

PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
CAMBRIDGE ANTIQUARIAN
SOCIETY

(INCORPORATING THE CAMBS & HUNTS
ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY)



VOLUME LXIX

1979

IMRAY LAURIE NORIE AND WILSON

1980

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THE CAMBRIDGE ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY'S ROOM

The Society's books, MSS., etc.¹, including a run of the Society's *Proceedings*, are now in the Society's room, on the second floor, next door to the Haddon Library of the Faculty of Archaeology and Anthropology, adjacent to the Museum. Members are reminded that the Society's room is available to them whenever the Haddon Library is open, upon application to the Librarian, and that they also retain their right to read in the Haddon Library. The Hon. Librarian reminds members of the usefulness of these resources. The books include all the principle publications dealing with shire history and topography for Cambridgeshire, some material for Huntingdonshire and for neighbouring counties. Prime sources like the collection of early topographical drawings and manuscript histories are included.

THE PROCEEDINGS

1. The Editor welcomes the submission of articles on the history and archaeology of the County for publication in the *Proceedings*, but in order to avoid disappointment potential contributors are advised to write to the Editor, to enquire whether the subject is likely to be of interest to the Society, before submitting a final text. The Editor, if necessary with the advice of the editorial committee, reserves the right to refuse to publish any papers even when an earlier approval of the subject has been given.
2. Authors are reminded that the cost of printing is high and that, all other things being equal, a short and succinct paper is more likely to be published than a long one. It would also assist the Editor if contributors who know of possible sources for subventions towards the cost of printing their paper would inform the Editor of this when submitting their manuscript.
3. The copyright of both text and illustrations will normally remain with the author, and where relevant the photographer and draughtsman, but to simplify future administration contributors are invited to assign their copyright on a form that will be supplied by the Editor.

BACK NUMBERS OF THE PROCEEDINGS

Members might like to know that a considerable stock of back numbers of the *Proceedings* and other C.A.S. publications can be obtained from the publishers, Imray Laurie Norie and Wilson.

¹See the Hon. Librarian's note on the Society's collections, below, pp. ix-x.

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THE CAMBRIDGE ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY'S COLLECTIONS

J. D. Pickles

In recent years the Council of the Society has considered at length whether some parts of its various collections may be made more accessible to members and other researchers if they are placed on deposit elsewhere than in the Faculty of Archaeology and Anthropology. Supervision had become difficult and open access was clearly impossible. It was felt that certain material would be safer where professional care is always available with regular funds, resources for conservation, and modern facilities for students. Precedents for such a course exist in the removal of coins to the Fitzwilliam Museum in the last century, and of primary documents and slides to the County Record Office in this. Approval for this policy was accordingly sought and granted at the A.G.M. in May 1978.

Here and in the next volume of *Proceedings* I shall report briefly on what has been done. It is not, of course, intended to disperse the extensive archives of the Society, nor its books relating to Cambridgeshire. The many valuable sets of journals exchanged with foreign and local societies will remain in the Haddon Library, which incorporates our general holdings and is open to members. It is to be hoped, moreover, that no one will hesitate to apply to the Librarian for answers to specific inquiries and so preserve a tradition of contact with other members.

THE PHOTOGRAPHIC COLLECTION

In 1904 a Photographic Record Committee was established, largely on the initiative of the late F. J. Allen, to make a systematic record with the co-operation of local bodies and volunteers of interesting features in the town and county before their loss through 'natural decay, accident, or wilful destruction'. The project was described by the then President, A. C. Haddon, as 'an entirely new departure ... to preserve pictorial records of everything of human interest that was photographable'. The Committee was most active in the thirties when it worked with the Cambridge Photographic Club under the leadership of W. M. Palmer. In all more than eight thousand items were brought together in what is certainly one of the fullest and finest county surveys of the kind.

Lantern slides. These are now in the County Record Office at Shire Hall. A typescript catalogue by Mr Christopher Dobb has been compiled, and there are copies in the Society's Library and the City Library. Almost two thousand slides relate to the town and county, arranged parish by parish, and a further six hundred to special

subjects such as dovecots, mazes, windmills, and library history. The collection incorporates Palmer's slides for his lectures and publications.

Prints and negatives. These are now in the Cambridgeshire Collection of the City Library. There are prints from most of the negatives in the main sequence, together with a not inconsiderable number of negatives still to be identified or from which there are not yet prints. To some extent the collection is self-indexing as the items are filed alphabetically by village, and Cambridge itself is treated in ten classes from 'boat houses' to 'yards'. Of prime importance is a subject index on cards which gives ready access to more than sixty subjects; the following examples, taken at random, are an indication of its value:

barns, brasses, bridges, carts ... flora, fonts, fords, gargoyles ... pawnbrokers' signs, piscina, ploughs, porches (church), pounds, railway ... tombs, trees, turf kneelers, walls, war memorials.

It deserves to be recorded that a great deal of the arranging and classification was the laborious work of the late Miss Z. M. Scruby.

THE PORTRAIT COLLECTION

J. E. Foster (1847-1912) assiduously collected likenesses of university worthies for the Society. Most of these are photographs of the Victorian period of varying kinds and quality from newspaper cuttings and *cartes de visite* to full 'studio' portraits. There are very few negatives. Earlier figures are represented in engravings.

This collection, which is admirably indexed by name, college, and office, has been transferred to the University Archives in the University Library.

FIELD OFFICERS' REPORTS, 1978-9

Work in the Roman town of *Godmanchester* continued under H. J. M. Green, and in the Roman area of *Cambridge* a small training excavation was carried out by Dr J. Alexander for further examination of the defences. At *Elton* near Peterborough, Alison Taylor cut a trial trench through the site of a probable Neolithic henge which had been revealed on aerial photographs, and at *Dry Drayton* Michael Sekulla examined some earthworks in the village centre and found the stone footings of the manor house and evidence of Saxo-Norman occupation.

Emergency explorations were carried out by Alison Taylor when extensive finds of Roman material were reported from a quarry near *Godmanchester* (TL 259721). The site had almost disappeared but it was possible to plot the position of a pottery kiln, a shallow well containing leather and wood and fragments of 2 rectangular buildings.

At *Horningsea* (TL 496645) the field adjacent to the Roman pottery kilns excavated early this century was ploughed for the first time last autumn, revealing a large number of human bones and Roman pottery in the plough soil. The skeletons were very disturbed and no grave-goods were noted but the extent of the cemetery, which was probably contemporary with the kilns, was plotted.

One most important object found this year was a Roman bronze statuette from gravel pits at Earith. Unfortunately the find was illegally taken from the site and has not yet been seen by any archaeologist, but to judge from photographs it is about 20 cms high, of fine craftsmanship and represents a youthful curly haired male in a long tunic. A rather similar bronze statuette of Mars was found a mile away in 1826 and is now in the British Museum. We hope to be able to report more fully next year on this object and its future.

Last autumn the Manpower Services Commission paid for the Cambridgeshire Archaeological Committee to employ 6 young graduates under the Special Temporary Employment Programme for one year. This team has sketch-surveyed and described the earthworks in a number of Huntingdonshire villages and inspected the villages for further sites. Villages surveyed so far are: Alconbury, Alconbury Weston, Abbotsley, Brampton, Broughton, Buckden, Denton, Easton, Ellington, Ellington Thorpe, Fenstanton, Folksworth, Grafham, Great Gransden, Great Staughton, Hardwick, Hemingford Grey, Hemingford Abbot, Hail Weston, Hamerton, Kings Ripton, Leighton Bromswold, Little Paxton, and Spaldwick. The surveys are kept in the sites-and-monuments record held by the Planning Office, Shire Hall, Cambridge. Many scheduled ancient monuments have been visited and their condition checked, and detailed field-walking took place on the Mesolithic and Neolithic settlement at Peacock's Farm, Littleport. In addition the S.T.E.P. employees have made a disused property, 78 Castle Street, Cambridge, into an

archaeological centre and work-place and have helped with a great deal of artwork, finds-processing and excavation.

Meanwhile 2 historians have worked on archival sources for Cambridgeshire. Their aim was to examine published and manuscript sources and historical maps for topographical information, field-names and other useful references and to help with detailed historical work for fenland parishes. This information is stored in parish files and the sites-and-monuments record.

David Hall, the Fenland Field Officer, has field-walked another 25,000 acres of fen in order to establish early settlement patterns and fen landscapes and is preparing further village surveys of the kind published for Elm in last year's *Proceedings*.

In June this year Francis Pryor joined the Committee staff in order to take care of the great number of archaeological sites, known and unknown, that are threatened by gravel excavation in the Welland Valley. He is at present organising a team to excavate prehistoric settlements and religious monuments at Maxey and to field-walk areas of the Welland Valley using statistical methods.

The archaeology workshop continues to be held in the City Library on the first Saturday morning of each month, to which people are invited to bring archaeological objects for identification and recording, and to talk about archaeological matters. We are holding similar events annually in Huntingdon Library and the Haddenham Farm-life museum. We have also held exhibitions of archaeological work at the Cambridge Leisure Fair and in the Corn Exchange, Wisbech Museum and the East of England Show.

Alison Taylor
August 1979

Fenland Survey

This survey was initiated by the Committee to assess the archaeological potential of the fenland with its important range of pre-medieval sites, preserved either in the form of earthworks or buried by fen deposits.

During the three winter seasons of 1976-79 about 75,000 acres of the Cambridgeshire fenland have been studied in detail. This is about one third of the total area, so giving a large sample enabling a meaningful assessment of the whole to be made. It is now possible to identify the fen edge at differing archaeological periods and so place settlements in their contemporary landscape.

The most exciting results of the 1978-9 season were the identification of a previously unknown Bronze Age settlement and barrow-field at Ramsey, and an extensive Mesolithic complex on sand dunes at Littleport (of which the well-known Peacock's Farm site is part).

The results are available in the form of parish studies (such as Elm published in this Journal), and also in the form of county period-maps which summarise the essential information.

David Hall

Welland Valley

Much of the summer was spent planning the first season of work at Maxey (TF 128 077) where some twelve acres of cropmarks in a gravel quarry are shortly to be stripped and excavated. The project will begin with a very detailed surface survey of the site which will plot the distributions of finds and soil phosphate concentrations against archaeological features revealed in the subsoil. Stripped features will then be planned, sampled and excavated in the usual way. The excavation will be set in its landscape context by means of a valley-wide surface survey, carried out by volunteers, and based on random transects across the width of the valley, placed at approximate kilometre intervals. Special attention will be paid to the distribution of finds between known and newly-found sites.

Francis Pryor

THE CAMBRIDGE ARCHAEOLOGY FIELD GROUP SECOND ANNUAL REPORT

Following a year in which the Group was organised on a relatively casual basis, for which the results have already been reported (*P.C.A.S.* LXVIII 1978 xi-xiii), an open meeting was held at the Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology on 6 September 1978. The meeting resulted in a formal constitution being adopted, and officers being elected. The main purposes of the Group, as defined in its constitution, are to further interest in and forward the aims of archaeology in the Cambridge area and, in co-operation with other interested organisations or individuals, to record archaeological evidence threatened with damage or destruction and to undertake research or excavation where necessary.

One of the most important aspects of the work of the group is in the training of interested volunteers in correct archaeological techniques. It is obvious that in the current financial climate public funding for archaeological work is likely to be severely limited, professional units cannot cope with the number of threatened sites and the country cannot afford to pay for their survey or excavation. It seems that there will have to be an increasing reliance on properly trained and supervised amateur groups to deal with the threat to archaeological material.

The Group, since its formal constitution, has been affiliated to the Cambridge Antiquarian Society as an associate body so that the work of the two organisations might be better co-ordinated. Grants have been received from the Cambridge City Council Lottery Fund and the Lloyds Bank Fund administered by the Royal Archaeological Institute, which have enabled the purchase of much needed surveying equipment.

The work of the Group has again concentrated in the winter months on field walking in the Granta Valley and adjacent areas south of Cambridge (see below). It was felt that the survival and recovery of artefacts by this means should be correlated with the known and inferable history of land use and the information compared with that provided by crop marks, earthworks and other visible surface features. Documentary, architectural and historico-ecological evidence and other sources should also be studied, to provide a co-ordinated picture of past landscapes.

The parish of Stapleford was selected for detailed study and, in addition to field walking, the Group has started a survey of earthworks including a moated site in the village, hedgerow dating, graveyard recording and a study of available documentary evidence. Here we must thank the farmers and landowners for their help and co-operation, the vicar for allowing us access to field books and other historical documents, and others, too numerous to mention, who have helped in many ways.

Increasing petrol costs, amongst other factors, have meant that many members feel

themselves unable to travel regularly to Stapleford. Any such restrictions on the involvement of members in the work of the Group is undesirable and the activities of the Group must be widened to cater for the many members living in other parts of the county. Some work other than that in the Granta Valley has been undertaken by the Group and preliminary results are given here.

Field walking was carried out along the route of the gas pipeline and road works on the A604 between Bar Hill (TL 377645) and Fen Stanton (TL 311687). Although this produced little material of archaeological interest, the discovery of a previously unknown outcrop (TL 362653) of the Boxworth rock horizon of the Ampthill claybeds resulted from finding a number of fossils, in particular several species of ammonite.

During the construction of a car parking area on Newmarket Road opposite Cambridge Airport (TL 491592) a series of pits and ditches with a dark infill was revealed. These features were surveyed and a plan produced: the very limited excavation possible showed the infill to contain animal bones and several small shards of Iron Age pottery.

A survey of earthworks near River Farm, Haslingfield (around TL 412518) was also carried out, together with field walking, when the main field concerned was brought under cultivation for the first time in many years. The earthworks included hollow-ways and banks which could be correlated with a roadway and the boundaries of small closes on the parish enclosure map. There also appeared to be house platforms and the field walking produced quern stones and heavy scatters of early Medieval pottery, including St Neots ware, suggesting a former settlement site.

A number of members of the Group provided assistance on Mr Michael Sekulla's trial excavation of the manor house site at Dry Drayton during the summer.

In addition to practical work in the field, the Group has also organised visits to West Stow and Grimes Graves and a series of monthly lectures. Speakers have included Mr D. Mackreth on Archaeological work in the Peterborough area, Mr J. Wymer on Paleolithic flints, Mr D. Hall on recent work in the fens, Mr Graham Lawson on early musical instruments and a geological workshop with Dr C. Forbes. It is hoped to arrange a further series of lectures during the coming year.

R. J. Flood

Field walking in the Stapleford area.

Because of the bad weather only a small proportion of the work planned for the winter 1978-79 was completed. Despite this, various interesting finds were made, the significance of which will become more apparent when the full report is published.

The season began with the completion of several fields in the vicinity of Wandlebury, Stapleford, which had been only partially walked the previous year (TL 501537, Mr Bush, and TL 491535, Mr Bradford). These produced very little, despite their proximity to the hill-fort and the Roman road. The opportunity arose for a brief investigation of an adjacent field (TL 505532, Mr Todd), where significant cropmarks of a ?Roman villa had been noted. This produced fragments of Roman

pottery and tile, as well as worked flint flakes which could well be connected with the tumulus overlooking this site.

The fields on the opposite side of the A604 to Wandlebury (TL 489532, Mr Bush), produced another scatter of worked flakes in the vicinity of a ploughed out circular cropmark; this field also produced an interesting series of 17th-century clay pipe stems, although little pottery of any period was found.

In the Clay Farm area (TL 458555, Sir Francis Pemberton), immediately adjacent to the farm, pipe stems, pottery and glass of the 17th century were found, as well as a 17th-century wig curler. Further finds in the same area (TL 455555) included a Mesolithic tranchet axe and a large number of worked flakes.

The season ended with a field in Shelford parish (TL 471532, Mr Webster), where a cluster of worked flints was found, again possibly associated with a ploughed out series of cropmarks in the adjacent field.

Although field walking was very restricted this season, the finds made appeared to be of some significance in the way many were associated with the cropmarks plotted on to maps from aerial photographs.

Further work concentrating on Stapleford parish will continue in the autumn of 1979.

ANCIENT COURSES OF THE GREAT AND LITTLE OUSE IN FENLAND

R. S. Seale

ABSTRACT

A section across the rodham of the Little Ouse N.E. of Ely, first described by Clark (1933), and three more recent sections nearby are investigated. The deposits and erosional features of the Little Ouse and its course within the Fenland in Post-Glacial times before it was finally diverted into its present channel, are described, discussed and compared with a section across a large rodham S.E. of Ramsey. The general features of this latter section are similar to those of the Little Ouse, but larger and appear to belong to a big river, probably the Great Ouse flowing from Bedfordshire, or an important tributary of it. Deposits similar to the post-Neolithic sediments of the Little Ouse appear to be missing so it is concluded that the river, or at least this part of it, was diverted in late Neolithic or early Bronze Age times into the channel occupied by the West Water, which existed in historic times. Evidence that the West Water may be relatively recent is provided by a rodham apparently crossing its course.

INTRODUCTION

The general sequence of the Post-Glacial history of the Fens can be summarised as follows.

Soon after the final retreat of the Ice from East Anglia, peat, assigned to Fenland pollen Zone IV (Godwin 1940) was formed in and adjacent to the deep river channels meandering across the Fens and into the North Sea basin before about 7,500* B.C. (Godwin 1960). It does not, however, appear to have spread over the greater part of the basin, which was then occupied by oak forest, much before 3,000 B.C. (Willis 1961), though there is evidence that there was peat development in Holme Fen about 4,500 B.C. (Godwin and Vishnu-Mittre 1975) and at Queen's Ground in Methwold Fens before 5,000 B.C. (Godwin 1940, 1960).

A marine transgression, during which the Fen Clay (Barroway Drove Beds) was

*According to evidence from tree-ring chronology correlated with radio-carbon dating, most radio-carbon dates given for instance as 2,000, 3,000 and 4,000 B.C. should be about 2,550, 3,780 and 4,870 B.C. respectively (Clark 1975). The dates given in this paper have not been corrected.

deposited, began about 3,000 B.C. in late Neolithic times in the north and by about 2,250 B.C. it had reached its maximum extent. In Glass Moor, half way between Ramsey and Whittlesey, a date of about 2,400 B.C. for cockles found on pine stumps beneath the Fen Clay gives a clear local indication of its onset (Godwin and Vishnu-Mittre 1975). It had begun to retreat in the south by 2,200 and had ended by 2,000 B.C. over much of the Fens (Willis 1961). This transgression engulfed the fen carr and reed or sedge swamp, from which the Lower Peat (that beneath the Fen Clay) was formed. The Fen or Blue Buttery Clay was laid down, from still water, in lagoons, intermittently invaded by tidal water and extending over much of the Fens (Godwin 1978). In the later stages of its deposition, at least, there must have been a great saltmarsh covered by a network of creeks in which coarser silty sediments were deposited, connected to the lower tidal reaches of the rivers draining the basin. Macfadyen. (1933) found that such silty deposits near King's Lynn contained foraminifera, more intolerant of less salty conditions than those in finer deposits.

The Fen Clay transgression was succeeded by the formation of the Upper Peat, interrupted in its turn in the northern fens by the Romano-British marine transgression, when alluvium, mainly silty, was deposited both up the channels of the main rivers, and the Roman canals and drainage ditches. This transgression had probably already begun in the pre-Roman Iron Age (Godwin and Vishnu-Mittre 1975).

In historical times the natural drainage pattern was considerably altered by man and the system that once flowed to the sea at Wisbech was diverted eastwards to the outfall at King's Lynn.

GEOGRAPHY

The ancient, now dry, courses of the rivers or creeks are represented by silt ridges ('roddams' Skertchly 1877, 'rodhams' Astbury 1956 or 'roddons' and the closely related 'old runs' and 'old ways') and in the upper reaches of the rivers or canals by deposits of shell marl ('old slades') and deep peat (Fowler 1932, 1933, 1934).

