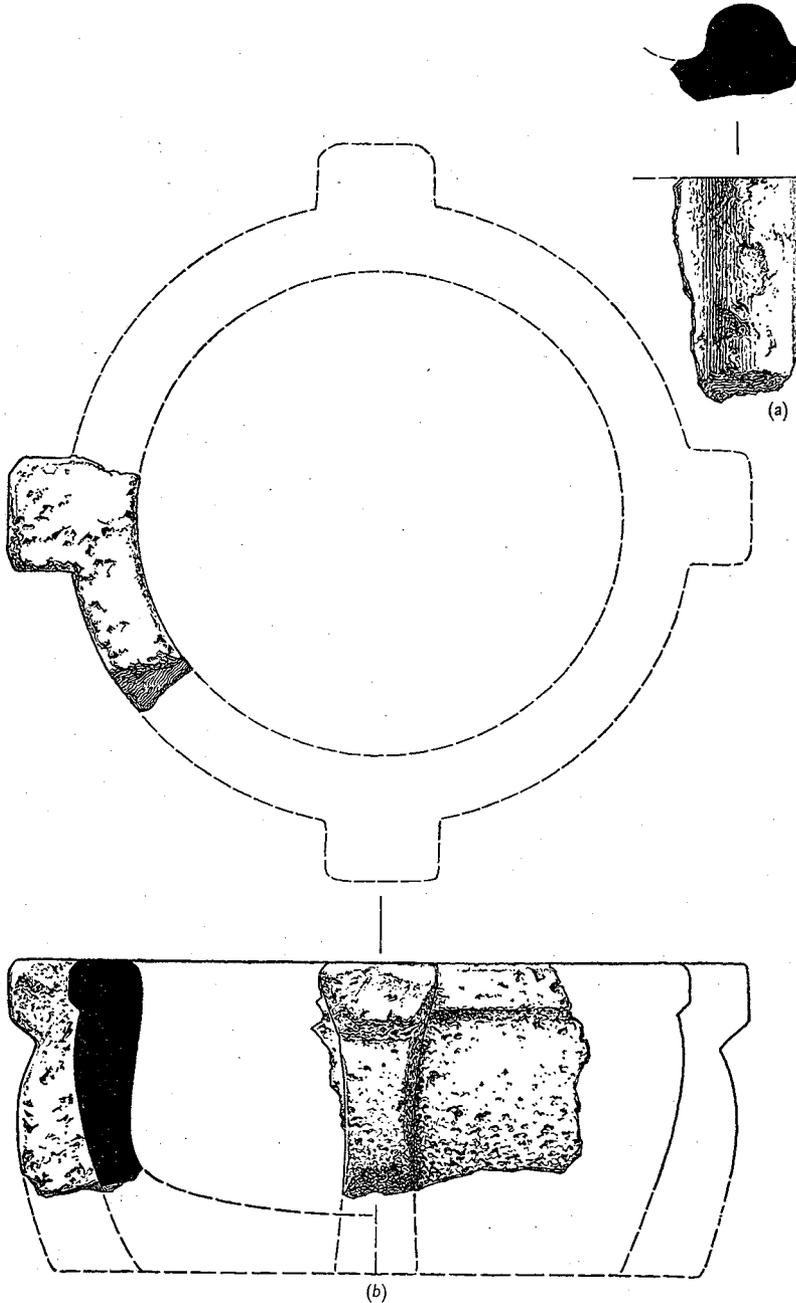


Fig. 6. Waterbeach Abbey: (a) stone moulding; (b) stone mortar. Scale $\frac{1}{4}$.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My thanks are due to all who have contributed to this article, in advice and consultation, and in the writing of appendices and the drawings. In addition, I should particularly like to thank Dr G. H. S. Bushnell, both for providing help from the staff of the Cambridge Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology during the excavation, and for constructive suggestions during the writing of this report.

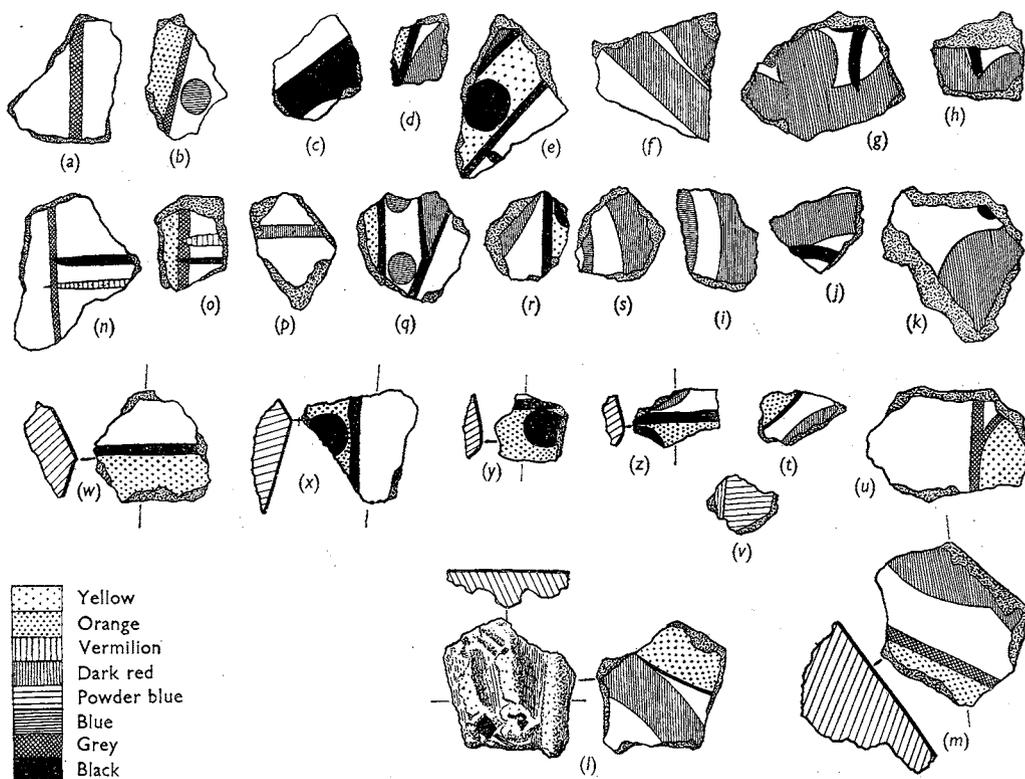


Fig. 7. Waterbeach Abbey: wall-plaster. Scale $\frac{1}{4}$. (a)-(m) are illustrated with the lath impressions on the back running vertically; (n)-(x) no lath impressions are visible, as the back of the plaster is broken away; (w)-(x) moulded fragments to turn a corner.

APPENDIX 1

THE WALL-PLASTER

It was not at first possible to tell from its appearance whether the plaster was Medieval or Roman, although such stratigraphical evidence as there was supported a Medieval date. The general similarity in composition between Roman and Medieval plasters and the small size of the fragments, together with their simple decoration, are the factors which make it difficult to distinguish between them.

Mr Norman Davey, Mr Clive Rouse and Mr R. W. Baker were consulted, in an attempt to obtain a more positive decision. Mr Davey and Mr Baker both believe that the plaster is Medieval, while Mr Rouse feels that it is probably Roman.

Mr Davey says that, although there is in general no difference in composition between Roman and Medieval plaster, there is a difference in technique. The Romans usually applied a dense rendering, followed by a skimming coat of lime slurry carefully trowelled to give a smooth, hard painting surface. The surface of Medieval plaster does not appear to have been so carefully prepared. He says that in the Waterbeach material, the white ground coat seems to have been brushed on; the brush marks are clearly visible on most of the fragments.

Mr Rouse, on the other hand, feels that the hardness of the rendering, the small proportion of sand in it and the nature of the surface coat, as well as other features, point to a Roman date.

Mr Baker states—on the basis of examples of both periods from St Alban's—that Medieval mortar contains a greater proportion of silica and no tile aggregate. In this respect, he thinks that the Waterbeach plaster conforms to Medieval practice. He sees no difficulty in accepting the range of colours employed as possible for the early fourteenth century; these include deep red, vermilion, grey, black, orange, lemon yellow, and both a dark and a powder blue. The width of this colour range is one of the factors which led Mr Rouse to favour a Roman date.

The designs are impossible to reconstruct, since the remains were too fragmentary (Fig. 7). There are two main elements: a series of fine red and black lines on a white ground, probably representing some kind of masonry pattern; and various unidentifiable shapes, mostly in dark red on white or coloured grounds, which appear to be foliage patterns of a very stylized nature.

APPENDIX 2

IMPORTED FRENCH POTTERY FROM WATERBEACH ABBEY

G. C. DUNNING, F.S.A.

The pottery imported from France comprises three sherds; two represent jugs made in Normandy and the third a jug of polychrome ware from Saintonge. The pieces will be described in that order (Fig. 8*a-c*).