Figure 1 shows the distribution of the largest of the rodhams of the southern Fens. The course of the Cam or 'Ely Great Ouse' (in reality a different river from the Great Ouse draining from the west), Little Ouse and Lark were evidently relatively constant, apart from minor meanders, between Glacial and Roman times when there was widespread diversion (Fowler *ibid.*, Astbury *ibid.*, Seale 1975). The former West Water, including Hammond's Eau, marks the mainly natural course of the (western) Great Ouse of probably late Post-Glacial but pre-drainage age. Entering the Fens near Earith, this river flowed in a northerly direction to the west of the Chatteris and March 'islands', joining the existing 'old course' of the River Nene at Benwick and its probable natural course at Flood's Ferry. The combined rivers then continued northwards to join the old Ely Ouse near Wisbech and not near Upwell as stated by Fowler (1934) (R. Evans, private communication). Probably in Roman times (Astbury *ibid.*, Salway

et al. 1970), the loop now partly represented by Hammond's Eau was cut off and the river diverted into a straighter more direct course from a point near Earith to Ferry Burrows (TL 383835). The northern part of this diversion is followed by the B1050 road. In this area the old county boundary between Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire ran along this diversion and the course of the natural West Water from Ferry Burrows almost as far as Benwick, indicating that the river was evidently flowing here in early medieval times. It was finally diverted following the construction of the Bedford Rivers in the seventeenth century and has now been replaced as the main channel of the Great Ouse by the New Bedford River or Hundred Foot Drain.

TABLE 1

Explanation of Figs 2-4. (pp. 16-19)

A'	Deep river channel (Early Post-Glacial).
A, A1, A2	Lower Peat.
A3	Clayey band within the Lower Peat.
B'	Erosion channel (Neolithic Age).
B1	Silty or fine sandy estuarine deposits (Neolithic Age).
B2	Calcareous laminated silty clay loam (Late Neolithic Age).
B3	Non-calcareous clay (Late Neolithic Age).
B4	Mixed silty clay and shelly peat (Neolithic Age).
B5	Peat with non-marine mollusca (Late Neolithic Age).
C	Blue Buttery or Fen Clay (Neolithic Age).
D'	Erosion channel (Bronze Age).
D1	Shelly peat or mixed deposits with shells (non-marine) (Bronze Age).
D2	Coarse sandy deposits (Bronze Age).
D3	Non-calcareous clay (Bronze Age? and later).
D4	Calcareous tidal silt (Romano-British).
D5	Thin peaty bands.
E1	Upper Peat.
E2	Disturbed plough layer.
F	Shell Marl (Chara marl or 'white eau').
G	Sandy levees.
H'	Final river channel (before diversion of river to its present course).
J	Cat clay with jarosite mottles.
Y-Z	Thin organic layer.
W-X	Horizontal reference lines based on local water-levels (the same datum in sections V and VI, but different in the others).

RODHAM STRATIGRAPHY

Detailed investigations of the stratigraphy of deposits in and adjacent to the rodhams have been made at a number of sites. Following the discovery in 1931 of a Bronze Age site on a sandy levée of the ancient Little Ouse at Plantation Farm, Shippea Hill, Cambs, borings and excavations were made across the line of the early course of the river here and at the nearby Peacock Farm (Figs. 1 and 2, III) on behalf of the former Fenland Research Committee (Clark 1933, Clark *et al* 1935, Godwin and Clifford 1939, Godwin 1978) and it was found that between the levées there was a deep flat-bottomed channel containing Lower Peat (Fig. 2 III, A), overlain and cut into by silty deposits (B1) that merged laterally into Fen Clay (C). There was further evidence of more recent erosion and deposition above (D1-D4 and E1-E2). Two other sections upstream were investigated (Figs. 1 and 2, I and II) during soil survey in 1963 and a further one downstream in 1972, at Mile End (Figs. 1 and 2, IV). This last section was kindly levelled at the instigation of Mr D. J. Bennett of the Anglian Water Authority. All four sections showed essentially similar features.

Corresponding deep channels have also been found beneath the silty deposits of the Cam or Ely Ouse at the sites of the Dimmock's Cote road bridge near Stretham (TL 537723) and at Prickwillow railway bridge (Fig 1, TL 596828) (Fowler 1934) and beneath the 'old course' of the River Nene at Flood's Ferry (Fig 1, TL 3694) where the bottom of the 'fen clay' was not reached at minus 9 m (27½ ft) O.D., the Lower Peat being replaced here by very fine sandy silt with shells (Godwin and Clifford 1939). Borings to about 5 m in the former courses of the Lark and Snail (Fig 1, Y and Z) failed to reach the bottoms of their buried channels (Seale 1975 p. 169), though in the latter case only 2 km from the old confluence of the two rivers the base of the peat in the channel was found to have been apparently only about a metre or two below O.D. (Fig 1, X). The channel here is less than 100 m wide so it is possible that sand and flints have been washed on to deeper peat.

All four sections (Fig. 1) along the old Little Ouse show the deep peat-filled depression at about -7 m O.D. varying between about 150 and 250 m wide and bounded by sandy levées (Fig. 2, G), parts of which stood out, even during the Fen Clay marine transgression, as islands, occupied, when the climate was relatively dry, by people in three archaeological periods. At Plantation and Peacock Farms Bronze Age implements were found to be younger than the Fen Clay but Mesolithic and Neolithic age tools were correlated with layers in the Lower Peat, later dated by radio-carbon investigation (Clark and Godwin 1962).

DEPOSITIONAL SUCCESSION OF THE LITTLE OUSE

At Old Decoy Farm (Fig. 1, TL 665857) and 6 km still further upstream at Wilton Bridge (TL 724867) beyond tidal influence, Godwin (1940) found that the deep depression of the Little Ouse was entirely filled with peat, the base of which was of Pre-

Boreal age. He showed that erosion around here to a depth of at least minus 20 ft (6 m) O.D. would have been quite possible at this early period, as peat of this age occurs on the bed of the North Sea (Godwin 1934, 1940, 1978). Further downstream Godwin and Clifford (1939) showed that in late Neolithic times, towards, or more probably after, the end of the formation of the Lower Peat, there was a period of erosion when the Little Ouse cut through the Lower Peat and the new channel so formed was later filled, near Plantation Farm, with Fen Clay and silt (Fig. 2 III C and B1). In section II (Fig. 2), assuming that the borings show sufficient evidence, the deepest part of the channel (A') is in the centre of the depression and not near the levées as it appears in the three other sections, though it is possible that closer bores would show the valley floor to be more irregular than is shown in section III. The deepest part at section II and probably also at section I is covered first by peat and not by the later tidal deposits, so it is presumably the original Pre-Boreal erosion channel of the river, which no doubt meandered to and fro across the depression between the sandy levées. The late Neolithic erosion (B'), when the dry Sub-Boreal succeeded the wet Atlantic climatic period, probably cut more deeply than the Pre-Boreal erosion in sections III and IV and perhaps less deeply in I and II. The gradient of the river would therefore have been greater than in Pre-Boreal times and it may not have reached its base level before it began to silt up. Section I is more complicated than the others as it is near the limit of the maximum Neolithic tidal influence, the eroded channel being filled partly with estuarine silt (B1), and partly with mixed deposits of clay and shelly peat (B4), succeeded by more uniform shelly peat (B5). Further downstream the Neolithic erosion channel was filled with several metres of very calcareous tidal silt loam or very fine sandy loam (B1) best seen at the permanent section IV at Mile End Road. Here the sandy loam was succeeded, as the tidal influence later became weaker, by a metre or so of calcareous laminated silty clay loam (B2), and then by about a quarter to a half metre of non-calcareous clay (B3) merging laterally at a slightly lower level into the upper layers of the Fen Clay, which are very similar and probably contemporaneous. A thin but distinctive band of humose clay, covered by non-humose clay, can be traced laterally for nearly 40 m rising from 1.5 m from the Fen Clay to near the top of the deposits filling the erosion channel (Section IV Y to Z)¹.

The Upper Peat with its oxidised and wasted plough layer (Fig. 2, E1 and part of I respectively) covers all these earlier sediments and is now represented by thin organic deposits in the three seaward sections (including Section III as there has been much wastage since 1933). It was overlain locally by the shell marl of Redmere (Fig. 2, I, F). Only section I shows the possible actual river channel of about the time of the Fen Clay transgression (B4 and 5). At the north-west side of this channel the very steep and sharp junction with the silty clay (which merges laterally into the Fen Clay), evidently

¹N.E. of Y (Fig. 2 IV) this band probably extends further, but could not be seen as it was below the water-level.

forming the river bank at that time, was clearly visible extending over a metre above the water-line in the ditch².

During the Bronze Age the river cut through the Upper Peat and part of the Fen Clay and other deposits to a depth of minus 4.05 m (13.3 ft) O.D. in section III (D') (Godwin 1940). Evidence for this is well shown in the other sections, in two of which, I and IV (D'), the erosion cut into the top of the sandy levées. Upper Peat of this age stretches far seaward and Godwin estimated that the land was then probably 3 m (10 ft) higher in relation to sea level than now. The fall in gradient at the base of this erosion was much less between, for instance, sections III and IV than that of the Neolithic erosion (B'). As the sea level rose, shelly peat or mixed deposits with shells (D1), or non-calcareous clay (D3) were deposited in or near the sluggish river, to be followed in the channel first by a thin layer of relatively coarse sand (D2), and then by the later calcareous tidal silts (D4) of the present rodham, the final river channel (H') being filled with shelly peat (sections II and IV) or shell marl (section I), though the highest parts of the rodham were probably never covered by peat. Further intermediate signs of erosion and deposition occur in sections I and IV as buried peat-filled channels, clayey shell marl and non-calcareous clayey deposits, and thin lenticles of peat show within the silts (section IV D5).

On the lower flanks of the Little Ouse rodham a thin layer of acid clay ('cat clay') (J) often extends outwards for a few metres over the Upper Peat (sections I and IV). This was probably deposited from relatively still waters during floods, the coarser sediments having been previously laid down nearer the river. Any calcium carbonate particles would have been similarly sorted so only the finest and therefore most quickly dissolved would have been deposited here. Van der Sluijs (1970) has shown in the Netherlands that decalcification of the marine clays in backwaters where there is only occasional flooding, is contemporaneous with deposition. These areas are above mean high tide level, and so could have been vegetated reedswamp, which not only slowed down the rush of flood-water, but, as the vegetation decayed, also caused extensive leaching of the sediments due to the formation of humic acids. Acidification probably followed the drainage of the Fens when oxidation of sulphides resulted in the formation of the yellow mineral jarosite and sulphuric acid. Similar clay below the watertable in the undrained land of the 'Wash' near Welney is of about neutral pH.

THE ABANDONMENT OF THE OLD LITTLE OUSE COURSE

The Little Ouse was probably partly flowing along the course of its rodham in Saxon times, as the Norfolk-Suffolk county and the Ely-Littleport parish boundaries

²Unfortunately the silty deposits below water were unusually sloppy and came up very badly on the auger (though there was a definite band of peat at the base), so the lower portion of this particular part of the section is therefore somewhat uncertain.

follow it in places, though the present straight portion to Brandon Creek was evidently cut in Roman times (Astbury 1958, Solway *et al* 1970) to take much of the water. By 1604, according to Hayward's map, the Little Ouse was definitely flowing along its present straight channel (Smyth 1727, Armstrong 1766) which was referred to as the Rebeck River in 1574/5 (Dugdale 1662), but several maps (Blaeu 1648, Jansson 1635, Hondius 1632) show a small stream flowing into the old Ely Ouse in the position of the lower part of the Little Ouse rodham which is named Depney Lode on both Hayward's map of 1604 and Sir Jonas Moore's 'Large Map' (1685).

DEPOSITIONAL SUCCESSION OF THE GREAT OUSE (WEST WATER) SYSTEM

In the summer of 1976 a new main drainage channel was excavated across the Fens south-east of Ramsey on behalf of the Anglian Water Authority and parts of this section were examined, and, as in the case of the Little Ouse, borings were made in the bed of the drain, reaching, where possible, the mineral substratum (Figs 1 and 3, section V).

The excavation cuts diagonally across the course of a very large rodham*. As in the Little Ouse sections, there is a corresponding deep peat-filled depression (Fig. 3 A) associated with the main rodham. Additional evidence of this further in the east was found through a random boring (Fig. 1 W) immediately south of a small 'island' (TL 358819) in Somersham North Fen, where no base to shelly peat had been reached at a depth of 5 m below the surface of the Fen Clay. From the limited evidence available it appears that this is probably a pre-Boreal depression, cut into the Oxford Clay or coarse sandy deposits of the fen floor, and about one and a half times as wide as that of the Little Ouse, though the levées (Fig. 3 G) are less well developed. The lower part of this depression away from the rodham contains peat with small non-marine shells (A1), more characteristic here than in the corresponding parts of the Little Ouse sections. This is succeeded by peat, with wood remains and tree trunks

*At the centre of the rodham the excavation abruptly changes direction from SE-NW to NNE-SSW. Because of this, the section, when reproduced to the same scale as that of the Little Ouse sections, is very long. It has therefore been projected onto a line drawn at right angles to the general direction of the main rodham. The resulting section shows approximately the true proportions of the Ramsey system relative to that of the Little Ouse, assuming that it is also at right angles to the hidden deep depression, which was found beneath the rodham. The boundary between the Lower Peat and the Fen Clay at each side of the section and the small rodham to the south-west are therefore relatively more compressed laterally than the main feature.

scattered through it (A2). A feature not found near the Little Ouse is a thin more or less continuous layer of clay or humose clay in the middle (A3).

The late Neolithic erosion channel below the Ramsey rodham (Fig. 3 B') was filled with fine sand and loamy sand (B1) to a depth of at least 8 m. It is slightly coarser than the corresponding sand in the Little Ouse section (Fig. 2 IV) furthest downstream, indicating that the sea from which it came was probably nearer, as already suggested by Godwin and Vishnu-Mittre (1975). The base of the channel could not be reached because running sand prevented sampling.

The sand was covered by thin layers of non-calcareous clay or silty clay loam (Fig. 3 B2) with pockets, or a discontinuous band, of peat or loamy peat. The band of peat may be contemporaneous with the thin humose clay of the Little Ouse, section IV (Fig. 2 Y-Z). The top 30 cm of the rodham is calcareous humose silt loam or silty clay loam, probably disturbed and evidently once covered by Upper Peat. Unlike the Little Ouse rodham there is no sign of a final peat-filled river channel or of a Bronze Age erosion channel so it is probable that the water course had already become blocked with sand by then. The magnitude of the deposits associated with the Ramsey rodham indicates that a large river must once have flowed here, probably the Great Ouse itself. It was evidently diverted northwards near Somersham in Bronze Age times along the course of the West Water, in contrast to the Little Ouse which, apart from local meanders, kept an almost constant course from the end of the Devensian Ice Age till the 17th Century.

BACKSWAMP

Though not very far from the big rodham a part of the ditch section away from the deep depression (Figs 1 and 4 section VI) was investigated. It illustrated the typical stratification of the fenland backswamp, consisting of Lower Peat, Fen Clay and Upper Peat. The thin layer of clay, generally humose, corresponding to that in the Lower Peat of the deep depression (Fig. 3 A3) is again represented (Fig. 4 A3), but it is much less continuous. This clay is generally non-calcareous and often associated with sedimentary peat containing non-marine shells. It has not been noticed in deep borings in the fens near Chatteris, so is possibly mainly confined to the deeper depressions of the south-western fens and their immediate neighbourhoods.

Over much of the Ely-Welney basin the Fen Clay is thicker and the Lower Peat correspondingly thinner than in the basin to the west and south of Chatteris, although the top of the Fen Clay is approximately level over the whole area. Section VI (Fig. 4) is probably fairly typical of the greater part of the south-western basin, apart perhaps from the thin clay band in the Lower Peat. While the water was being pumped out, the junction between the Lower Peat (A) and the Fen Clay (C) was clearly seen. A very distinctive feature (more exaggerated in section V (Fig. 3) because of the projection) is its extreme irregularity. Depressions in the top of the Lower Peat are known to occur where moderate-sized or large rodhams cross the Fen Clay (Seale 1975, Fig. 10 p. 31),

though this does not explain all the small depressions. Because the junction between the Lower Peat and the Fen Clay is generally very deep over much of the Ely-Welney basin it is unlikely ever to be exposed even during major drainage excavations except at the edges where the Fen Clay thins out and where the junction is anyway relatively even; furthermore the nature of the contact in the centre of the basin will not be known until frequent deep borings are made. It is quite probable that the Fen Clay transgression reached the Ely basin some time before it reached the southwestern basin. In the latter area it no doubt flooded first over minor depressions in the surface of the marsh, and where there were creeks the top of the peat was slightly eroded. Quite often the boundary is merging and there are many plant remains such as the reed *Phragmites* indicating that in these places the water only gradually overwhelmed the vegetation. *Phragmites* can however form dense communities in salt marshes as it is very tolerant of brackish conditions (Godwin 1978).

Perhaps the thin clay layer (A3), judging by its relative position in the sections, is about contemporaneous with the base of the Fen Clay of the Ely area and represents a temporary flooding of the river, but this cannot be proved without pollen analysis and radiocarbon dating.

CONCLUSIONS

Since Fowler's extensive research into the history of the fenland waterways, there has been much wastage of the peat and many aerial photographs of the Fens have been taken, bringing to light, in the form of rodhams, much additional evidence that was unavailable to him. The present work is an attempt to add to the knowledge gained by him of the major watercourses in the southern Fenland. Those of the Ely area have recently been mapped and discussed and one or two minor alterations to Fowler's work were found to be necessary (Seale 1975).

The approximate relationships of the various deposits and erosional phases to the main marine transgressions and human culture and activities are summarised in Table 2.