(*a*) Rim and upper end of handle of fine whitish ware. Clear, pale yellow glaze covers the neck. The rim is almost flat on top, moulded on the outside, and below it is an angular cordon.

The handle is a solid rod, oval in section. At the junction with the neck are two large applied scales, each with a deep tool-mark along the middle. Near the break is a patch of red slip on the back of the handle.

(*b*) Base of fine white ware, glazed yellowish-buff outside. Above the base are two narrow girth-grooves, marking the change in profile to the body.

(*c*) Sherd of fine white ware, with yellow-toned inside surface. To the right is the greater part of a bridge-spout. The upper part of the neck has a deep band painted green, continued round the lower part of the spout, and bordered below by a brown line. Below this, on the upper part of the body of the jug, is part of a bird's head with beak to the right. This is sufficient to show that the jug had a free-style decoration of large birds, also painted green, with long tail feathers.

Comments

(*a*) and (*b*) belong to the same shape of jug, but the differences in ware and glaze show that they came from different pots. The type is a large jug, with cylindrical neck, ovoid body and retracted

base. The decoration, often present on the neck as well as on the body, consists of applied strips and pellets arranged in simple geometric patterns, either vertical panels or large chevrons. Usually zones or parts of the pattern are coloured with red or brownish-red slip, which forms a background to the applied decoration.¹

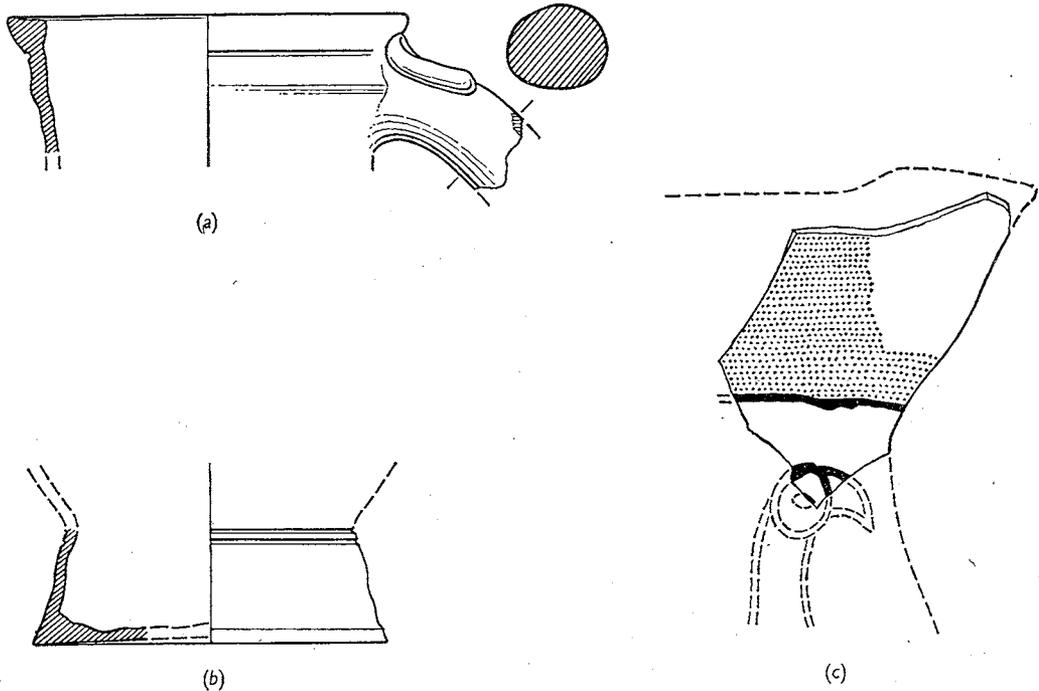


Fig. 8. Waterbeach Abbey: French imported pottery. Scale $\frac{1}{2}$.

Jugs imported from Normandy in the thirteenth century have now been found at twenty-six sites in England, and at two sites in Ireland. In England two-thirds of the sites occur to the south of a line joining the Bristol Channel and the Wash, and the majority are located at ports and towns on or near the south coast and the Thames Estuary. The principal centres for the importation of the jugs were London, Stonar in East Kent, and Southampton, each of which has produced at least half a dozen examples, whereas at other sites the numbers are less.

(c) is easily identified as polychrome ware imported from Saintonge.² The type of bird represented is known from complete examples at Cardiff,³ and Doctors' Commons, London,⁴ and at Lesnes Abbey, Kent.⁵ The unusually deep green band on the Waterbeach sherd is matched on the Cardiff jug quoted above.

The interest of these imported wares at Waterbeach is twofold. First, the date brackets for the abbey (c. 1294-1351) provide useful terminal dates, of which the upper limit is more

¹ The finest series of Normandy jugs is in the Musée des Antiquités at Rouen. K. J. Barton, 'Medieval Pottery at Rouen', *Arch. Jour.* cxxii (1965), pp. 73-85.

² K. J. Barton, 'The Medieval Pottery of Saintonge', *Arch. Jour.* cxx (1963), pp. 201-14.

³ *Archaeologia*, lxxxiii (1933), p. 115, pl. xxvi.

⁴ *Ibid.* p. 126, fig. 13e-f.

⁵ *Antiq. Jour.* xl (1960), p. 4, fig. 4 and pl. 1b. This paper includes the most recent discussion of the dating and distribution of polychrome ware.

relevant than the lower, giving a date of *c.* 1300 or soon after for the pottery. This confirms and possibly slightly extends the dating of polychrome ware from other sites in Britain, and provides one of the few fixed dates for the imports from Normandy.

Secondly, the position of the site well inland raises the question as to which port supplied the pottery. The most likely is King's Lynn, at a distance of 35 miles. The current excavations at King's Lynn directed by Miss Helen Parker have produced examples of Normandy ware and also polychrome ware from Saintonge, showing the trade connexions of this port with both regions of France.

APPENDIX 3

WATERBEACH: THE MEDIEVAL POTTERY

J. G. HURST, M.A., F.S.A.

The pottery from this site is important since it should all be datable to the first half of the fourteenth century and so provide a very useful series for an area where very little stratified or dated medieval pottery has been found. No pottery was later than the middle of the fourteenth century in type so it can be said that, at least in the area excavated, there was no occupation after the nuns moved to Denny. There are, however, a handful of earlier sherds which are possibly twelfth century in date. These must suggest earlier occupation on the site or nearby before the abbey was established. The main bulk of the pottery may be compared closely with that found in Cambridge and the same sources of supply were clearly used. As the pottery was mainly found in robber-trenches or other disturbed levels, it has been described by type and date rather than by where it was found.

SAXO-NORMAN

St Neots ware

Fragments of typical shelly wares¹ were found including an inturned rim bowl (Fig. 9, no. 1)² and a cooking pot with thickened rounded rim (Fig. 9, no. 2).³

*Stamford ware*⁴

Fragment of the rim of a tubular spout from a spouted pitcher⁵ with pale green glaze (Fig. 9, no. 3).

All these sherds are likely to be post-conquest but the end date for these wares in the region is not known. It is usually given as the middle of the twelfth century and there are in the Cambridge Museum many examples of gritty and sandy late twelfth- and thirteenth-century wares suggesting that St Neot's ware had finished by *c.* 1150. Despite the recent recognition of archaism and survival of pottery types (see p. 92) it is unlikely that these wares would continue in use until the fourteenth century.

¹ J. G. Hurst, 'Saxo-Norman Pottery in East Anglia. Part I. St Neots Ware', *Proc. C.A.S.* XLIX (1955), pp. 43-70.

² *Ibid.* p. 61, fig. 6.

³ P. V. Addyman, 'Late Saxon Settlements in the St Neots Area. I. Eaton Socon', *Proc. C.A.S.* LVIII (1965), p. 71, fig. 14, no. 26.

⁴ J. G. Hurst, 'Saxo-Norman Pottery in East Anglia. Part III. Stamford Ware', *Proc. C.A.S.* LI (1957), pp. 37-65.

⁵ 'Anglo-Saxon Pottery: A Symposium', *Med. Arch.* III (1959), p. 40, fig. 16, no. 1.

MIEVEAL COARSE WARES

Medieval bowl

Fig. 9, no. 4: rim of a large bowl in a rough brown sandy ware with a grey core and some shell fragments. The rim is stabbed and there are traces of the start of a lip for pouring. This should be not later than the thirteenth century but may have survived.