A section across the West Water old way between Old Halves (TL 384815) and Benwick Mere (TL 349892) would be of interest as it might give a date for its inception. If it showed an erosion channel no deeper than about minus 5 m O.D. this would prove that this portion of the river was post-Neolithic. A large rodham appears to cross Hammond's Eau at right angles north-east of Holwoods Farms (TL 395811) and possibly again to the north (TL 384824), implying that it is older than the old way itself. This rodham would probably be contemporaneous with the Fen Clay, but it would be very unlikely for any watercourse to cross right over a pre-existing deep channel if one was there. Possibly this rodham, the southern portion of which has not yet been traced, represents an ancient course of the Great Ouse. North of this area a very wide rodham, of low relief, crosses West Fen west of March about 1 to 2 km west of the 'old course' of the River Nene (the continuation of the West Water). Though it is

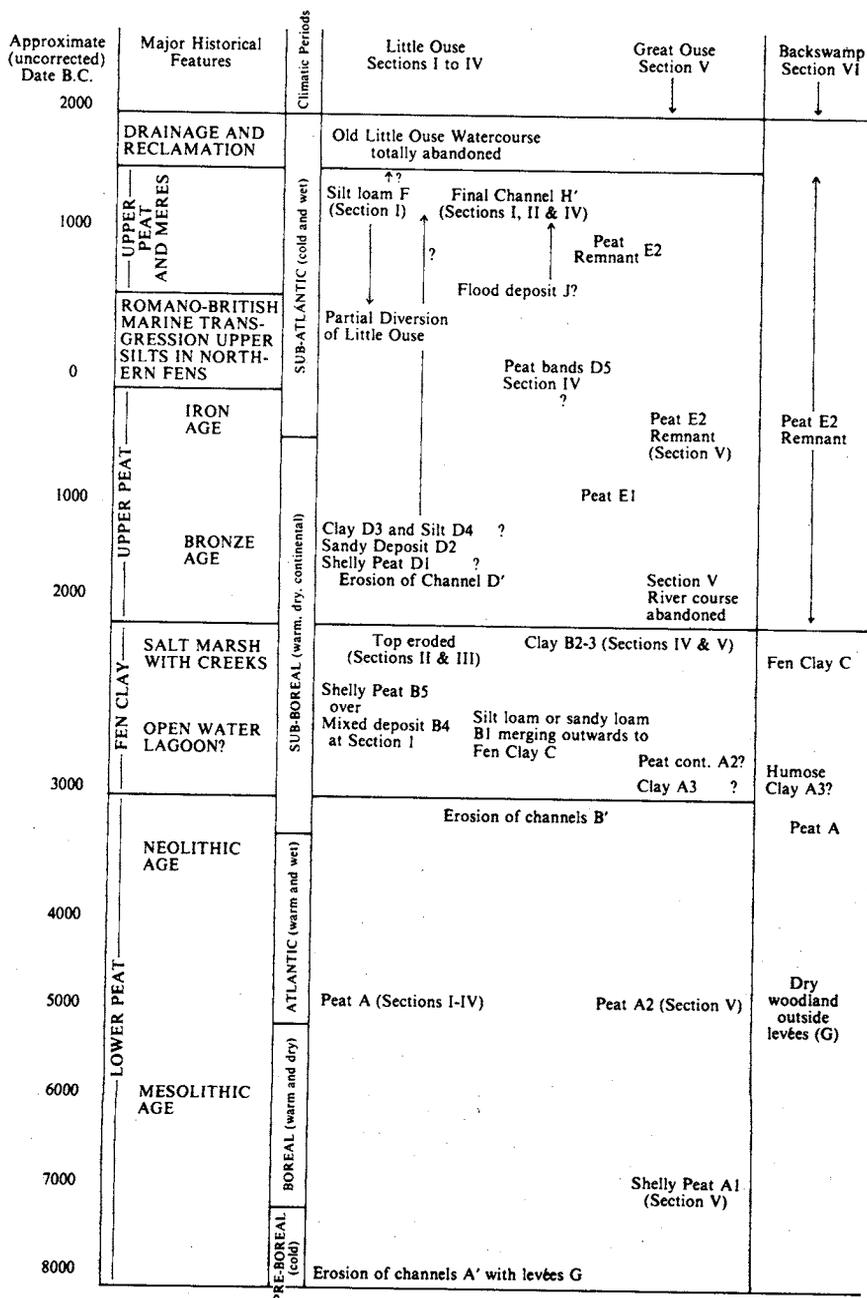


Table 2. Relation between the erosional and depositional features in and near the old courses of the Little and Great Ouse Rivers (modified after Godwin).

wider than the silt deposits of the West Water, it was evidently not noticed by Fowler, presumably because there was more peat in his day. This again was either a very large distributory or the main post-Glacial channel of the river. A Roman canal marked by a moderate-sized rodham runs westwards from the 'Old Nene' towards the island of Coates (TL 385992-335996). It crosses the course of a Roman causeway at an acute angle near Infield's Farm (TL 360994) and appears entirely superimposed on the enormous rodham, which by then probably represented a silted-up channel. A small final channel can be seen on aerial photographs on the eastern convex side of this large rodham north of the March-Peterborough railway.

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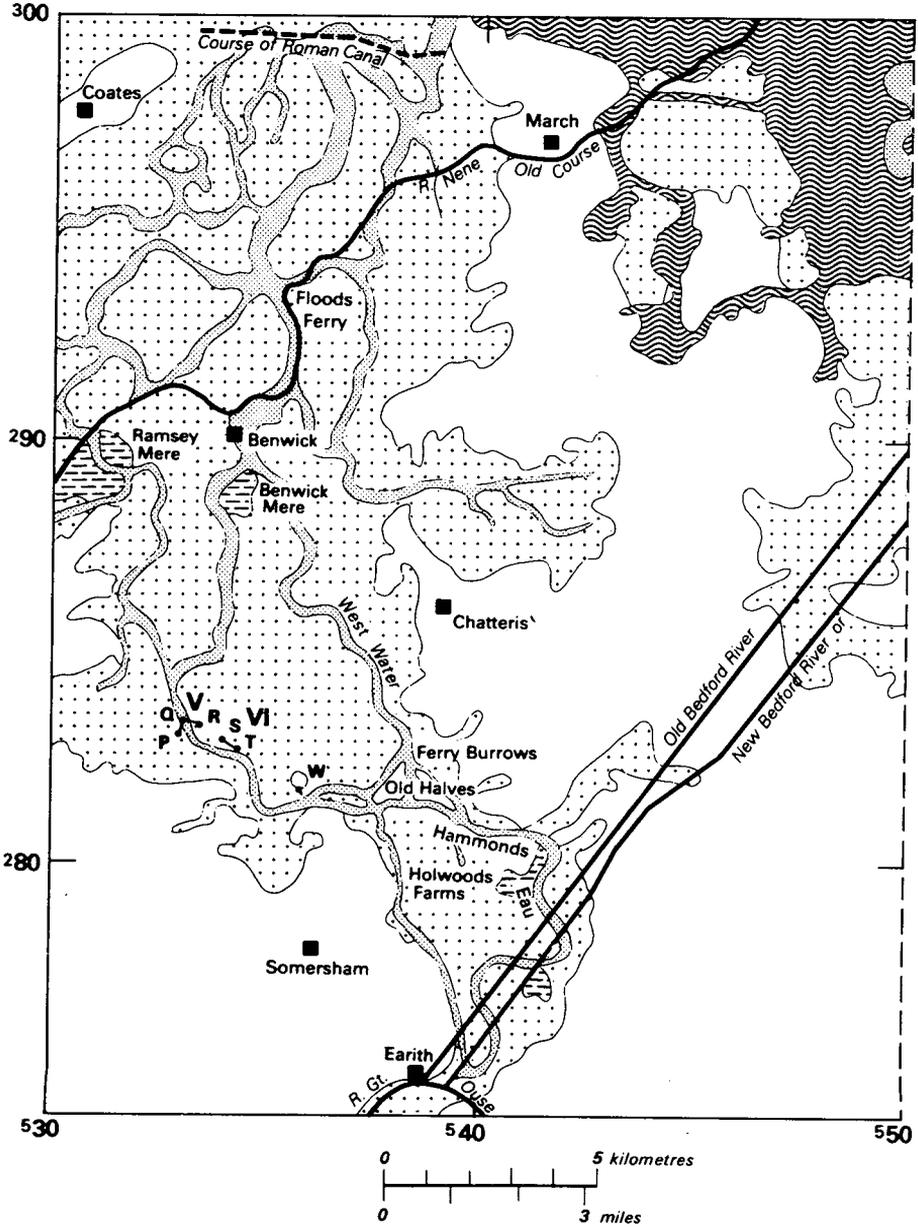


Fig. 1. Post-glacial mineral deposits and principal extinct and existing watercourses around Ely and March, showing positions of sections I to VI and bores W-Z.

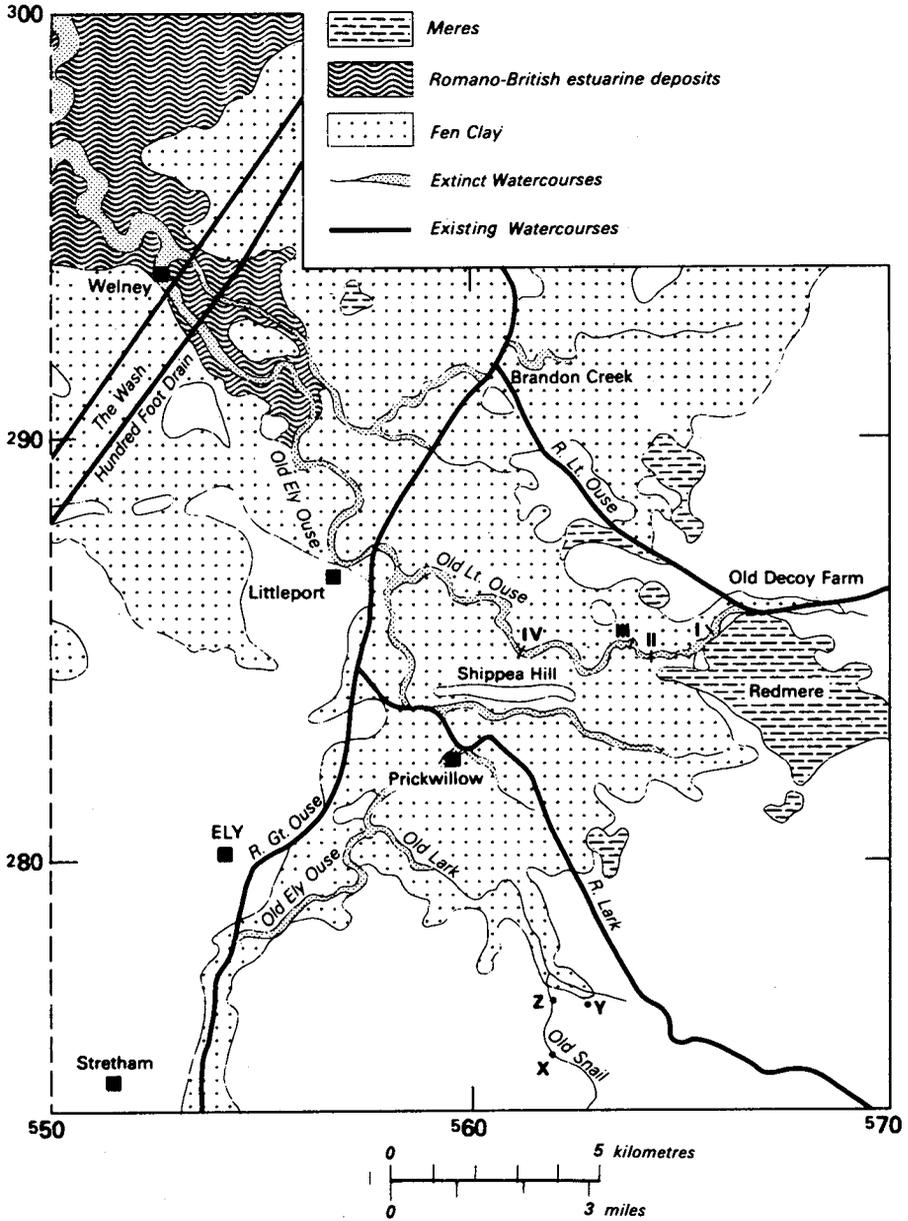


Fig. 1 (cont'd)

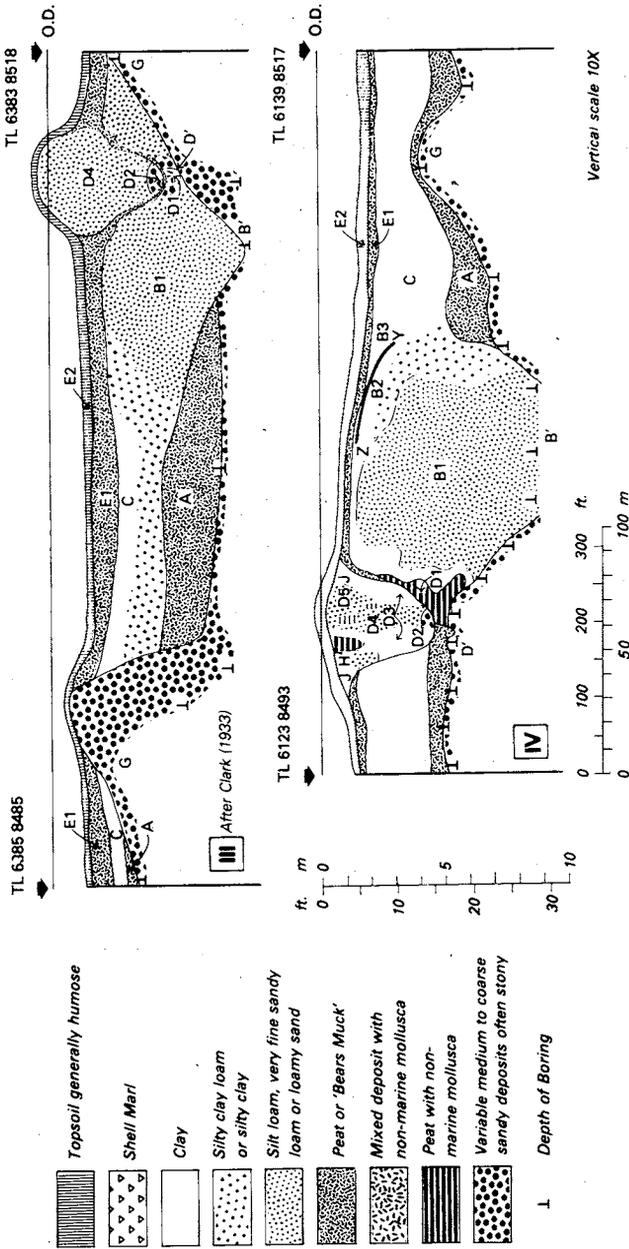


Fig. 2. Sections I to IV across the Little Ouse rotham (for explanation of letters see Table 1, p. 3).

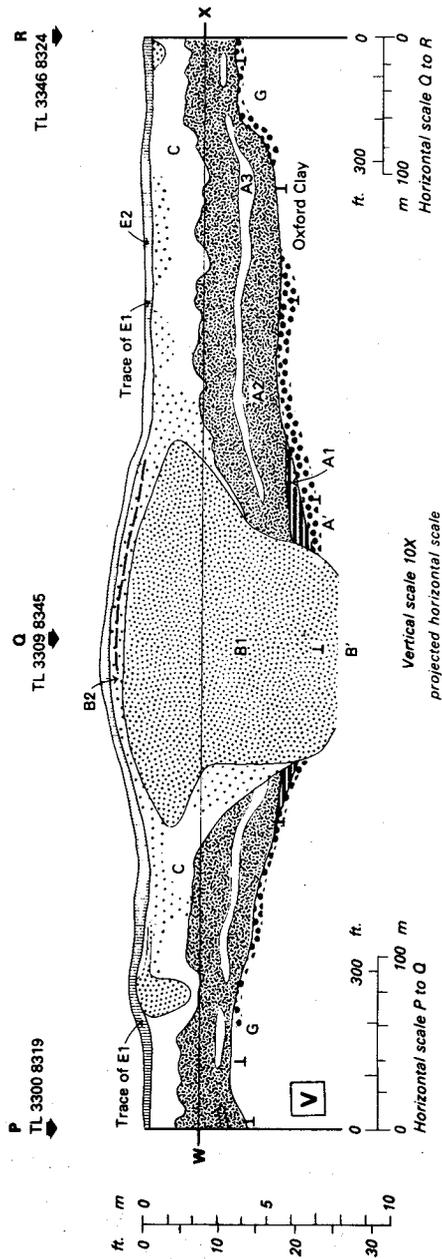


Fig. 3. Section V across large rodham south-east of Ramsey, Cambs., (for explanation see Fig. 2; for positions of P, Q and R see Fig. 1).

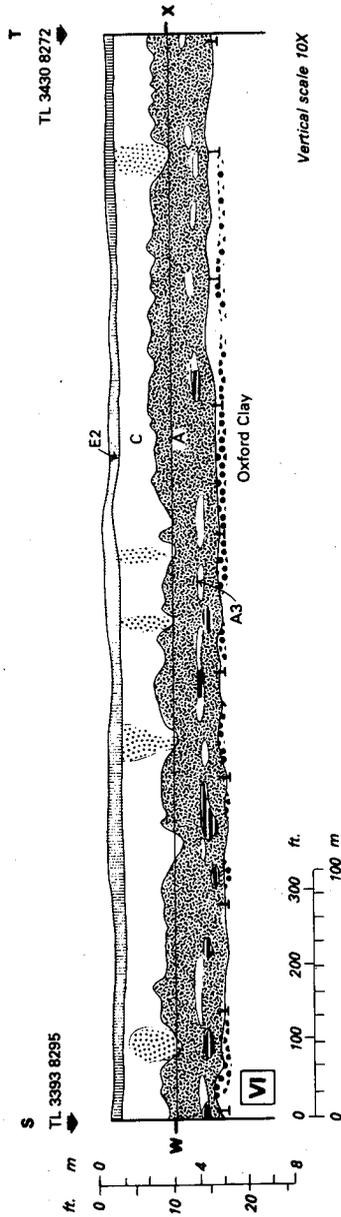


Fig. 4. Section VI of Fenland deposits in Backswamp area south-east of Ramsey, Cambs., (for explanation see Fig. 2; for positions of S and T see Fig. 1).

A SURVEY OF PREHISTORIC SITES NORTH OF CAMBRIDGE

Maisie Taylor

The area chosen for this survey is a block of land approximately 420 sq. km. situated just north of Cambridge (Fig. 1). It covers part of central southern Cambridgeshire with part of West Suffolk. The Haddenham Ridge, which is the most southerly outlier of the Isle of Ely, lies to the north-west. The survey area is the greater part of the land covered by the Soil Survey of Great Britain Sheet 188 (Hodge and Seale 1966). Cambridge, which is included in the Soil Survey's map, is just to the south of the area covered here. The region is quite diverse topographically and one of the main aims of this survey is to look at the occupation of various soil types by various prehistoric groups to see what, if any, pattern emerges.

The relief of the area is quite varied but not, of course, particularly dramatic. The landscape features are shown in an extremely generalised map (Fig. 2). The Upland areas can be divided into three distinct types:

a) The Boulder Clay Plateau: this is an extension of similar country from Suffolk and Essex and barely enters the survey area in the south-east corner.

b) The Chalk Upland: this crosses from the south-west to the north-east and is about 6 miles (10 km.) wide. To the north-east of Newmarket this land merges with an outlier of the Breckland where it becomes sandier. This Upland generally carries the various Calcareous Soils and Brown Earths.

c) The Clay Lowlands: this is almost level but is crossed by a number of ridges at Cottenham, Haddenham, Wicken and Soham. The Haddenham Ridge rises sharply to 100ft., giving a fine view of the Fens. It is considerably higher than any of the other ridges. These ridges show up very well on the 1st. edition Ordnance Survey map of the area, the hatching technique on the old map tending to emphasise the topography (Harley 1970). Most of this area carries various Gley Soils.

The height of the Fenland is generally at, or slightly above sea-level. It is drained by a system of dykes and pumping stations and is maintained as open, level, arable land. The Fenland in the area under consideration consists entirely of peat soils. These are the Black Fens. They are part of the South Bedford Level drainage area and are separated from the rest of the Level by the Haddenham Ridge. The role played by this separating ridge was extremely important in prehistory. At each end of it there is a gap approximately one mile wide. The gap at the eastern end of the ridge now takes the united rivers of the Cam and Great Ouse or Old West River, while the gap to the north-west connects the Old West River with the Middle Bedford Levels and the great Hundred Foot Drain. In fact the original drainage followed a slightly different pattern

from that shown on the modern drainage plan (Fig. 1) but the situation is far less complex than is found in the northern Fens, although the probable ancient courses of the rivers are difficult to plot in some cases.