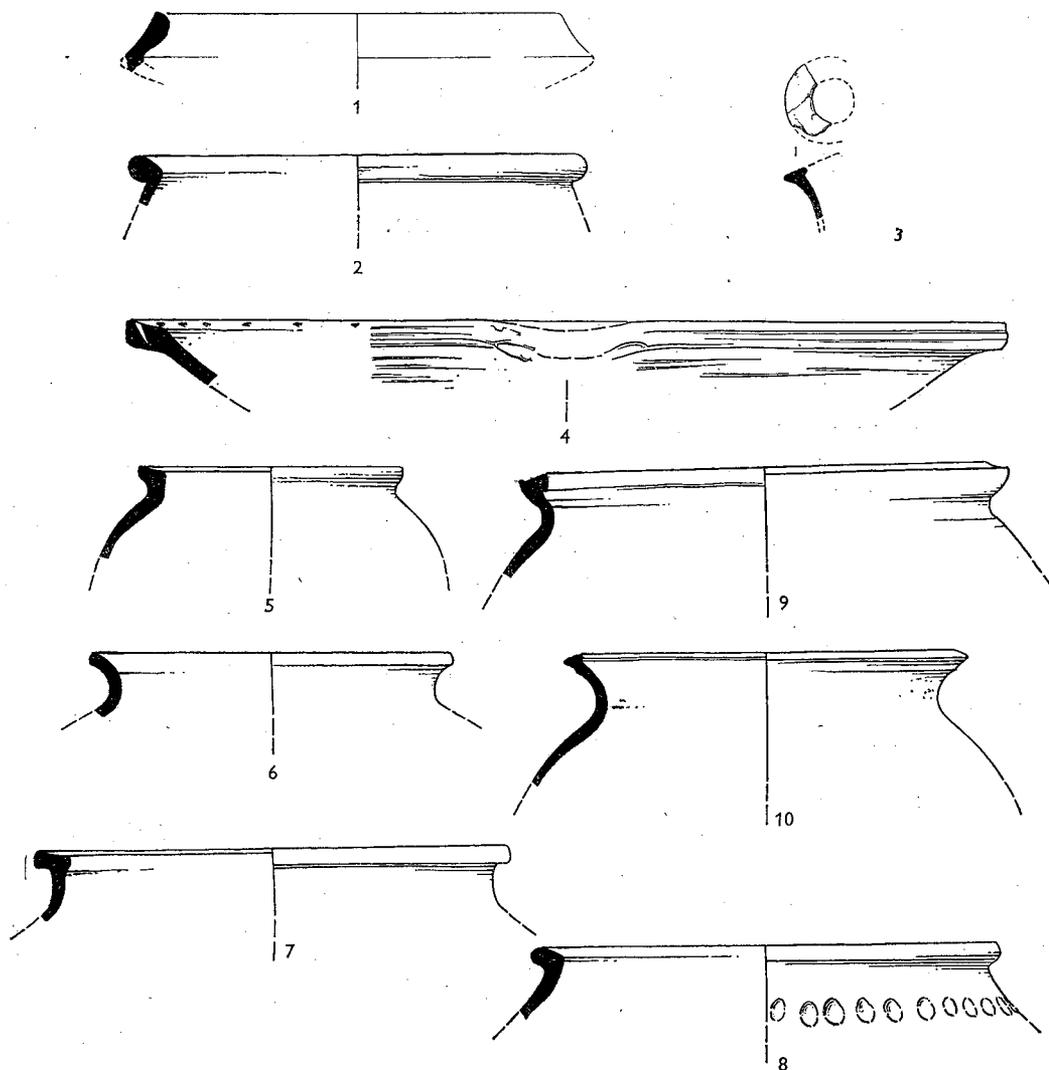


Fig. 9. Waterbeach Abbey: pottery. Scale $\frac{1}{4}$.

Medieval cooking pots

A series of cooking pots in various wares and with a wide range of rim forms. The fabrics range from brown with a shell and sand tempering (Fig. 9, no. 5), brown sandy wares often with a grey core (Fig. 9, nos. 6-9) to much harder grey (Fig. 9, no. 10) and double sandwich (grey-red-black) wares (Fig. 10, nos. 11-12).