The rivers marked on Fig. 4 are plotted from historical accounts of the drainage work, from the work of Gordon Fowler (Fowler 1933; 1934), from aerial photographs and from the presence in the soil survey of river flood material (Hodge and Seale 1966). Part of the Old West River is, in fact, artificial, as it crosses the watershed south of Haddenham. Aerial photographs taken to the west and north-west of the survey area show a large roddon which runs north of the Haddenham Ridge and which appears to be the original course of the Ouse (Robert Evans, pers. comm.). Another major diverted stream in the area is the Snail, which once flowed north-east to the River Lark but has now been diverted near Soham, forming Soham Lode and flowing west into the Cam as part of the system for draining Soham Mere. Except for the Snail, all the streams which drain into the eastern side of the Cam rise from springs close to the junction of the Chalk Upland and the Fens. The geology of the area is, in places, deeply buried under the various superficial deposits: fen peat, fen clay, mere deposits and river alluvium. An understanding of these deposits, their deposition, causes and effects is of prime importance in studying the archaeological settlement of the area. There is little to be gained from studying the archaeological material without a grasp of the concept of the rapidly changing landscape in the ancient Fenland.

The superficial deposits and solid formations in the survey area are quite complex in places but the whole area has been surveyed and mapped in detail by the Soil Survey of Great Britain on to a 1: 63360 Ordnance Survey map (Hodge and Seale 1966). This soil map is very complex, too complex in fact for our needs here. Ultimately, however, the soils in this area can be divided into five groups:

- Brown Earth Soils
- Calcareous Soils
- Gley Soils
- Calcareous Immature Soils
- Peats and Skirtlands

These are the major soil groups and they occur in this area in the proportions indicated in Fig. 3 (p. 34).

Brown Earth and Calcareous Soils are generally loamy soils with a higher or lower sand and clay content, but the important factor in loamy soils is that no one particle size predominates. They are, therefore, potentially easily worked and fertile. All these soils are found on slopes or slightly raised ground. The Immature Calcareous soils occur on ground that has been heavily worked for coprolites and reclaimed lake marl. Both of these soils began to form in relatively modern times.

The Gley Soils all have poor drainage. They are often found on level ground at Fen-edges or floodland in the Fens and are both derived from parent material of clay over peat or drift deposits. Other Gley soils are found in undulating country or on gentle slopes.

The Basin Peat Soils in this area are all derived from alkaline fen. This is because the ground water which fed the Fens was from the Chalk Uplands. In general the ground surface of the peat soils is presently around sea-level. When it was first drained it was much higher. The earlier phases in the lowering of the height of the peat were probably due to compaction as it dried out, with losses through peat cutting and the burning back of vegetation during early cultivation (Godwin and Vishnu-Mittre 1975; Godwin 1978; Hodge and Seale 1966). Later on, and indeed into modern times, most of the wastage has been due to oxidation of the organic material in the soil. There are no reliable measurements of the amount of peat shrinkage in the survey area but one source from nearby has produced figures. The Holme Fen Post near Whittlesey on the western edge of the Fens was driven through the peat into the underlying clay by a local landowner in the nineteenth century. Godwin quoted certain measurements taken at the post (Godwin and Vishnu-Mittre 1975). These measurements suggest that between 1848 and 1957 the thickness of the peat decreased from 7.3 metres (24 ft.) to 3.3 metres (10 ft.).

The Skirtlands vary a great deal in their characteristics as they represent the transition between various upland soils and the Basin Peats. In some places they have been heavily ploughed and, especially where the peat layer was not deep originally, oxidation of the peat has meant that the organic material has now largely disappeared from these soils. This group of soils is steadily expanding in area as the shallower Basin Peats gradually waste because of this oxidation. The drainage of the Basin Peats and Skirtlands is effected by a system of ditches, drains and pumps.

For the purpose of defining the Ancient Wetlands I have taken all the soils which, without artificial drainage techniques, would remain waterlogged for at least a large part of the year. It seems safe enough to assume that this tendency towards waterlogging is an ancient pattern. The bulk of the soils plotted are lake marls, alluvium or originally peat. This includes the Gley Soils, the Calcareous Immature Soils, the Skirtlands and the Basin Peats. The pattern that appears when these 'wet' soils are plotted on to the map of the survey area is shown in Fig. 4. It is also possible to locate the extent of the major Fen meres from the distribution of Lake Marls and these too are figured on the map. The meres were shallow lakes in the peat, perhaps two or three feet deep or less in dry summers. The large meres marked on Fig. 4 appear to date from the Iron Age or Late Bronze Age (Godwin 1939), but the pattern of the shallow open water and peat is much older. The meres marked on the map are showing, in effect, the last areas of open water to be drained rather than the full extent of open water in the Fens at any one time in prehistory. All the meres in the Fens have now been drained.

The Prehistoric Material

Nearly 200 finds spots and sites ranging from the Mesolithic to the Iron Age were uncovered by searching through a variety of publications and journals as well as the Sites-and-Monuments Record at Cambridge. Not all of these sites were used in the survey. Some had to be rejected because the exact location of the finds spots could not

be ascertained. The sites were classified according to the nature of the finds, and the soil type for the location identified. The types of sites were then plotted against the major soil groups as defined by the soil survey (Fig. 5). The Late Neolithic and Early Bronze Age are considered together because the break between them is not always easily distinguished and a great many sites span the transition. Recorded on the Middle Bronze Age diagram are a number of tumuli and ring ditches (17 sites) that either have not produced any dating material or have not been examined. They are included with the Middle Bronze Age material for convenience and it is not intended to imply that these sites should be considered as Middle Bronze Age in date. The sites are considered under certain categories and these are defined below.

IF	Isolated Find
MF	Multiple Find
Scatt	Finds Scatter: more than 10 finds, generally including flint-working debris, with pottery in later periods
Tum	Tumulus or ring ditch (Multiple Tumuli – more than one within a $\frac{3}{4}$ km. square)
Hab	Habitation Site: defined as habitation by excavation or a Finds Scatter found by field walking to contain a variety of domestic debris
Inhum	Inhumation, not in tumulus
Crem	Cremation, not in tumulus
Ho	Hoard
Fo	Foundry, bronze working debris
Causeway	Wooden trackway across Fenland

The Mesolithic Material

Locally in the survey area it is quite difficult to form a picture of the pre-peat landscape but it is important to do so as this would have been the landscape occupied by Mesolithic man. Underlying the Peat Basin are clays and extensive river gravels. These represent the land surface upon which the Mesolithic people would have operated. It is into this mineral material that the original vegetation sank its roots. Indeed, the stumps of trees, firmly rooted in this material have been found in the Fens beneath the Lower Peat (Godwin and Clifford 1938 p. 381; Godwin 1940 p. 257). Often these trees are enormous when they are found. Godwin quotes an example (Godwin 1940 p. 274) of an oak trunk 75ft. (23 metres) long and a yew stool with a girth of 14.5ft. (4.5 metres) in Isleham Fen. This underlying mineral material was not flat: another concept which is difficult to absorb when one looks at the expanse of the modern Fens. Of course, banks and ridges are now appearing in the Fens as the peat shrinks and the underlying material is ploughed up. These would have been part of the undulating countryside originally, becoming islands during the wet phases. The picture, then, is of gently undulating countryside in the present Fen Basin, covered with substantial forests, as there would also have been on the Uplands. During the Mesolithic period

these forests would have developed from birch and pine woods with hazel through to a full mixed oak forest with oak, elm, lime and alder. By the end of the period, when peat growth was well under way, presumably triggered off by a generally rising water table linked with a generally rising sea-level, these well developed forests would have been suffering in the wetter areas. After a time, the Fen Basin would have been thoroughly inhospitable, choked with dead and dying trees standing and lying in the fast growing peat whilst, on higher ground, the normal vegetational development continued. It is interesting to note that the bulk of the sites in the Mesolithic period are in the Fen Basin or on the Skirtlands (Fig. 5). Many of the remaining sites are not very far from the Fen-edge. Most of the Mesolithic finds are of tranchet axes or maceheads. These are the sort of finds, rather than fine flint work, which are likely to be found casually. Obviously this land was not covered by peat at the beginning of the period and even with the eustatic rises in sea-level that continued throughout, it probably presented an attractive habitat until choked by peat growth. It is interesting to speculate about the quantity of Mesolithic material which may still exist, especially under the deeper peat deposits, in the Fen Basin.

Other than the large quantity of material which occurs in the peats and skirtlands the other soil types appear to be represented fairly evenly. In fact all the sites on these other soil types are still very close to the Fen Basin or the feeder streams. Mesolithic activity seems concentrated in the vicinity of the Wetlands.

The Early Neolithic Material

It is generally accepted that conditions in the Fens were very wet during the Early Neolithic. Evidence for the start of peat formation in the river channel at Peacock's Farm dates from this period (Renfrew 1974 p. 130; Willis 1961 p. 374). Soon after the start of the period there began the deposition of the Fen Clay. Generally speaking, the area under consideration was not greatly affected except for some relatively thin tongues of Fen Clay which penetrate into the northern part of the area. There must have been a high water table north of the Isle of Ely while this clay was being laid down, so it is likely that it was also wetter to the south of the Isle.

Bearing in mind the complexities of the water table question during the Early Neolithic it is quite difficult to interpret the information presented by the survey. Of the 23 sites listed, 21 represent isolated or multiple finds and the bulk of these are axes. Of the two other sites, one is a long barrow about which little is known and the other is a Fen island, excavated by Leaf more than forty years ago (Leaf 1935). It does seem strange on the face of it that so many of the Early Neolithic finds should have come from the Fen Basin, if, as suggested above, the area was very wet at this time. The fact that so many of the axes were found close to streams and rivers may suggest that the Fens were not impassable by water.

Obviously there was some kind of activity in the area during this period and it seems fruitless to reconstruct too elaborate a speculation based almost entirely on a haphazard collection of axes. The absence of more concrete evidence might suggest that this area was on the fringe of whatever activity there was. A final point must be

that the low level of finds and sites on the calcareous soils seems extraordinary remembering the dense occupation of these kinds of soils in other parts of the country. Indeed, the 'scatter' which is marked in the calcareous soils column (Fig. 5) is not on the main body of this soil type but is situated on an island of drift material in the Fen. The finds on the brown earths are remarkably scattered and cannot be said to suggest any particular pattern of activity.

The Late Neolithic and Early Bronze Age Material

The Upper Peat is deposited on top of the Fen Clay in those areas where the Fen Clay occurs. The growth of the Upper Peat is generally accepted to have spanned this period of the Late Neolithic and Early Bronze Age (Clark 1938; Clark and Godwin 1962). There are many problems associated with the study of the Upper Peat because it has been greatly affected by drainage and has often deteriorated to a considerable depth, often having disappeared altogether (Clark and Godwin 1938 p. 334). It is generally suggested that this Upper Peat was, at times, quite dry and subjected to weathering in some places during the Bronze Age. Certainly there was a considerable quantity of Bronze Age remains in the Fens (Fox 1923). The greatest proportion of Bronze Age finds, at least in the survey area, are Early, rather than Late or Middle Bronze Age. The classic type of occupation site in the Fens at this period are the small settlements on sand islands (Clark and Godwin 1962; Leaf 1935; Martin 1977 and others.) On the western edge of the Fens extensive Bronze Age occupation is becoming apparent (Pryor 1976) and new sites are appearing on the edges of the silt fens in South Lincolnshire (Chowne 1978). These sites consist of systems of fields or enclosures and droveways leading out onto the Fen. None of these types of sites has been found in the survey area up to date.

Of the three habitation sites and fourteen finds scatters found for this period, only one is more than 2 km. from the Fen-edge and this site is quite closely associated with a large barrow cemetery. Of the other sites outside the Wetlands area, none is more than $\frac{1}{4}$ km. from the edge as defined. Of the sites within the Wetlands area, one is on a Fen island and except for two, all the others are less than 1 km. into the Fens. This obviously suggests a great deal of activity on the eastern edge of the Fens. All the tumuli and ring ditches on the brown earths and calcareous soils are on the rising ground to the south-east of the Fen. These barrows on the higher ground virtually follow the spring line. None of them is more than 2 km. from one of the main waterways that serve the area and all of them are from 5-10 km. from one of the sites in the Fen. This apparent activity on the eastern edge of the Fen in this area contrasts with the almost total absence of finds from the western side where the gley soils are found. It may be of significance that these soils are usually too heavy to show sensitive soil changes that can be picked up by aerial photography (Taylor 1978).

The pattern that appears in this period strongly supports the idea of a pastoral way of life. Even if the Fen were drier and warmer than before or after this period (Godwin 1940 p. 284), it would still not necessarily present a hospitable landscape in the winter. If, as Godwin suggests (Godwin 1940 p. 284), the climate was more continental, then

the Fens would have made a very unwelcoming home. Even today the icy north-easterly winds tear across the Fens in winter. Perhaps the north-easterly winds have something to do with the fact that there was no apparent utilisation of the north-east facing slopes on the Fen-edge. The difficulties of living in the Fens in winter must be balanced against the lush vegetation in summer and the diversity of natural resources presented by the rivers, woodland, open water and cleared countryside. The idea of transhumance into the Fens for summer grazing is well established elsewhere (Pryor 1976).

The Middle Bronze Age Material

The trends which began to appear in the Early Bronze Age all continue in the Middle Bronze Age. This also appears to hold true for the vegetational and climatic tendencies (Godwin 1956 p. 52) and for the archaeology (Pryor 1976 pp. 41-2). Certainly the peat seems to have been dry enough to allow movement over it in the summer months, although it is interesting that the gleys appear to have been abandoned (Fig. 5). Presumably they remained an unattractive prospect, perhaps even more so when the Fens were dry and open for exploitation. It is interesting that the calcareous soils are not represented at this period. As 18 of the 21 sites in the Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age were on the thinner Rendzina soils it is possible that these soils were already showing signs of exhaustion, or that soil erosion has been such that the sites have disappeared or have been redeposited as hill wash. The tumuli and ring ditches marked on the diagram as being Middle Bronze Age are, in fact, re-used Early Bronze Age ones. One of the habitation sites is also of Early Bronze Age date but continued in use into the Middle Bronze Age.

The Undated Ring Ditches and Tumuli

The distribution of these undated ring ditches and tumuli is not dissimilar to that of the Early Bronze Age. The difference is that six of these tumuli and ring ditches occur on the Peats and Skirtlands where there were none in the earlier period. Most of these features were located through aerial photography. The problem is that with so few of them having been investigated it is quite possible that many of them are not the ring ditches of tumuli but could have been caused by a variety of factors at any period in history or prehistory. The fact that the general pattern of their distribution echoes quite closely that of the Early Bronze Age ring ditches suggests that many of them may indeed date from that period. They cannot be included in the main considerations, however, because of the uncertainty that surrounds them.

The Late Bronze Age Material

Compared with the preceding periods, the Bronze Age is relatively short. It is the period which marks the important transition from stone to metal technology, however, and many of the developments which took place during this time are not fully understood. Partly because of this, it is a period which is currently attracting much interest and new work (Burgess and Miket 1976 Preface). A noticeable similarity

of Late Bronze Age distribution patterns to those of the earlier Bronze Age occurs in that there is a concentration of activity on the Fen-edge and along the river valleys. There is a greater variety of types both of sites and finds, in proportion to the total number of sites (9 types of finds/32 sites).

Although Fig. 5 would suggest heavy occupation of the calcareous soils in this period, the diagram is distorted because all the tumuli in that column are situated in one group and it is not clear whether all the tumuli were reutilised in the Late Bronze Age. The need for a causeway in the north between Fordy and Little Thetford (Lethbridge 1935) suggests a great deal of movement within the area. Presumably this desire for movement was being thwarted by deteriorating conditions in the Fen Basin (Godwin 1956 p. 52). The presence of founder's hoards deep in the Fen Basin (the Wicken Fen hoard must have been about 3 km. from 'solid' ground when it was buried, for example) suggests that conditions at least in parts of the Fens cannot have been too bad.

The Iron Age Material

There is evidence over much of the Fens for widespread flooding during and after the Iron Age and conditions were certainly deteriorating during this period (Bromwich 1970; Churchill 1970; Godwin 1940; Godwin and Vishnu-Mittre 1975; Jelgersma 1966; Piggott 1972; Willis 1977). It is certainly true that no site or finds for either the Early or Late Iron Age has been found more than 1 km. inside the Wetlands area which suggests that the deepest parts of the Fen were not particularly hospitable. It is also true that no sites are further than 1 km. outside the Wetlands area. Perhaps the other two noticeable points about the Iron Age distribution are the increased number of sites on the western edge of the Fen Basin and the total absence of sites from the chalk uplands in the south-eastern corner.

With a total of thirteen sites in the area for the whole of the Iron Age it is difficult to draw any sweeping conclusions, especially as only four of these sites have ever been excavated or closely examined. There does appear to be a definite move out of the Wetlands. All the activity seems to be concentrated in a narrow band around the Fen-edge.

DISCUSSION

I feel that a great many of the gaps in the picture presented in this survey are due to limited exploration, rather than the real absence of prehistoric activity. If and when the gaps are filled or found to be genuine, the picture may look totally different. It is difficult to know how valid an assessment of a period might be when it is based on a few, often casual, finds in a relatively small area. One enthusiastic farmer, finding and handing in a good selection of material will distort the picture over several periods for instance. Parts of the survey area have never been thoroughly investigated. Obviously a certain amount of field walking and exploration has gone on at various times.

Unfortunately this work has been done at different times, by different people, using different criteria; the same variables apply to the recording of the work after it has been completed.

It will be of great interest to see how the work of David Hall in this area modifies the picture. The basis of this survey was completed before he had processed his first year's work and so none of the new material that has been uncovered by him has been included. Even in this small survey, however, the need for systematic work by people using comparable criteria and standards is obvious. So much of the early work that was done, although excellent for its time, was patchy. The unknown variables mean that we have no way of assessing the accuracy of the total picture that is presented to us by the early field workers.

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Many people have contributed to the formation of my ideas during the compilation of this survey, generally in the course of conversation, and it would be impossible to acknowledge everyone. However, David Cranstone made many helpful comments. Martin Bell at the Institute of Archaeology in London drew my attention to several useful references and, through his interest, helped formulate many of my ideas. Other than help from various members of staff at the Institute, I have received a great deal of help and encouragement from Alison Taylor and David Hall at the County Planning Office in Cambridge. Dr Robert Evans at the Soil Survey in Cambridge has provided enthusiasm, interest and access to the Soil Survey's collection of aerial photographs. Francis Pryor has allowed his brains to be picked many times and has generously lent me many books.

In general I would like to thank anyone who has listened to my ramblings on this subject and tried to make helpful remarks, and also comment upon the generosity of everyone who gave me access to unpublished material and material in the course of preparation for publication.

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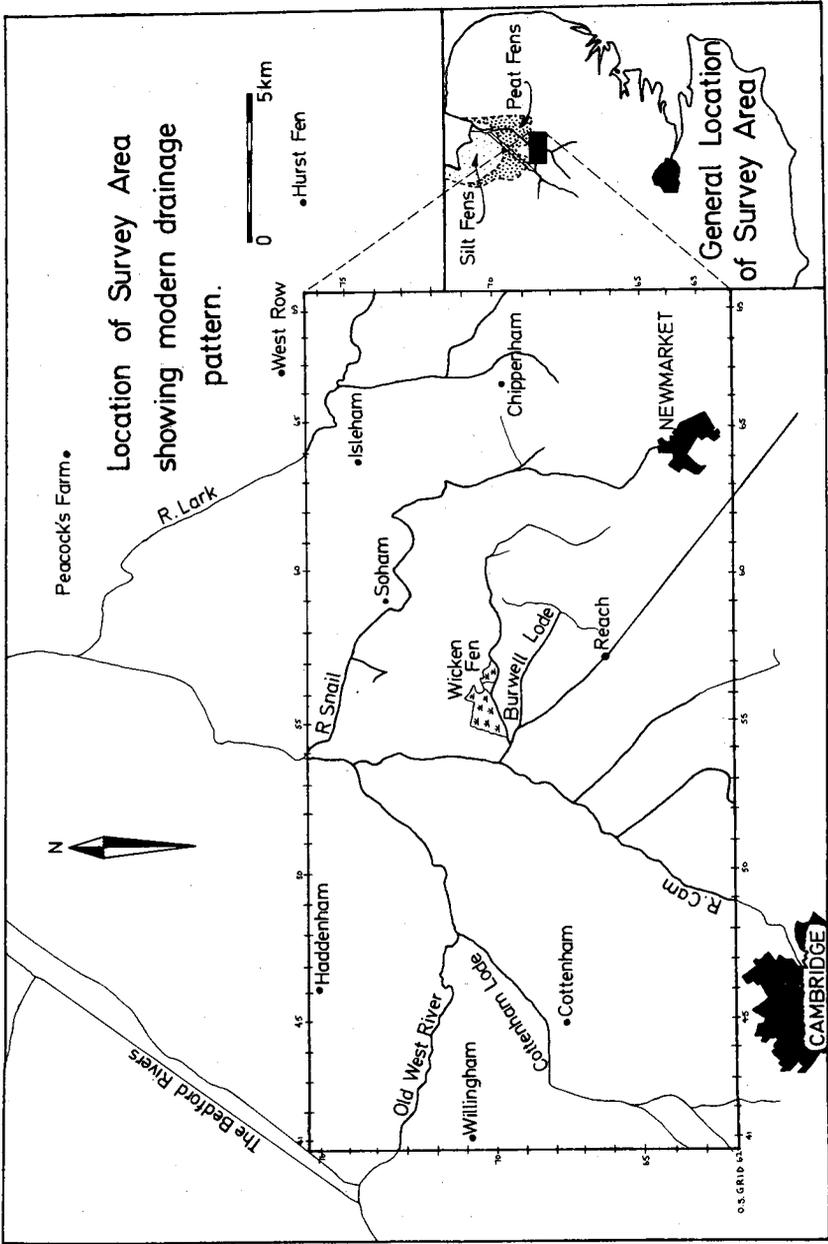


Fig. 1. Location of survey area showing modern drainage pattern

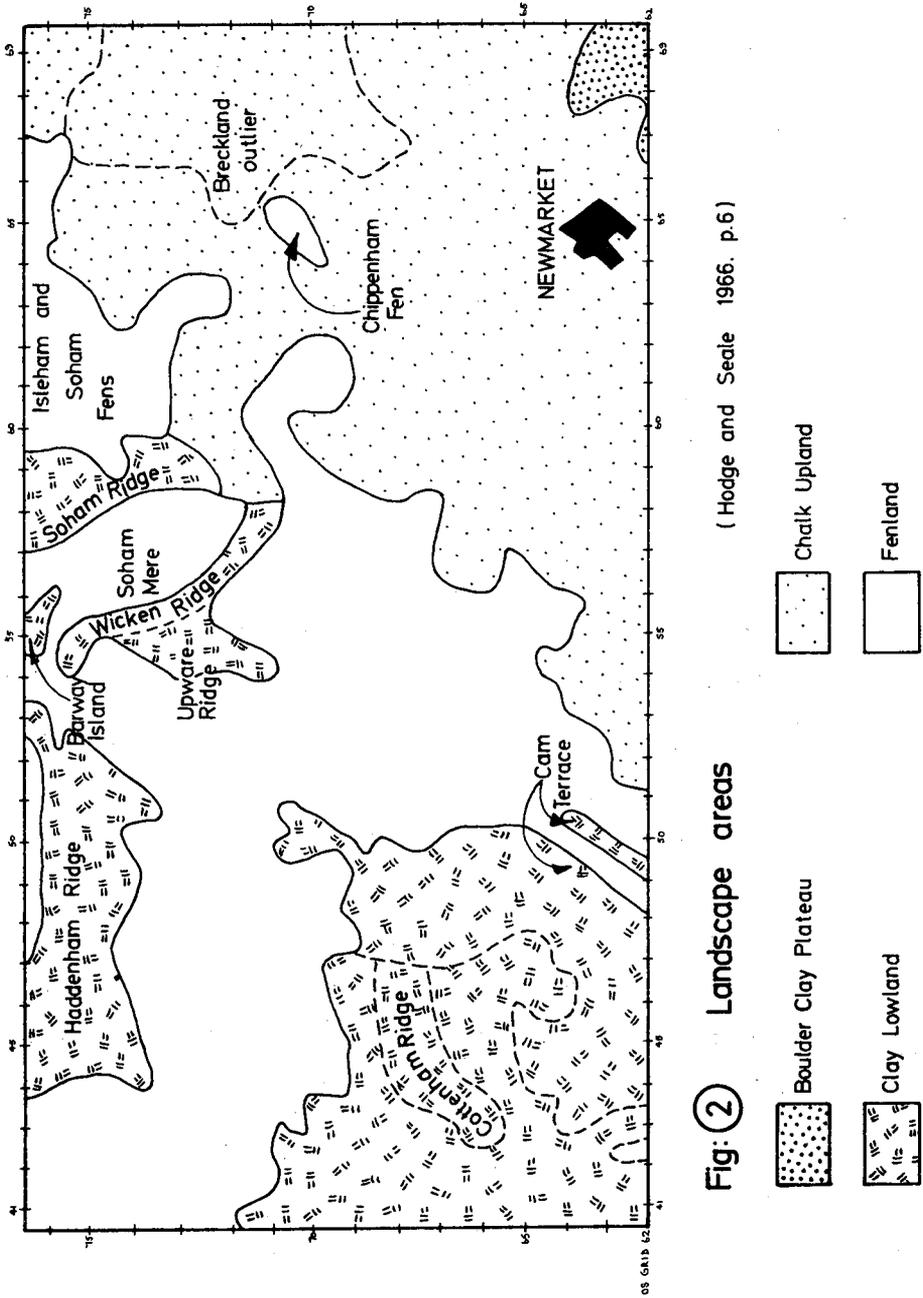


Fig. 2. Landscape areas

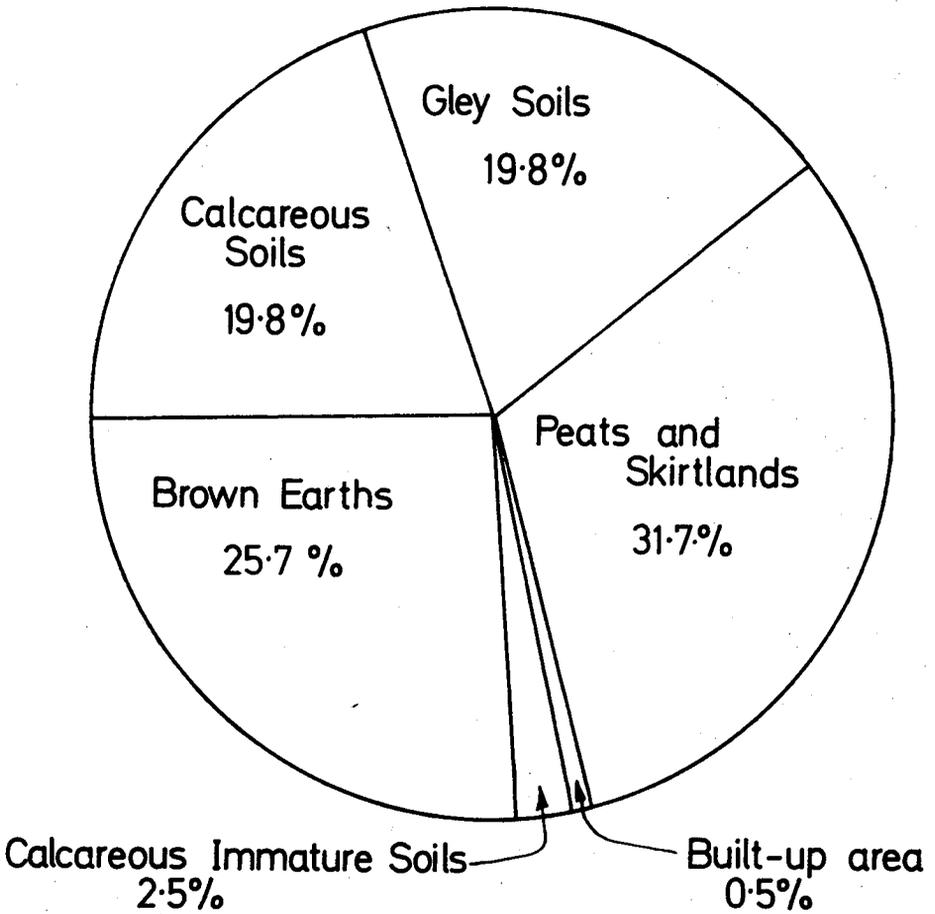


Fig. 3. Relative proportions of major soil groups

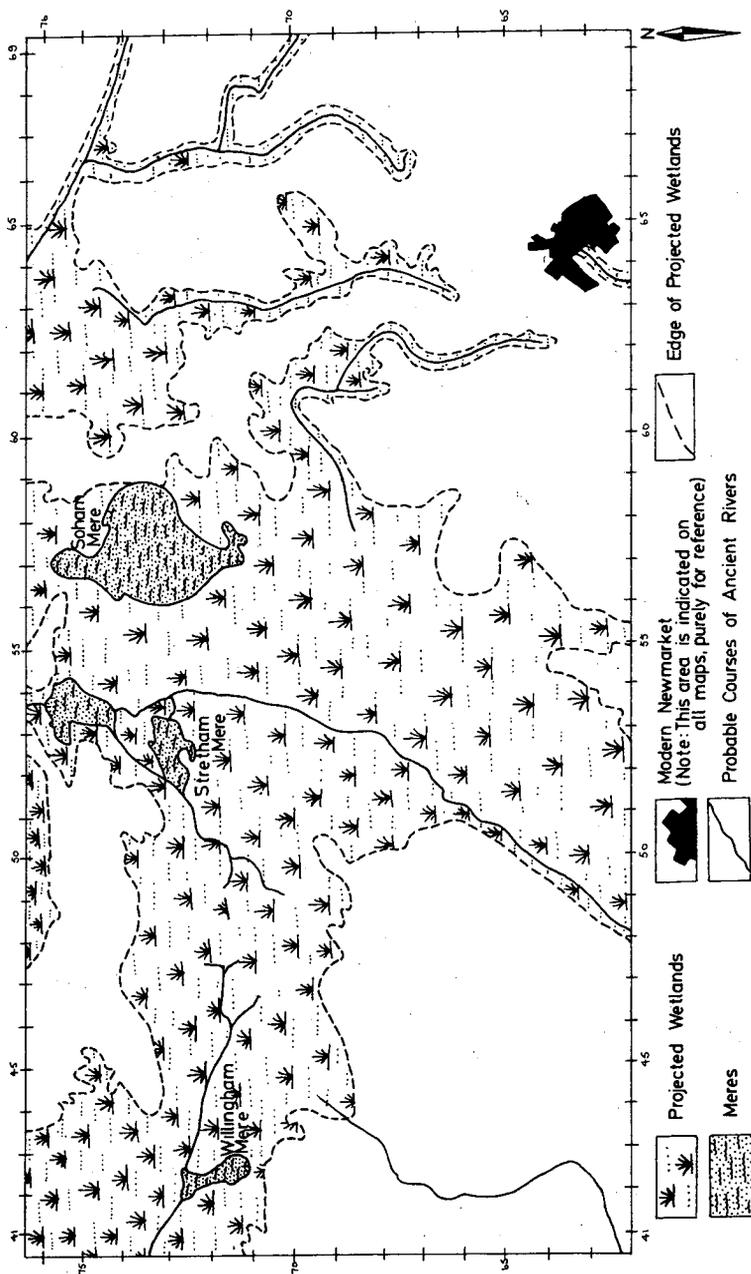
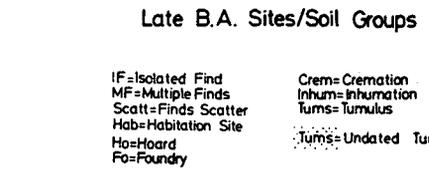
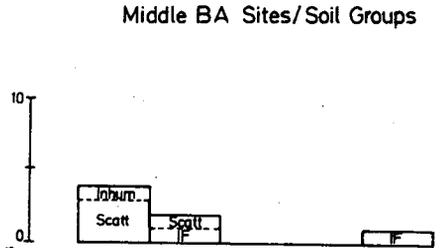
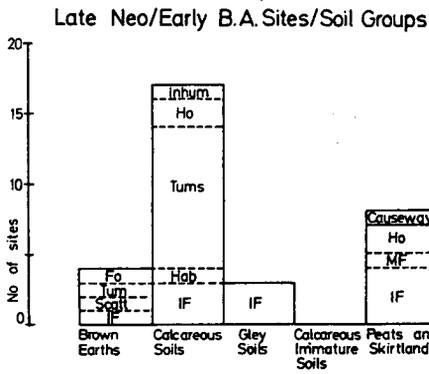
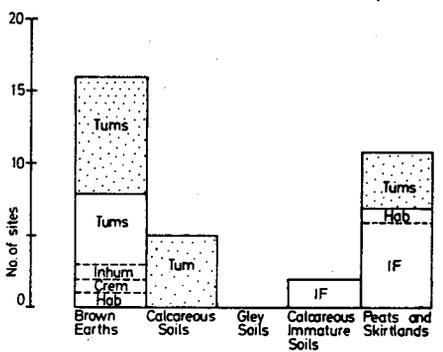
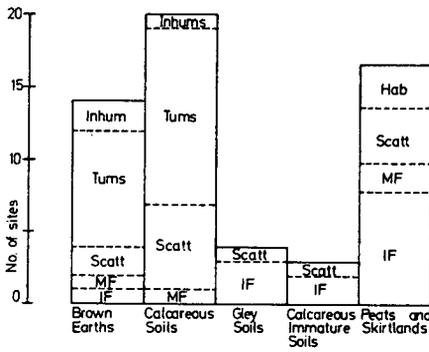
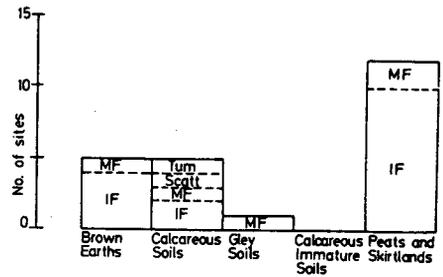
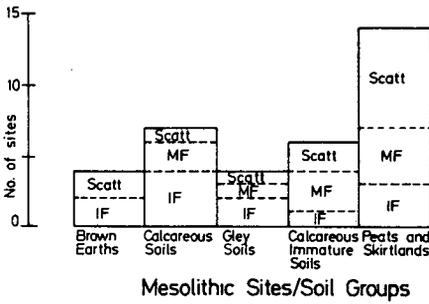


Fig. 4. The ancient wetlands



IF=Isolated Find
 MF=Multiple Finds
 Scatt=Finds Scatter
 Hab=Habitation Site
 Ho=Hoard
 Fo=Foundry
 Crem=Cremation
 Inhum=Inhumation
 Tums=Tumulus
 Tums=Undated Tumuli

Fig. 5. Prehistoric sites/ major soil groups

A LATE BRONZE AGE SOCKETED AXE
WITH PART OF ITS WOODEN HAFT,
FROM FEN DRAYTON, CAMBRIDGESHIRE

S. V. E. Heal

The socketed and looped bronze axehead (Pl. 1)* is of a recognized Late Bronze Age type: Evans illustrates one of parallel form and decoration from Bottisham Lode, Cambridgeshire. (Evans, 1881, p. 123, Fig. 135.) It is in a very good state of preservation apart from some surface accretion from the gravel in which it was found, and since – wisely – no attempt has been made to “clean” it, it is also uncontaminated; the haft fragment remains in place.

The axehead is 12.6 cm in length, the blade edge 5.7 cm wide and 6 cm along the cutting edge. The socket measures 4.5 cm by 5.2 cm externally and 3.2 cm by 3.6 cm internally. The loop emerges immediately below the moulding of the mouth, the orifice being 1.3 cm by 0.5 cm and the loop itself 1.4 cm wide and .2-.3 cm thick. The decoration is of three ribs running vertically for 7 cm down the faces with two rows of pellets – one terminal and the other 1.3 cm from the lower end of the ribs, the terminal row appears on ribs at the angles of the faces.

The wood is very dehydrated and split, but firmly fixed due to its initial tight fit and subsequent corrosion of the metal. It is not possible to remove the haft stub intact; in its present state it is unlikely that working details could be interpreted if it were possible to see the whole. It can however be determined that the haft was a round stem, and a small sample was rehydrated and identified as oak (*Quercus* sp.)

The use of roundwood suggests that the haft was fashioned from a naturally forked or bent growth, a piece bent with the aid of steam or possibly a limb tied down to grow to the required angle. The stub to fit in the socket could be worked to the required dimensions by the removal of bark and sapwood from the shorter arm of the crook; the handle being formed from the longer arm. Plate 2 shows an example of this method of hafting. There are several instances of axe hafts of oak from prehistoric contexts (Coles, Heal and Orme, 1978); it is a suitably strong and shock-resistant wood for the purpose. Hafts of other woods are also known, including ash (*Fraxinus*) which is perhaps the most suitable.

*Found by A. H. Lloyd-Dunn in a gravel pit c. TL 335703. I am grateful to Miss M. Cra'ster for drawing this object to my attention and to Dr G. Morgan for confirming the wood identification. The axe (Acc. No. 78.49) is in the finder's possession.

It is probable that a retaining thong or cord (of hide or vegetable fibre for example) was passed through the loop and attached to the handle, though no trace of this remains. The main function of such a device would have been to retain the head should it work loose from the haft or be detached by a false blow, rather than primarily to secure the head to the haft. The fit of the stub and active use should be security enough initially. In this case it seems that the haft and (putative) retainer failed, the fracture at the mouth of the socket allowing the stub to break off taking the axehead with it.

The condition of the axe blade suggests that it was not much used: there is little edge wear or sign of resharpening. It seems likely that it was not recovered or re-hafted after the accident, but permanently lost. The exact stratigraphy of the find being uncertain it is not possible to say whether the loss occurred in vegetation, disturbed soil or water, but it must subsequently have been waterlogged, allowing the preservation of the wood. It is of course conceivable that it was deposited or discarded on purpose, though the condition of the blade offers no practical grounds for such disposal. The presence of the broken haft suggests that it was used, however briefly, prior to deposition.

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Pl. 1. The Fen Drayton axe showing the haft remains. (Photo G. Owen)



Pl. 2. Bronze socketed axe from Kew Bridge, showing method of hafting. (Photo G. Owen. Reproduced from *Arch.J.*, 86, Pl. IXb, by permission of The Royal Archaeological Institute.)

SOME ROMAN MIRRORS AT CAMBRIDGE

G. Lloyd-Morgan

Among the collections of the Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology at Cambridge are five Roman mirrors. The first, a damaged rectangular mirror from Malton has been on public display for some time. The other four came to light recently among other classical mirrors, during reorganisation. Although this group is small compared to the numbers found in some other collections in this country, it represents most of the basic forms of metal mirrors that were produced during the first three centuries of the Roman Empire.