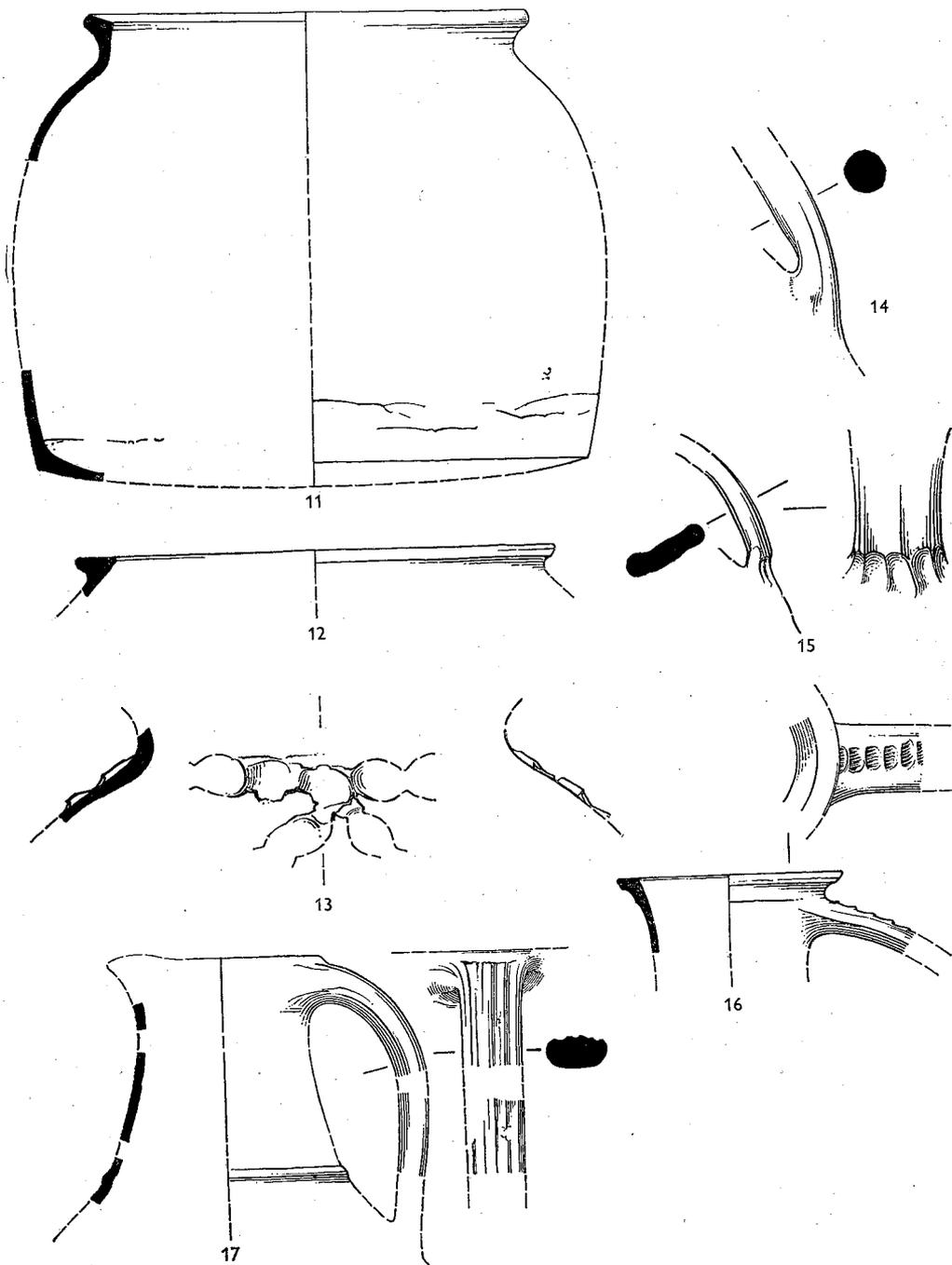


Fig. 10. Waterbeach Abbey: pottery. Scale $\frac{1}{4}$.

The rim forms vary from simple everted rims (Fig. 9, no. 6), through squared forms (Fig. 9, nos. 7, 8 and Fig. 10, no. 11) to sharply cut mouldings (Fig. 9, nos. 9 and 10) and flat flanges (Fig. 10, no. 12). Fig. 9, no. 8, has a series of dimples on the shoulder. This is a common East Anglian feature¹ but is not usual in the Cambridge area.

Most of the squared rims look thirteenth century but could well date to the early fourteenth century. The more developed rims are typical of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries so it is of interest to see them in a context of the first half of the fourteenth century. There is often a supposed gap between the sandy thirteenth-century wares and the harder fifteenth-century wares so it is important for our understanding of the sequence in the Cambridge region to see both types overlapping in the early fourteenth century. There was evidently no clear-cut changeover from one type to another, and some kilns could go on making earlier types when more developed wares were being brought from another kiln. Unfortunately no kiln sites are known in the area so the source of the various pots cannot be determined.