The rectangular mirror, measuring 12.9 x 9.1 cm., found at Malton in 1913 and formerly part of the Evans collection, is one of the simplest forms of mirror, which has been found in virtually every province of the Empire and outside the *limes*. Like most mirrors it was made of a brittle high-percentage tin bronze which gives a clean fracture when it breaks. To avoid damage, these mirrors were usually encased in a frame or box of wood which was probably attractively carved and decorated. A large portion of such a frame was found with an incomplete rectangular mirror during rescue excavations at St. Lawrence Road, Towcester, and measured roughly 12 x 11 cm., about 1½ cm. larger in each direction than the mirror, and was about 0.5 cm. thick. Even less common is the report of traces of a leather case found on one of the mirrors from a grave in the St. Pancras cemetery, Chichester in the 1960's.¹ Well over 40 rectangular mirrors have now been found in this country in varying states of completeness. So far the Malton mirror is Cambridgeshire's only piece. It was probably made during the first century A.D., though it could have been in circulation as a family treasure for many years before being lost.

The four new mirrors in the collection of the Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology are numbered Z.23216 a/d and are unprovenanced. They are all of continental manufacture, and although some would not be out of place on a Romano-British site, they are more likely to have been found elsewhere.

The small mirror disc (Z.23216.a), diameter 8.9 cm., with a decorative border of holes around the edge is, like the rectangular mirror, one of the more commonly found types. The edge, however, is not infrequently found damaged, and in many cases the handle which had been soldered on at the point where the holes cease, may have been lost. There is a small, though somewhat damaged, series from the cemeteries at Colchester. Two from the Pollexfen collection are now in the British Museum, the other three in the Colchester and Essex Museum. One of the earliest recorded pieces from this country, now in Norwich Castle Museum (no. 717.76.94), was found at Caistor by Norwich in 1837 and exhibited by Robert Fitch at the Archaeological

Institute on May 1st 1857.² It is a little larger than the piece now in the Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology and has a diameter of 9.4 cm. The latter is virtually complete apart from the loss of a little of the edge and its handle. It still has traces of the silvering or tinning which was used to give the finished mirror a good reflecting surface. Hand mirrors of this type appear to have been mainly produced in Northern Italy in imitation of the large ornate silver prototypes such as have been found in Campania.³ Some smaller, less well balanced pieces may have been made elsewhere, copying these Italian imports, but so far this is no more than an hypothesis. Since the Campania pieces appear to have been made during the last years of the first century B.C. or early first century A.D., the smaller silvered bronze pieces were probably produced fairly soon afterwards, and have been found in graves in the northern provinces from the time of Claudius onwards.⁴ There is no evidence to suggest just when they ceased to be manufactured.

The large fragment of mirror disc with a serrated or radiate edge (Z.23216.b), which would have had a diameter of 14.8 cm. maximum, is a much rarer find. Only 48 have so far been recorded and none have been found in Britain. The greatest concentration, some 35, has been found in Italy, spreading into Provence, up to Carnuntum, and down the Rhine valley. A couple of examples have been found outside the *limes*, the first in one of the princely graves at Lübsow,⁵ the other, a fragment, in the Viking settlement at Paviken,⁶ which could well have been plunder from a raid on a similar early tomb. With so few examples, most of them without properly recorded contexts, it is not possible to date these mirrors accurately except by comparison with the more elaborate ones from Pompeii and Herculaneum,³ which, like the mirrors in the previous group, seem to have been made from some time during the early years of the first century A.D.⁷ Each mirror is a little different from the rest, and it seems likely that a plain disc was first cast and turned and then the border of decorative rays cut out as either taste or inclination led. The difficulties of handling the rather brittle metal and the greater length of time needed to produce these rays, rather than the simpler effects produced by drilling a border of holes, or hatching the edge of the disc, probably led fairly quickly to the discontinuation of this type of decoration. Since no mirrors of this type have been found in Britain, it could well be that they had long gone out of production before the Claudian invasion had started, even though some examples were still being used by families in the Rhineland and elsewhere until the end of the century.

The most complete of the Cambridge mirrors is a small piece some 9.3 cm. in diameter (Z.23216.c), which was protected by a slightly larger lid, diameter 9.5 cm. It would originally have been hinged, with a small catch diametrically opposite. Of the little handles which would have fitted near the catch, on the upper side of the lid and on the concave base of the mirror, only one leaf shaped solder plate now remains. The Roman lid mirror is a direct descendant of the large bronze ones used by the Greeks from about the fourth century B.C. onwards, but, unlike their Hellenistic prototype, they are lighter, more delicate, and for the most part undecorated apart from a lightly turned series of concentric circles placed at intervals between the edge and the centre.

Unlike other Roman mirrors, the bronze alloy used was much lower in its percentage tin content to allow for easier casting and turning of the sometimes heavily convex mirror and lid. The main area of production and circulation of these pieces is southern France, with over 18% of the total coming from Vaison la Romaine.⁸ Unfortunately, very few are dated, but it seems most likely that they were made during the first century, starting with a rather heavy box-shaped lid over a relatively flat mirror disc. The mirror then became smaller and more convex, and had a small lip to prevent it falling into the depth of the lid and getting jammed, and the lid itself had a profile more closely matching the mirror. It is this form which can be seen in the Cambridge mirror, rather than the final version where the curvature of both sections is considerably exaggerated so that the mirror reflects the whole of the face within its small diameter. This final version achieved greater commercial success outside France than its precursors, with items finding their way into Italy, the Danubian provinces, the Rhineland and Britain. It is probably a mirror of this type which is shown on some statuettes of Venus, where the goddess holds it open, giving a characteristic figure-of-eight shaped outline, whilst rearranging her hair and admiring her own reflection.⁹

The final mirror among the Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology pieces, is a delightful little disc mirror with a slightly eccentric outline giving a diameter of ca. 6.6 - 6.8 cm. (Z.23216.d). The reflecting side is just slightly curved, the back has a low convex moulding as a border, limited by two concentric circles. Within this are just the faintest traces of what was probably a neat little handle across the back, after the style of the mirror found in the Sempelveld sarcophagus in the Netherlands.¹⁰ The date of these types of mirror, which are made both of silver and heavily silvered bronze, as is the Cambridge piece, is uncertain as they have turned up mainly in contexts dating to the second and third century in the north western provinces, and appear in toilet scenes on funerary monuments during the same period. About 40% of the total number recorded have been found in the region of the Lower Rhine, and could well have been made there, though other examples are known from Turkey, the Kertch and Italy.

The collection of Roman mirrors from the Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology is thus of considerable interest, with its range of common and rarer types from workshops in Italy and the provinces, from the early first century to the second and third centuries A.D.

NOTES

1. A. Down and M. Rule *Chichester Excavations I* (Chichester 1971), p. 80, 100, Grave 87c.
2. R. Fitch, *Archaeological Journal*, 14 (1857), p. 287-8; 'Roman Speculum found at Caistor by Norwich' *Norfolk Archaeology*, 5, (1859) p. 271-6.
3. G. Lloyd-Morgan 'The Antecedents and Development of the Roman Hand Mirror', *Papers in Italian Archaeology I* ed. H. McK. Blake, T. W. Potter, D. B. Whitehouse, *B.A.R. Suppl. Ser. no. 41* (1978) p. 227-235.
4. G. Lloyd-Morgan 'Note on some Mirrors in the Museo Archeologico, Brescia', *Commentari dell'Ateneo di Brescia*, 174 (1975) p. 107-116 (p. 114 and note 26).

5. E. Pernice 'Der Grabfund von Lübsow bei Greifenberg i.P.' *Praehistorische Zeitschrift*, 4 (1912) p. 126-148 (p. 127, 140-2, Abb. 8).
6. J. P. Lamm 'En Spegeln från Paviken' *Fornvännen*, 68 (1971) p. 48-52; with G. Lloyd-Morgan 'En Spegeln från Helgö och nytt om Spegeln från Paviken' *Fornvännen* 69 (1974) p. 198-201.
7. G. Lloyd-Morgan 'A New Hand Mirror from Roman Libya' *Ann. Rep. Soc. Libyan Studies*, 7 (1975-6) p. 23-5.
8. J. Sautel *Vaison dans l'Antiquité* (Lyons 1927) Vol. II p. 298-311.
9. G. Lloyd-Morgan 'A Bronze Statuette from London Bridge' *Ant. J.* 54 (1974) p. 85-6 Pl. XXVIIIb.
10. J. Holwerda 'Romeinsche Sarcophaag uit Simpelveld' *OMROL* Suppl. 12, (1931), p. 27-48, Afb. no. j;
G. Lloyd-Morgan 'Some Bronze Mirrors in the Collections of the Rijksmuseum G. M. Kam, Nijmegen' *Bull. Musées Royaux d'Art et d'Hist.* 46, (Brussels 1974) p. 43-51, (p. 47-8, fig. 6, 7).

NOTES ON A *LIFE* OF THREE THORNEY SAINTS THANCRED, TORHTRED AND TOVA¹

Cecily Clark

For all the mixed blood of which he boasted,² William of Malmesbury sometimes betrayed an unambiguously Norman sensibility, as, for instance, when he flinched from naming the Anglo-Saxon saints 'resting' at Thorney Abbey because their names 'grated somewhat barbarously' on the ear:

Corpora vero Sanctorum, qui olim in illa heremo diversati fuissent, necnon et aliorum per Angliam, tot advexit, ut omnes pene anguli ecclesiae pleni sunt. Quorum nomina scribere ultro refugio, quia barbarum quiddam stridunt. Non quod eos Sanctos vel discredam vel diffitear; cujus enim auctoritatis ego sum, qui in disceptationem vocem quod sancta consecravit antiquitas? Sed quia, ut dixi, vocabula eorum inconditum sonant, horridum olent, fatuis duntaxat hominibus, quales multos nostra parit aetas, nolo Sanctos exponere ludibrio. Præsertim cum eorum vitas nec habitatores legant; frivolumque videatur, si eorum prædices merita, quorum nulla invenias miracula.³

Those 'barbarous' names notwithstanding, the monks of Thorney remained proud of the saints sleeping in their church, proud enough not only to translate them ceremonially to the new building consecrated in 1108⁴ and to enter their names – 'Reliquie ... Sancti Botulfi abbatis, Sancti Adulfi episcopi, Sancti Apelwoldi episcopi, Tancredi, Sancti Thortredi, ... Sancti Herefridi episcopi, Sancti Wihtredi, ... Sancte Touæ uirginis' – in a twelfth-century hand into their *Liber vitae*⁵ but also to pass on to their dependent priory founded at Deeping in the middle of the twelfth century the duty of commemorating several of those most 'barbarously' named.⁶

By a paradox, that pride may have been stimulated by a foreign incomer. For, some two generations before William of Malmesbury wrote his *Gesta pontificum*, the Flemish monk Fulcard, a celebrated hagiographer, who had been intruded on the abbey as its unconsecrated head,⁷ had found these same saints an inspiration in their then disregarded holiness, as he himself related in the *Prologue* to a work he was presenting to Bishop Walcelin of Winchester:

Videns autem sanctos in eadem basilica pausantes nulla scriptorum memoria commendatos, indignatus antiquitate, quæ de eis addiscere potui, tuis auribus primum offerre volui; ne rusticius sermo, nullo suffultus defensore, derisioni expositus emulorum, cachinnum potius optineret quam auditum. Reperta sunt tamen quædam in veteris libris vitiose descripta; quædam ab ipso precipuo presule in privilegiis eiusdem cenobii sunt breviter annotata; cætera ex relatione veterum ut ab antiquioribus sunt eis exhibitæ. Omnia tamen, ex devotione cordis, tibi, eximie pater, tuoque examini discutienda exhibeo, ut si quis æmulus caninas erexerit cristas labori nostro, humilitatis nostre opusculum tuæ auctoritatis paterna contegat defensio.⁸

Unfortunately, the exact scope of the work to which Fulcard is here referring has been uncertain. The *Prologue* itself is preserved in three manuscripts: British Library Harley MS 3097 (ff. 61v-62r), an early-twelfth-century book from Peterborough;⁹ St. John's College, Cambridge MS H 6 (ff. 171r-172v), also of the twelfth century and associated with Ramsey;¹⁰ and BL Cotton MS Tiberius D III (ff. 223v/b-224r/a).¹¹ In all these manuscripts what the *Prologue* immediately precedes is a *Life of Saint Botulf*,¹² the saint to whom Thorney Abbey offered its secondary dedication and whose relics are, as we have seen, listed in the *Liber vitae*. This *Life of Saint Botulf* also occurs, but without the *Prologue* asserting Fulcard's authorship, in at least two other manuscripts: Corpus Christi College, Cambridge MS 161¹³ and Gray's Inn MS 3.¹⁴ Of the manuscripts which do contain the *Prologue*, Tiberius follows the *Life of Botulf* with a completely unrelated *Passion of Dioscurus*, St. John's follows it with a *Translatio* of Botulf and of other saints venerated at Thorney, and Harley, which also contains this *Translatio*, inserts between this and the *Life of Botulf* a *Life* 'of Saints Thancred and Torhtred and of their sister, Christ's virgin Saint Tova'.¹⁵

As we saw, relics of Thancred, Torhtred and Tova were listed in the *Liber vitae* alongside those of the better-known Botulf. The two brothers are entered, under 30 September, in the early-fourteenth-century calendar of Deeping Priory.¹⁶ And all three are named in the Thorney section of the Anglo-Saxon *Resting-Places of English Saints*, probably compiled between 1013 and 1035.¹⁷ Their claim to be remembered, at least by the monks of Thorney, is explained in one of the sources Fulcard himself mentions, as 'the privileges of Æthelwold', that is, the abbey's foundation charter;¹⁸ this describes them as the last of the anchorites from whom the islet of Thorney had taken its original name of *Ancarig* 'the anchorites' island'.¹⁹

Nam in ipso prefato loco anachoretice vite aptissimo, duo quondam precipue sanctitatis germani antistites, Tancredus videlicet et Torhtredus, celestis vite beatitudinem, alter martirio, alter confessionis gloria obtinentes cum gloriosa ægregii triumphii palma migraverunt ad Christum. Tova vero eorum soror, non solum carnalis propinquitatis federe compaginata, set etiam imitatione virtutum et caritatis repagulo connexa, in ultima huius insule parte anachoreticam vitam ducens, agonem sancte conversacionis decentissime complens, ac putidam huius fragilitatis mortem deserens, membrum tripudians perrexit ad capud quod est Christus humani generis redemptor, qui cum coeterno patre et spiritu sancto utriusque sexus milites infiniti tripudii gloria beatificando coronat.²⁰

So, given the place these three seem to have occupied in the traditions of Thorney Abbey and also Fulcard's own claim to have drawn upon the foundation charter, the question must arise whether the sequence in the Harleian manuscript – *Prologue, Life of Saint Botulf*, then *Life of Saints Thancred, Torhtred and Tova*, and finally the *Translation of the Saints who Rest at Thorney Abbey* – represents the hagiographer's original scheme.

A priori, the Harleian manuscript, although certainly not a wholly authoritative witness, may nonetheless be a fair one, being associated with near-by Peterborough and datable early in the twelfth century (Fulcard's work must have antedated his

dismissal from Thorney in the mid 1080s) – the only other copy of the *Translatio* surviving is in the other Fenland manuscript, the Ramsey book now at St. John's. Admittedly, Harley's presentation of the items is unhelpful, owing to a shift in the style of rubrication:²¹ red and green headings introduce both the *Prologue* and the *Life of Botulf*, headings in red only and in somewhat smaller script introduce the *Life* of the three anchorites and the *Translatio*, and the same all-red style is again used to introduce the immediately following *Life of Saint Guthlac*, the work of the eighth-century hagiographer Felix.²² The *Prologue* itself, however, implies that Fulcard had been working to rescue from oblivion not simply Botulf and his less famous 'brother' Athulf but a number of saints associated with Thorney and, in particular, some dealt with in the 'privileges', the foundation charter.

Moreover, if it be granted that the *Translatio* might be by Fulcard, then its internal evidence will reinforce that of the *Prologue* for Fulcard's authorship of the *Life of Thancred, Torhtred and Tova*; for, after dealing with the translations of Botulf and Athulf and of Herefrith, it ends by describing the oratory which Æthelwold had had built for himself on the site where Tova had had her separate hermitage:

Construxit etiam non longe ab eodem monasterio, in eo scilicet loco ubi beata virgo Christi Tova inclusa fuerat, lapideam æcclesiolam in modum pyramidis, delicatissimis cameratam cancellulis, et dupplici area tribus dedicatam altaribus permodicis, undique usque ad ipsos eius muros vallatam arboribus diversi generis, sedem scilicet heremiticam sibi si permisisset gratia supremi rectoris, qui magis tantam lucernam retinebat in candelabro pontificali ad illuminationem totius orbis anglici. Huc quotiens Thornensem insulam ingredi posset divertebat; hic orationes et sanctas agebat excubias; huc, post allocutionem fratrum & institutionem rerum necessarium loco, mox intenta caritate se Dei amicus recipiebat.²³

With its emphasis on Æthelwold's great love for Thorney, this conclusion, preserved not only in the Harleian manuscript but also in the St. John's one which omits the *Life* of the three anchorites, seems integral to the *Translatio* and, moreover, echoes Fulcard's reference in the *Prologue* to Æthelwold's reported intention of retiring to Thorney.²⁴ Yet, without the preceding *Life* explaining who Tova had been, it is not wholly clear. With the *Life* of the three anchorites, however, the items grouped in the Harleian manuscript offer a neatly interlaced structure: the *Prologue* mentioning several saints and the translations of some of them, as well as Æthelwold's proposed retirement, then the *Life of St. Botulf*, then the *Life* of the three anchorites including Tova, and last the *Translatio* of Botulf and of other saints, concluding with this reference back to Tova and to Æthelwold's proposed retirement (admittedly, the structure might have been better still had a *Life* of Herefrith likewise balanced the reference to him in the *Translatio*, but for such a piece there seems no evidence anywhere). Thus, the wisest view seems to be that, of surviving orders, the one in the Harleian manuscript comes nearest to Fulcard's original intention. For the copyists of the other extant manuscripts to have omitted the *Life* of the three Thorney anchorites would be entirely comprehensible; for the merest glance at the monastic calendars published shows that, whereas Botulf was widely honoured,²⁵ Thancred, Torhtred and Tova seem to have gone uncelebrated outside Thorney and its dependencies.

This *Life of Thancred, Torhtred and Tova* can, therefore, be attributed provisionally to the well-known hagiographer Fulcard; not that it makes any very brilliant addition to the canon of his works. He had little information beyond what we have seen the foundation charter to offer; he himself admits that 'no history commends to us their way of life, nor does any page of ancestral narrative record it'.²⁶ His own wording sometimes echoes that of the charter, especially in his account of Tova:

Quæ, sicut beatus ... Atheluuoldus in suis testatur scriptis, *non solum* erat tantorum sanctorum soror *carnali propinquitate, sed etiam virtutum sedula imitatione. ... Membrum Christi facta, caput meruit Christum habere ...*²⁷

The dating 'tempore Beati Eadmundi regis et martiris', although possibly derived from an additional source, documentary or oral, might equally have been a guess based on the charter's references to 'martyrdom' and to the laying-waste of the site 'by pagans'.²⁸ The story of Æthelwold's tiny pyramidal oratory built on the site of Tova's anchorhold does seem most probably derived from local oral traditions. With these scanty materials the hagiographer wove a brief sermon on contempt of the world and resistance to the Enemy's wiles: a modest piece, compared, for instance, with Abbo's *Life of King Edmund*, for it offers no invented speeches or dramatic reconstructions. Whatever may have been the 'sins' that exiled Fulcard to Thorney or those for which he was later dispossessed, here (if his authorship is accepted) he shows a touching honesty in refraining from introducing even trivial or conventional episodes for which his exiguous sources gave no warrant. Yet this restraint in no way hinders him from elegantly demonstrating how to make bricks without straw and composing a pious meditation most apt for reading to the monks who had succeeded the hermits.

How much historical truth underlay the thin reference to the three hermits whose holy lives were said to have hallowed the place where the abbey was to be built? A cynic might suggest that Thancred and Torhtred with their sister Tova represented Thorney's attempt to match or outdo Crowland's Guthlac with his sister Pega. Plainly, later references in Thorney materials, like the fourteenth-century calendar from Deeping Priory, carry no weight at all. Nor does much attach to the reference in *The Resting-Places of English Saints* – 'Donne restað on Þornige sancte Botulf and sancte Aðulf and sancte Huna and sancte Pancred and sancte Torhtred and sancte Hereferð and ... sancte Toua'²⁹ – in so far as this dates from the eleventh century, some two generations after the founding of the abbey and the presumable drafting of its charter; and in so far, also, as the compiler(s) of *Resting-Places* presumably relied on claims put forward by the abbeys concerned. And, although an Exeter psalter does indeed list *Sancta Tova* among virgin saints,³⁰ in a manner suggesting a fame spreading beyond the Fenland, this reference too is deprived of much force by its eleventh-century date.

On the other hand, the possible transmission of this legend might be compared with that of the supposedly contemporary King Edmund of East Anglia. Abbo of Fleury, writing when he was at Ramsey between 985 and 987, tells how the story of Edmund had reached him through St. Dunstan, who in his youth had heard it related to King Æthelstan by an infirm old man who claimed to have been Edmund's sword-bearer on

the very day of his martyrdom.³¹ Supposing that the three Thorney hermits had indeed been victims of the same 'piratical plague'³² in which Edmund was slain, then, even though their lives and deaths would have been so much more private than the king's, some oral tradition could well have lived on locally between their 'martyrdom' in about 870 and the founding of the abbey a century later (the site was not then abandoned but, 'wretchedly owned by lay-people', had to be purchased from a certain Æthelfled³³); for, as Professor Whitelock has pointed out, such a chain of memory needs no more than two links.³⁴

In conclusion, perhaps some hint of authenticity lies in those names so embarrassing to William of Malmesbury. Neither *Pancred* nor *Torhtred* is common; indeed, notoriously incomplete though Searle's *Onomasticon* is,³⁵ its failure to record any bearers of either, apart from the two Thorney saints, must say something for their rarity. Nor is it only these specific compounds that are rare, for the initial elements *Panc-* and *Torht-* seem unknown outside the earliest records, being uncommon even there. The sister's name, latinized as *Tova* (presumably representing an Old-English **Tofe*), is rather better attested, occurring twice for *consorores* of Hyde Abbey and in a few other records, mainly of the late eleventh century;³⁶ but instances so late might, like the mention of *sancta Tova* in the Exeter psalter, testify to the saint's fame rather than to any independent currency of the name. In the event, vexed origins make this the point crucial for the credibility of the legend. If it is taken, as an apparently analogous form from Domesday Book has been taken,³⁷ to represent Old-Norse *Tófa*, a feminine corresponding to the masculine *Tófi*, Anglo-Scandinavian *Tovi*, common in twelfth-century records from the former Danelaw,³⁸ such a derivation would tell conclusively against any pre-Viking tradition. An alternative etymology might, however, be proposed, taking this as a native Old-English shortening of a two-element name. Among the West-Germanic peoples name-elements were customarily permuted within families: thus, for instance, Tova's brothers' names share the final element *-red*, *-ræd*; for their sister's full, formal name, a first element figuring in one of their names might have been compounded with one of the feminine second elements, perhaps forming **Torhtflæd* or **Torhtgifu*, for either of which **Tofe* (latinized as *Tova*) would seem a possible childish reduction. Failing records, no certainty is possible; but, with feminine names notoriously under-recorded and with an analogous *Torhtgyð* listed by Searle, there is no call to deny the possibility of **Torhtflæd* or **Torhtgifu*, which, like all the known compounds of *Torht-*, would presumably have been early forms. All in all, then, the three names seem, for what they are worth, compatible with an authentic tradition dating from pre-Viking times; the two men's names at least would hardly have been invented in the late tenth century or after unless the forger had had an antiquarian's knowledge of early personal names.

NOTES

1. For help in compiling this article I am deeply grateful to two of my friends: to Professor Dorothy Whitelock, who criticized the final draft and suggested several additional references; and to Mrs Dorothy Owen, who gave invaluable advice and encouragement throughout the work.

2. W. Stubbs (ed), *Willelmi Malmesbiriensis monachi de gestis regum Anglorum libri quinque*, 2 vols., Rolls Series (London, 1887-9), ii, 283.
3. N. E. S. A. Hamilton (ed), *Willelmi Malmesbiriensis monachi de gestis pontificum Anglorum libri quinque*, Rolls Series (London, 1870), pp. 327-8 (Indeed, he [Æthelwold] brought there so many bodies of Saints, both of those who had of old retired to that hermitage and also of others from throughout England, that almost every corner of the church is full of them. Their names I forbear to set down in detail, for they grate somewhat barbarously on the ear. Not that I lack belief or faith in those Saints; for what authority have I to call into question what holy antiquity has hallowed? But because, as I have said, their names have an unpolished ring and a primitive air, at least to such frivolous people as our times are producing in plenty, I do not wish to lay the Saints open to ridicule. All the less, as not even the inmates of the abbey read their Lives, and it might seem light-minded if one should extol the merits of those of whom one can find no miracles recorded).
4. According to the note entered in the upper margin of an Easter table bearing unpublished Thorney annals (British Library Cotton MS Nero C VII, f. 81v; see N. R. Ker, 'Membra Disiecta', *British Museum Quarterly*, 12 (1937-38), 130-5, esp. 131-2, and *idem*, *Medieval Libraries of Great Britain*, 2nd edn. (London, 1964), p. 189.
5. BL Additional MS 40000, f. 11v; printed in F. Wormald (ed), *English Benedictine Kalendars after A.D. 1100*, 2 vols., Henry Bradshaw Society 77 and 81 (London, 1939-1946), i, 129-30.
6. The mid-fourteenth-century calendar from Deeping is believed to represent fairly adequately the lost calendar of Thorney Abbey itself, see Wormald, *Kalendars after 1100*, i, 129-44, esp. 129. Among the saints commemorated are: Herefrith (28 February and 21 August); 'Wihburg' (17 March); Botulf (17 June and 1 December); Ætheldred (23 June); and Thancred and Torhtred (30 September) [spellings slightly normalized].
7. For his career, see F. Barlow (ed), *The Life of King Edward who Rests at Westminster* (London, 1962), pp. xliv, li-lix; also M. Chibnall (ed), *The Ecclesiastical History of Orderic Vitalis* (Oxford, 1969 - in progress), vi, 150. Note especially the unfavourable account in the Red Book of Thorney (Cambridge University Library Additional MSS 3020 and 3021 [continuously foliated], f. 416r).
8. T. D. Hardy, *Descriptive Catalogue of Materials, &c.*, 3 vols. in 4, Rolls Series (London, 1862-71), i/pt. 1, 373-4, n. (When, however, I saw that the saints who rest in that temple had not been commemorated in the writings of any historians, then, vexed with our predecessors, I resolved to offer whatever I was able to learn of them first of all to your own ears [Bishop Walcelin's]; lest my somewhat uncultivated discourse might, unless protected by a patron, be exposed to the mockery of envious men and so excite mirth rather than attention. A few matters have, after all, been found inadequately treated in old books; some were briefly recorded by the distinguished prelate himself [Æthelwold] in the privileges of the abbey itself; the rest are taken from the testimony of old men according to the way they had been passed down to them by their own seniors. All these things I am, out of the devotion of my heart, presenting to you, my honoured Father, to be tested by your criticism, so that, if any envious man should with hackles raised threaten my work, the fatherly protection of your authority may shield the modest fruit of my humble talents).
9. See B. Colgrave (ed), *Felix's Life of St. Guthlac* (Cambridge, 1956), pp. 30-1; also Ker, *Medieval Libraries*, p. 151.
10. See M. R. James, *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Manuscripts in the Library of St. John's College, Cambridge* (Cambridge, 1913), item 209, pp. 240-2; also Ker, *Medieval Libraries*, p. 153. I am grateful to the Librarian of St. John's College for most kindly allowing me to consult not only this manuscript but also related materials.
11. Cf. Hardy, *loc. cit.*; no known provenance; a partial victim of the Cottonian fire.
12. See Socii Bollandiani, *Bibliotheca Hagiographica Latina*, 2 vols. and supplement (Brussels, 1898-1911), item 1428; the *Life* was printed in *Acta Sanctorum Iunii III* (Antwerp, 1701), pp. 402-3. For Botulf's career and the standing of this *Life*, see D. Whitelock, 'The pre-Viking Age Church in East Anglia', *Anglo-Saxon England*, 1 (1972), 1-22, esp. 10-11.
13. See M. R. James, *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Manuscripts in the Library of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge*, 2 vols. (Cambridge, 1912), i, 358-63, esp. 361. I am grateful to the Librarian of Corpus Christi College, Dr R. I. Page, for allowing me to examine this manuscript.
14. See N. R. Ker, *Medieval Manuscripts in British Libraries* (Oxford, 1969 - in progress), i, 52. I am grateful to the Librarian of Gray's Inn for allowing me to examine this manuscript.
15. Not in *Acta Sanctorum Septembris VIII* (Antwerp, 1762); printed as Appendix F in W. de Gray Birch (ed), *Liber Vitae: Register and Martyrology of New Minster and Hyde Abbey, Winchester*,

- Hampshire Record Society (London and Winchester, 1892), pp. 284-6, with the *Translatio* on pp. 286-90 (the latter also in *Acta Sanctorum Iunii* III, pp. 405 *et seq.*).
16. Wormald, *Kalendars after 1100*, i, 141, also 132; cf. n. 6 above.
 17. F. Liebermann (ed), *Die Heiligen Englands, Angelsächsisch und Lateinisch* (Hanover, 1889), p. 15, item 27; for closer analysis and dating of this compilation, see D. W. Rollason, 'Lists of Saints' Resting-Places in Anglo-Saxon England', *Anglo-Saxon England*, 7 (1978), 61-93. Professor Whitelock points out that in the Latin version known in mid-twelfth-century Peterborough the Thorney list, although including the three hermits, in some respects represents a distinct tradition (see W. T. Mellows (ed), *The Chronicle of Hugh Candidus* (Oxford, 1949), p. 63 and cf. p. xxxiv).
 18. Printed in C. R. Hart (ed), *The Early Charters of Eastern England* (Leicester, 1966), 165-72 (for the unreliability of this text, see the review by D. Whitelock in *English Historical Review*, 84 (1969), 112-5). See also P. Sawyer, *Anglo-Saxon Charters* (London, 1968), item 792, pp. 252-3.
 19. See P. H. Reaney, *The Place-Names of Cambridgeshire and the Isle of Ely*, English Place-Name Society 19 (Cambridge, 1943), p. 280.
 20. Hart, *Charters* pp. 166-7, corrected by collation with the two versions in the Red Book, ff. 12r and 14r (For in that aforesaid place, so well designed for the anachoretic life, there dwelt of old two brothers, Thancred and Torhtred, both priests and of remarkable holiness, who, having earned the blessedness of heavenly life, the one by martyrdom and the other by the glory of confessing his faith, ascended to Christ, bearing the splendid palm of that signal victory. Moreover, joined to them not only by the bond of blood-relationship but also by imitation of their virtues and by the link of holy love, their sister Tova, having most richly accomplished her struggle towards a holy way of life and disregarding the vile death of this frail flesh, like a dancing limb journeyed up to Christ her head, the Redeemer of mankind, who with his coeternal Father and with the Holy Ghost honours his warriors of both sexes by blessing them with the splendour of an unending dance).
 21. Cf. Colgrave, *Guthlac*, p. 30.
 22. For the date, see Colgrave, *Guthlac*, pp. 18-19.
 23. Harley MS 3097, f. 67v, and St. John's MS H 6, ff. 182r-182v; Birch, *Liber Vitae*, p. 290 (Not far from the same abbey he [Æthelwold] also had built, in the very place where Christ's blessed virgin Tova had had her anchorhold, a tiny stone chapel in the shape of a pyramid, encompassed about with the slenderest railings, dedicated to three miniature altars within a double court and on every side sheltered up to its very walls by trees of many kinds, intended indeed as a retreat for himself, had such retirement but been permitted by the grace of the supreme ruler, who preferred, however, to retain such a great light in the episcopal lamp, for the illumination of the whole English realm. To this place, whenever he was able to visit the island of Thorney, he withdrew; here he performed his prayers and his holy vigils; hither, after addressing the brethren and organizing whatever was needed for the house, God's friend at once retired with eager love).
 24. Hardy, *Catalogue*, i/1, 373-4, n. (...in qua, ut aiunt, et satis credi potest, cursum præsentis vitæ finire delegerit in conversatione therica).
 25. See Wormald, *Kalendars after 1100*, i, 7 (Abbotsbury), 24 (Abingdon), 56 (St. Augustine's), 73 (Christ Church, Canterbury), 89 (Chertsey), 105 (Chester), 122 (Crowland), and ii, 13 (Ely), 32 (Evesham), 68 (Westminster).
 26. Harley MS 3097, f. 65r (*Horum siquidem sanctorum genus sive continuam vite conversationem nobis nulla commendat historia, nulla veterum relationis referat pagina*).
 27. Harley MS 3097, ff. 65r-65v (...who, just as the blessed Æthelwold himself bears witness in his writings, was sister to such great saints not only by blood-relationship but also by eager imitation of their virtues. ... Having become a limb of Christ, she was worthy to have Christ for her head).
 28. Hart, *Charters*, pp. 166, 167 (...alter martirio ... a paganis vastatus...)
 29. See n. 17 above.
 30. E. S. Dewick (ed), *The Leofric Collectar*, Henry Bradshaw Society 45 (London, 1913), p. 422 (Harley MS 863, f. 111r). See also W. Levison, *Das Werden der Ursula-Legende* (Cologne, 1928), pp. 55-6, n. 1.
 31. M. Winterbottom (ed), *Three Lives of English Saints* (Toronto, 1972), p. 67.
 32. Harley MS 3097, f. 65v (...pestis pyratice que legitur Angliam depopulasse tempore Beati Eadmundi regis et martiris).
 33. Hart, *Charters*, p. 167.
 34. 'Fact and Fiction in the Legend of St. Edmund', *Proceedings of the Suffolk Institute of Archaeology*, 31 (1966-69), 217-33, esp. 218-9, 233.
 35. W. G. Searle, *Onomasticon Anglo-Saxonicum* (Cambridge, 1897); see O. von Feilitzen, 'Planning a

New Old English Onomasticon', in H. Voittl (ed), *The Study of the Personal Names of the British Isles* (Erlangen, 1976), pp. 16-42.

36. See Searle, *Onomasticon, s.n.*, and Birch, *Liber Vitae*, pp. 30, 53; also references given in n. 37 below.
37. See O. von Feilitzen, *The Pre-Conquest Personal Names of Domesday Book*, *Nomina Germanica* 3 (Uppsala, 1937), p. 384; also E. Björkman, *Nordische Personennamen in England*, *Studien zur englischen Philologie* 37 (Halle, 1910), pp. 140-41, esp. n. 2, suggesting that *Sancta Toua* 'probably does not belong here'; and M. Redin, *Studies on Uncompounded Personal Names in Old English* (Uppsala, 1919), p. 137.
38. A shortening of names with the first element *Thor-* and with second elements beginning with *-v-*: see von Feilitzen, *Domesday Book*, pp. 384-5, and G. Fellows Jensen, *Scandinavian Personal Names in Lincolnshire and Yorkshire* (Copenhagen, 1968), pp. 285-6.

THE GREAT WINDOWS OF KING'S COLLEGE CHAPEL AND THE MEANING OF THE WORD 'VIDIMUS'.

H. G. Wayment

In the muniment room at King's College are four indentures of the year 1526 which provide for the renewal of the campaign to glaze the great windows.¹ They refer to a previous contract with Barnard Flower, the King's Glazier, binding him to glaze the great windows 'with the story of the olde lawe and of the newe lawe'. In November 1515 and February 1517 Flower received two advances of 100 *l.* each for this work, but in the summer of 1517 he died. Under the 1515 contract, which does not survive, glass for the equivalent of four windows must have been painted; for the indentures of 1526 provide for the glazing of only 22 out of the 26 windows. Two indentures signed by Galyon Hone, Richard Bond, Thomas Reve and James Nicholson deal with eighteen windows, and two more signed by Francis Williamson and Simon Symondes with the remaining four. Two of the indentures use the word 'vidimus'. One provides that the representatives of the King and of the College, William Holgyll, Master of the Savoy Hospital, Thomas Larke, Surveyor of the King's Works in Cambridge, and Robert Hacomblen, Provost of the College, shall deliver to Williamson and Symondes 'patrons otherwise called A vidimus ... for to form glass and make by the foresaid four windows of the said church'. The main indenture signed by Hone and his three fellows in fact binds *them* to hand over the vidimuses in question to Williamson and Symondes. Both documents specify that two of the four windows concerned are on the north side and two on the south side; Dean Milner-White and Kenneth Harrison concur in identifying them as nos I and III in the north-west and nos XXIV and XXV in the south-west of the ante-chapel.² One of these (XXIV) must in fact have been sub-contracted to another glass-painter; but they all share similar canopies in the heads of the lights. We shall return to these windows later on; but meanwhile what is the meaning of the word 'vidimus'?

During the later middle ages the primary sense of the word was 'a certified copy', made for legal or administrative purposes, and authenticated by the word 'vidimus', signed and often sealed by the competent authority. The word is so used in the *Rolls of Parliament* in 1436.³ A secondary meaning, which follows easily from the practice itself, is 'authentication'. There is even a word in late medieval Latin 'vidimare', to authenticate, and in French 'vidimer'. The use of the word to mean a first sketch for a glass window may derive from a parallel use of the word 'vidimus' to mean a sketch signed by the person who commissions the window and given to the glazier as the basis of the contract between the two; or it may be used, more strictly in accordance with the primary sense of the word, to denote the glazier's certified copy of an original to be

kept by the person commissioning the window. In either case it is clearly a legal and administrative term.

The nineteenth-century Belgian antiquary J. Neeffs, for instance, cites⁴ an example of 1547, in which a glazier named Van Vianen binds himself to glaze a window in St Rombouts' Cathedral, Mechlin, 'naervolgende dit vidimus', that is in conformity with this vidimus; and on the other side of the same sheet of paper is the actual design by Michael Coxcie which he was to use; this showed the *Baptism of Christ*, with portraits of Charles V and Mary of Hungary, and the words 'Ceste verriere a donne messire Gaspar Duchy ... Conseil de l'Empereur ... 1548'. Unfortunately Neeffs does not specify the context in which this document was found; but it is probably the donor's and not the glazier's copy.

Can the word 'vidimus' also stand for the full-size cartoon which is to serve in the actual cutting of the glass? This seems at first sight most unlikely. A cartoon, much less four cartoons the size of the great windows of King's Chapel, would be an extremely cumbersome basis for a contract, almost impossible to check. The words 'for to form glass and to make by the foresaid four windows' do not by any means imply that the 'patrons' mentioned are on the same scale as the windows themselves.

Nevertheless such an interpretation has more than once been put forward. Arthur Lane, in a footnote to an article of 1949 in the *Burlington Magazine*,⁵ quotes the King's College contracts and describes the vidimuses as being 'presumably cartoons'. In the next number the Dutch scholar A. van der Boom firmly corrected him:⁶ "A vidimus is always the first sketch after which the cartoons for the large glass paintings are made ... This first sketch ... should have the approval of the donor who gave the order for the window, thereby becoming a kind of I.O.U. from glass painter to donor".⁷ In his book of 1952⁸ Harrison established the distinction with admirable clarity: 'to every window, and to every part of it, there are at least four questions attached:

- (1) Who drew the vidimus?
- (2) Who drew the cartoon?
- (3) Who painted the glass?
- (4) When was the glass painted?