Medieval storage jar

Fig. 10, no. 13: fragment from the neck of a large storage vessel. Grey sandy ware with some shell, and decoration of horizontal and oblique thumbed strips. This falls into the East Anglian group of large thirteenth-century storage vessels² which developed out of the Saxo-Norman twelfth-century Thetford-ware type.³ There is no reason why this type should not still be made in the early fourteenth century.

Local jugs

The local jugs were in similar wares to the cooking pots, grey and brown sandy (Fig. 10, nos. 14 and 15) and hard, double sandwich grey-red-black (Fig. 10, no. 16). Handles were either rod- (Fig. 10, no. 14) or strap-shaped (Fig. 10, nos. 15-16). The interrupted combing on Fig. 10, no. 16, is a survival of the decoration on developed Stamford ware and other grey jugs in the Cambridge area.⁴ All these jugs could fit into the first half of the fourteenth century.

NON-LOCAL JUGS

Better quality jugs were imported from three kilns to the south-east, north-east and north-west. These were the same main sources which supplied Cambridge.⁵

Hedingham ware

Fig. 10, no. 17 and Fig. 11, nos. 18-20: fragments in a characteristic red micaceous ware with a mottled orange and green glaze. These jugs are very common in Cambridge and are decorated either with applied strips and stamps,⁶ or combing⁷ (Fig. 11, nos. 18-19). Exactly comparable sherds have been found from one of the kiln sites discovered by Mr J. Lindsay at Southey Green in the Sible Hedingham, Essex, complex of kilns. These jugs fall in general into the period

¹ It occurs on twelve sites in Suffolk including Bungay Castle (*Proc. Suff. Inst. Arch.* xxii (1936), pp. 334-8, no. 8) but only three in Norfolk. This suggests a south-eastern origin and dimpled decoration occurs on the products of the Sible Hedingham kilns in Essex; see Hedingham ware below.

² H. A. Andrews and G. C. Dunning, 'A Thirteenth-Century Stirrup and Storage Jar from Rabley Heath, Herts', *Ant. Jour.*, xix (1939), pp. 303-12.

³ J. G. Hurst, 'Saxo-Norman Pottery in East Anglia. Part II. Thetford ware', *Proc. C.A.S.* L (1956), pp. 53-60.

⁴ P. V. Addyman and M. Biddle, 'Medieval Cambridge: Recent Finds and Excavations', *Proc. C.A.S.* LVIII (1965), p. 111, with other references.

⁵ B. Rackham, *Medieval English Pottery* (1948), pl. 41.

⁷ *Ibid.* pl. 33.

1250-1350 and it has been thought likely that the tall narrow combed jugs are later than the more globular strip- and stamp-decorated examples. For what it is worth with such a small assemblage, all the Waterbeach examples come from this later type.

Lyveden ware

Fig. 11, no. 21: fragments from the neck and shoulder of a globular jug in a corky fabric from which the shell has been burnt or leached out. Decoration of white applied strips and pads, with grid stamps and green glaze, firing yellow over the strips and pads.¹

These jugs have a wide distribution from Leicester,² Rutland³ and South Lincolnshire, to Cambridge, King's Lynn and Norwich, and are part of the developed St Neots ware complex which continued in Northamptonshire throughout the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. It has been thought that they were mainly thirteenth century, but the Waterbeach jug suggests a longer life into the fourteenth century. Until recently their source was not known, but kiln sites were ploughed up and excavated by Mr J. Steane in 1965 at Lyveden, Northamptonshire, where there is documentary evidence for potters. Sherds of this ware have been found on the site, though not actual wasters, and there can be little doubt that this characteristic jug was made in this area, though it may have been made elsewhere as well.

Grimston ware

Fig. 11, no. 22: fragment of a small arm in grey ware with green glaze decorated with arc notches. This comes from one of the face jugs which are decorated with freestanding arms, made at Grimston near King's Lynn.⁴ These have a wide distribution in East Anglia and are the second most common non-local jug in the Cambridge region after Hedingham ware. Their date range is roughly 1250-1350, so this jug again fits with an early fourteenth-century dating.

IMPORTS

See Appendix 2 by G. C. Dunning.

APPENDIX 4

MORTAR OF BROKEN SHELL LIMESTONE

G. C. DUNNING, F.S.A.

Part of the rim and side of a stone mortar, made of yellow broken shell limestone or burr-stone (Fig. 6*b*). The rock is crowded with comminuted shells of the freshwater snail *Viviparus*, and it belongs to the same geological suite as Purbeck marble.

The mortar, 13 in. in diameter at the top, is larger. The rim is flat on the top, and offset from the curved side. The fragment retains one of the four lugs at rim-level which, since it is plain, was probably one of a pair on opposite sides of the mortar. The lug facing the front would have

¹ *Ibid.* pl. 68.

² 'Excavations at the Jewry Wall Site, Leicester', *Rep. Res. Com. Soc. Ant.* xv (1948), p. 244.

³ P. W. Gathercole, 'Excavations at Oakham Castle, Rutland', *Trans. Leics. Arch. & Hist. Soc.* xxxiv (1958), p. 28, fig. 7, no. 2.

⁴ *Proc. C.A.S.* LVIII (1965), p. 113. *Med. Arch.* vi-viii (1962-3), pp. 100-1, and fig. 37, nos. 7 and 9. The distribution in *Arch. Cant.* LXIX (1955), pp. 144-5 is brought up to date by a note by Mrs J. Le Patourel in *Med. Arch.* x (1966), forthcoming.

had a shallow runnel cut in the top. The lug is rectangular in plan, and below it is a prominent rib curving outwards beyond the side, which would have been continued down to the base.¹

Mortars of Purbeck burr-stone are now known from fifteen sites in England. A few mortars travelled inland to sites in Dorset, South Wiltshire and Hampshire. The main distribution was, however, by sea to the coastal part of Sussex, to London and sites in the Home Counties,² and to East Anglia. The finds farthest north are at Boston³ and at Coventry.⁴

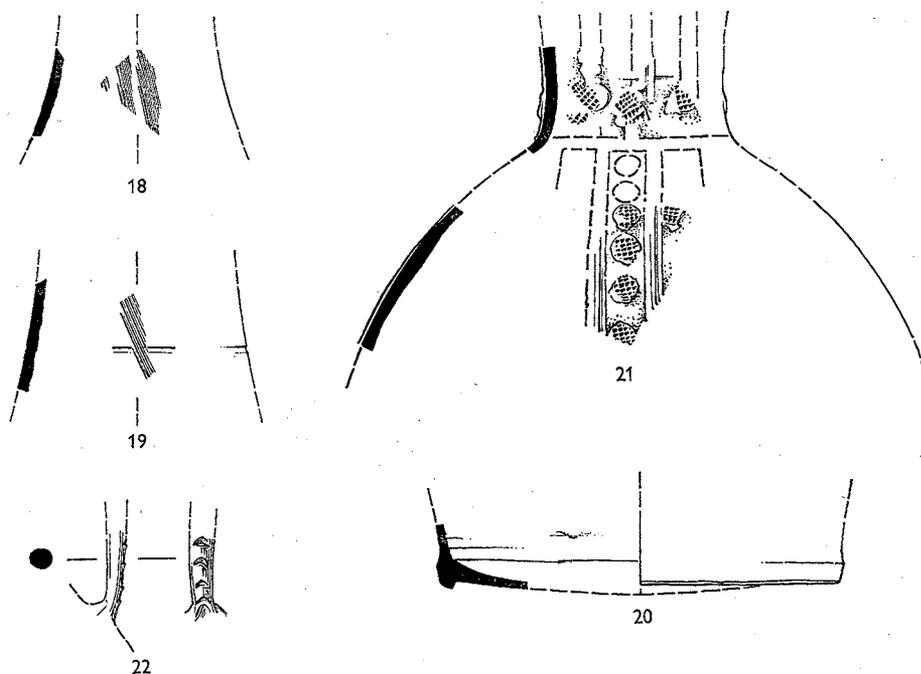


Fig. 11. Waterbeach Abbey: pottery. Scale $\frac{1}{4}$.

Mortars of Purbeck marble, recorded from thirty-eight sites in England, have a similar but wider distribution, ranging from South Devon to Yorkshire. Mortars of this stone were also shipped abroad, where examples have been found near Ostend and at Aardenburg in Zeeland.

In date, mortars both of Purbeck marble and of burr-stone belong to the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, and thus fall well within the date brackets of Waterbeach Abbey.

¹ *Med. Arch.* v (1961), pp. 279, fig. 74, 5-7.

² Northolt Manor, Middlesex, *ibid.*; the More, Rickmansworth, *Arch. Jour.* cxvi (1961), p. 189, fig. 22, 26.

³ *Med. Arch.* v (1961), p. 282, fig. 75, 3.

⁴ *Trans. Birmingham Arch. Soc.* LXXIII (1955), p. 88, pl. 9b.



Waterbeach and the site of the Abbey.

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