However, in 1964, when another Dutch scholar, K. G. Boon, actually discovered in an American library three small-scale sketches for scenes on the south side of the Chapel, he would not call them vidimuses, but reserved this term for the cartoons.⁹ Similarly in an analysis published in 1973 of a number of actual cartoons preserved on the continent he maintains that the word 'vidimus' frequently means 'cartoon'; but the sole instance he gives are the King's College contracts already quoted.¹⁰

Our only resource in this impasse is to examine the windows themselves and draw from them any evidence they may provide on the question. First let us look at two of the sketches published by Boon and the scenes painted after them. They are probably not, in fact, the original sketches, whether or not the originals were kept by the persons offering the contract, but copies rapidly made as guides for the cartoonist. They show how the design fits into the grid of the *ferramenta*, the iron cross-bars and

stanchions which are built into the masonry from the beginning, and they even number the cross-bars 1 to 14. The basic module of the glass itself will follow this grid, of which each square is filled by two oblong pieces, cut across by whatever shapes the mosaic of the coloured design requires. The sketch shows the decorative framework only summarily, and omits it altogether where one side is simply the mirror image of the other.

The cartoon of the *Appearance of Christ to the Disciples* was not apparently drawn by the designer himself, but by the colleague who was responsible for the painting of the glass. The assistant has weakened the design at several points, especially by filling the simulated window with blank panelling in grisaille, instead of letting the blue of the sky shine through.

The proof that these are not copies *after* the windows arises from the scene of *Peter and John healing the Lame Man*. The swags and garland within the glyphed arch of 'the Gate called Beautiful' are afterthoughts intended to relieve the monotony of the background and put more weight and colour into the upper part of the scene.¹¹ A second afterthought is to be seen in the window itself: the lame man's leg comes down one step further in the grid than it does in the sketch. This improves the design: the figures are better balanced and a vacancy is avoided. The style of the heads and drapery shows that this scene was painted by Dierick Vellert of Antwerp, the presumed designer and also in my view the master-painter of the later glass; he was no doubt also largely responsible for the full-size cartoon in which the change must have been made. Nevertheless, his name is nowhere mentioned either in the King's College contracts or in any other English document of the time, unless he is to be identified with a 'Longe Deryk' who is named with a number of other foreign-born glaziers in a document of about 1545.¹²

If, as all scholars since Friedländer have agreed, Vellert was the designer of the later glass, and even more if, as I believe, he acted as master-glazier in charge of operations, why is he not mentioned in the 1526 contracts? Simply, I think, because he could have no contractual status. Barnard Flower, to whom as we have seen, advances of as much as 100 *l.* were made at a time, is described as a native of 'Almayn';¹³ but he had been settled in England since at least 1496, and had become a denizen in 1514. Hone, Bond, Reve and Nicholson were either natives or residents; they received similar advances *pro rata*, but had themselves to pay a deposit of 500 marks. Similarly Williamson and Symondes had to get guarantors to join with them in depositing 200 *l.* sterling. A foreigner normally resident abroad could scarcely be bound in this kind of way, and would not therefore be mentioned in the contract with the donor's agents; but the contracting glaziers themselves might well take the risk of calling in as their subcontractor a foreigner not normally resident in England.

So much for the origin of the word 'vidimus' and the three surviving examples of what, in deference to Mr Boon, we will merely call small-scale sketches for the windows. We must now examine the four windows entrusted to Williamson and Symondes, and see if they contain any evidence about the nature of the vidimuses given them 'for to form glass and make by the foresaid ... windows'. They all exhibit in

profusion Renaissance motifs of a delightful kind which begin to appear in Flanders at the very end of the first decade of the century and become common towards the end of the second: shell niches, putti, swags, profile medallions, glyph mouldings, arabesque reliefs. This Renaissance detail alternates and mingles with a wealth of late Gothic decoration of a similarly playful character, such as interlaced canopy-work reminiscent of late fifteenth or early sixteenth-century German paintings and glass,¹⁴ the trick arches beloved of the Antwerp mannerists,¹⁵ the peculiar key-caps to shaftings which appear in certain Brussels tapestries of the second decade,¹⁶ and the short coloured colonnettes found in certain windows in Normandy at the same time.¹⁷ This amalgam was already going out of fashion in 1526. However, the basic designs and the figure-work contained within this framework are even older. The figure of the translated Enoch prefiguring the Virgin of the Assumption (XXV, 1) goes back to that of the kneeling Magus in an *Adoration of the Magi* from St Vincent's in Rouen, which I would date about 1507,¹⁸ and even further to the corresponding figure in the glass at Fairford, which was probably designed in or around the year 1500. The Virgin of the Nativity kneeling in adoration of the child Christ (III, 4) is more than a reminiscence of Van der Goes' *Portinari Madonna* of 1475 or so,¹⁹ and again the same allusion may be traceable at Fairford (n. III, 1b). The angel announcing to Joachim the coming conception of the Virgin Mary (I, 3) is a close copy of the alighting angel of the Annunciation on the outside of the wings of the same altarpiece; and the Fairford designer once again has the same original in mind (n. III, 1a). The close connection with the Fairford glass is finally confirmed by the re-use of a bearded figure (Pl. 1a) in the *Judgement of Solomon* at Fairford (n. X, 1a) as a Messenger, three times repeated, in the Williamson and Symondes windows (Pl. 1b.); each complete window in the north and south walls has four such Messengers in the middle light of the five, each carrying a scroll referring to one of the four scenes.

In the style of drapery and gesture there are similar resemblances. The robe of an angel supporting the Virgin of the Assumption (XXV, 3), painted by Symondes, has straight, deep folds, expanding radially, turned at right angles to each other, and ending in wide, curving trails; the same pattern recurs in a Messenger painted by Williamson (III M3). Something very similar can be seen in the mantle of Peter in the *Agony in the Garden* (IX, 4), one of the most backward-looking scenes in the Chapel, and also in the *Transfiguration* (s. III, 1c), in the best preserved window at Fairford.²⁰ Finally, the half-open hand with gently curving fingers seen in the Joachim of window I, 3 recalls that of Christ in the *Agony in the Garden* dating from ten years earlier (the head and body are modern), and those of St James in the *Transfiguration* at Fairford, at least twenty years earlier.²¹

What are we to make of all these links with Fairford, and who designed the Fairford glass? By good fortune one of the glaziers left what appear to be disguised monograms in at least two of the windows at Fairford. In the south-west window, the *Judgement of David on the Amalekite* who slew Saul, a capital A on the blade of the executioner's sword (now partly flaked off) has long been thought to be a concealed signature – concealed, because the A represents primarily the armourer's initial on a real sword-

blade. This was long the subject of contention, since one party of antiquaries insisted that it must be the curtailed monogram of Albrecht Dürer, a theory which the more knowledgeable and realistic recognised to be untenable.²²

A second crux lies in an inscription on the collar of a foot-soldier in the east window, which is to be read IO SAVELE, for Sir John Savile, a soldier and administrator who achieved some success under Henry VII and must have been entrusted with the oversight of the glazing campaign in its early stages.²³ The two central letters of the inscription are combined into a sort of monogram, and are painted on a larger scale than the others, so that they obtrude on our notice (Pl. 2a, b). This constitutes, I am convinced, a *double-entendre* on the same lines as the other: the artist could not gratuitously include his own signature in his work, but took any opportunity he could to slip it in under the cover either of a character in the scene concerned, or an inscription, or the donor's name. In a painting at Mechlin, for instance, dating from 1507 or a little before, the arms of the leader of the city's forces at the time are shown on the caparison of its champion's horse with a border composed of As: his name happened to be Van der Aa, and a capital A was his badge.²⁴ In a tapestry (Pl. 3) which bears all the marks of the same artist's style, a design for the funeral of Absalom has been adapted to that of Turnus, as foreshadowed in the last book of the Aeneid: the dead man's shield carries an A, whose cross-piece is also a V, so that it corresponds to the combined letter in the inscription at Fairford.²⁵ The weavers did not change the A to a T; if they thought about it at all, they must have regarded it as the designer's monogram.

Two figures here in particular recall counterparts at Fairford: the man in the foreground holding the crested helmet, who stands with his feet at an obtuse angle, is paralleled for instance by two Persecutors of the Church (Pl. 4) in a clerestory window at Fairford (n. II, 1b & 1c), and the St Michael in the west window (w. I, 1d). The flexed knee stands out in pure profile. Again, the figure on horseback in the middleground who turns his back to the spectator, but at the same time looks over his shoulder resembles the horseman on the right of the *Crucifixion* (Pl. 2c), or the footsoldier called IO SAVELE (Pl. 2a) on the left. A third gesture which constantly recurs is that of the arm raised for the stroke of a sword or bludgeon, or for the thrust of a lance. The *Flagellation* and the *Carrying of the Cross* (Pl. 5) at Fairford (I, 1d & 1e) afford two parallel examples. Common as it is, wherever such a gesture occurs in Flemish or Anglo-Flemish art of this period the question must be asked whether the Master AM has not something to do with it. An example, cut off by the frame, occurs in the scene at Tournai Cathedral from which I derive his makeshift name (Pl. 6).²⁶ His style is recognisable in a score of works, whether in glass, tapestry or oils, which sport the monogram A or AV or AM, and it is largely his (surely roguish) insinuation of these letters into his designs which made it possible to rescue him from oblivion. He is almost certainly to be identified (though the final proof is lacking) as Adrian van den Houte of Mechlin: hence the A, the AV, and the AM. His style as a draughtsman was brilliantly characterised by Max Friedländer in his analysis of the group of drawings which he attributes (wrongly, in my view) to Aerdt Ortken:²⁷ 'His firm, blunt heads ...

are loosely outlined with an indented contour and often misplaced in false perspective ... The eyes (are) almost always closed and rounded to a circle ... The drapery folds are schematic with their thrust of straight lines often running off parallel this way and that, while the outer extremities swing in wide curves'. Only a few of the so-called Ortkens drawings are to be attributed to AM, but the *Man Struggling with Death* (Pl. 7)²⁸ or the *Jupiter and Arcas*²⁹ certainly answer to Friedländer's description.

To return to the early windows of King's Chapel: the fan vault was finished in July 1515, and before the end of November in that year, when the King's Glazier Barnard Flower received his first advance, Richard Fox, Lord Privy Seal and Bishop of Winchester, will have worked out the iconographical scheme for the twenty-six windows.³⁰ Before the end of November, too, the first batch of vidimuses will have been prepared and accepted. One set, those of the silvery window opposite the south door, must have been drafted by the Flemish-Burgundian glazier who painted it;³¹ but the other early scenes, making up the equivalent of three windows, bear unmistakable signs of AM's hand. The resemblance of the Mount of Olives in the *Agony in the Garden* in King's (IX, 4) to the mount of the Ascension at Fairford (s. V, 1c) has often been noted; the descending angel is first cousin to the angel appearing to Gideon at Fairford (n. V, 1c).³² The stylistic correspondence between the *Transfiguration* at Fairford (s. III, 1c) and the King's *Agony in the Garden* is so close as to suggest that the designer and the chief painter were the same in both cases.³³

Again, in the King's *Arrest of Christ*, another early scene (X, 2), there are figures which correspond to the stereotypes we have already met: Peter with his arm uplifted to strike off Malchus' ear, and the soldier seen from behind with head in profile and feet at an obtuse angle. The glass-painter in both scenes is a glazier who had worked previously at Fairford to AM's designs, and is probably to be identified as the now elderly Englishman, Richard Bond.

The *Fall of the Rebel Angels*, in the upper register (IX, 3), was probably glazed by two partners who had painted the lively musical angels in the south clerestory at Fairford. One of the warring angels comes from one of Dürer's *Apocalypse* woodcuts,³⁴ but St Michael has the same tell-tale posture; AM's responsibility for this eclectic design is clearly established by the figure of God the Father (Pl. 8a), which resembles the David (Pl. 8b) in one of the signed windows at Fairford (s. X, 1c). In the kneeling angels at the top of the right-hand light there is another borrowing from Hugo van der Goes' *Portinari Altarpiece*, though even in 1515 Hugo had been dead for over thirty years.

Thus, in the early glass of King's Chapel we are driven to the same sort of assumption as has been made, by all recent commentators, in regard to the later glass and Vellert's part in it. Barnard Flower, in 1515, contracted to glaze the windows of the Chapel with 'the story of the olde and of the newe lawe', just as Hone and his fellows did in 1526. And just as they are thought to have called in Vellert, so Flower must have called in the Master AM, and paid him to prepare at least the first batch of designs. How many did he prepare? When Henry VII wrote his will, from 31 March to 10 April

1509, the fabric of his chapel at the east end of Westminster Abbey was almost completed; but already all the designs for the windows 'with the story of the olde lawe and of the new lawe' had been prepared.³⁵ In the case of King's Chapel, where the iconographical scheme was modelled on that of the Henry VII Chapel, can only four windows have been designed before work was interrupted on the glass c. 1517?

To answer this question it is only necessary to look at the two windows by the delicate, tentative glass-painter whom I believe to have been Thomas Reve, nos 5 and 7 on either side of the organ loft in the north wall. These were first ascribed by Harrison to the years 1526-31.³⁶ Here the heads of the lights present a very different aspect from those of the four windows assigned to Williamson and Symondes. There are no canopies at all above four out of the five outdoor scenes, and three scenes are surmounted by simulated reliefs of a Renaissance character. A peculiar circumstance proves that the glass-painter did not design the windows himself. The lower register of window VII is unbalanced in that there are two celestial figures in the heads of the two left-hand lights representing the *Baptism of Christ* (VII, 2), God the Father in the left-most, and an angel in the companion light. The angel is redundant; apart from the customary angel holding Christ's robes there are four more occupying the middle ground, and the sixth in the cusping is positively confusing. On the other hand there is room for an angel in the head of the right-hand light of the *Temptation* on the other side (VII, 4), since St Matthew's version says that after the Devil had departed 'angels came and ministered unto him'.³⁷ Alike on grounds of symmetry and iconography, then, it appears that the angel has been transferred from light 5 to light 2. This cannot have been done by a repairing glazier later on, because the blue of the sky above the *Temptation* is much more intense than that above the *Baptism*; the error must go back to the original glazing.

In the designs of windows V and VII, as opposed to the decorative elements, the hand of AM can once more be discerned. One of Christ's legs in the *Baptism* is seen directly from the front, and the other from the side, at not less than 90° difference. A dismounted horseman, in the *Cleansing of Naaman* above, walks like the courtier in the *Funeral of Turnus* with his legs at an obtuse angle to each other. Joseph, in the *Flight into Egypt*, west of the organ loft, does precisely the same, and the hand of Christ in the *Temptation* curls like an opening bud. The Reve windows, in fact, seem to be as much indebted to AM as the four Williamson and Symondes windows.

There is no need to labour the point. If two sets of windows with widely different decorative framework yet betray in the structure and gesture of their main figures the same formal style, it is clearly the preliminary sketches on which they are based that transmitted the similarities and the large-scale cartoons prepared by their respective executants that imported the differences. It must have been because the preliminary sketches for 'the foresaid four windows', prepared at the time of the first contract, were left over and were available at the time of the second that they are mentioned in Williamson and Symondes' indenture. In other words, the windows themselves, when examined attentively, give no support to the theory that the word 'vidimus', as used in the 1526 contracts, refers to full-size cartoons. On the contrary, they prove

conclusively, in my submission, that here the word means purely and simply, as its etymology suggests, a small-scale, preliminary sketch, and is used deliberately to distinguish this from the full-scale cartoon.

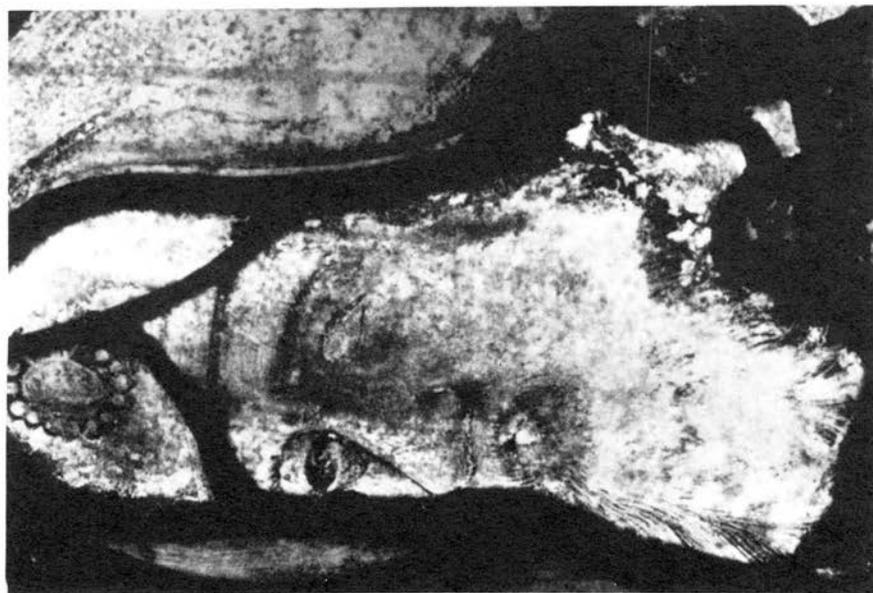
This argument, I may add, does not depend in any way on the identification of the designer, which is put forward in the hope of shedding still more light on what actually happened.

The Mechlin archives record the death of Adrian van den Houte on 19 March 1521.³⁸ If he was indeed the Master AM (and there is no evidence to conflict with the theory, but much to support it),³⁹ Hone in 1526 had to look elsewhere for a designer to finish the cycle at King's. Vellert had almost certainly been trained by AM, and was peculiarly suited to take over the task. In window IX three of the designs date from the early period, including the *Agony in the Garden* (IX, 4) and the *Fall of the Rebel Angels* (IX, 3). AM must surely have prepared a design for the fourth scene, the *Last Supper* (IX, 2); it will have resembled the round-tabled *Supper at Emmaus* which is one of the weakest of the Fairford compositions (s. IV, 1a-b). The existing glass, however, follows an advanced design by Vellert, using Pieter Coeck's adaptation of Leonardo's *Last Supper*, but turning the long table endwise in perspective so as to use the full height of the lights. There could be few more eloquent contrasts between late Gothic and early Renaissance art than the work of the two masters standing side by side above the northern stalls.

NOTES

1. H. G. Wayment, *The Windows of King's College Chapel, Cambridge*, Corpus Vitrearum Great Britain Supplementary Vol. I (London 1972) 123-5; this volume comprises a complete photographic record of the great windows, and accordingly reference is not made as a rule to individual plates, but only to particular windows.
2. *ibid.* 24-5; K. P. Harrison, *The Windows of King's College Chapel, Cambridge* (Cambridge 1952) 53.
3. *Oxford English Dictionary* s.v. The word normally used for this purpose in England, as Mrs Dorothy Owen has kindly pointed out, is 'inspeximus'; the word 'vidimus' is the French equivalent.
4. 'Notes sur les anciennes verrières de l'église métropolitaine de Malines', *Messenger des sciences historiques de Belgique*, Ghent 1877, 20-22.
5. 'Florentine painted glass and the practice of design', *The Burlington Magazine* XCI 47 n. 15.
6. *ibid.* 114.
7. The implication here is that there were two copies, for without his own copy the glazier could not have kept his side of the bargain.
8. Harrison (n. 2) 19, cf. 69.
9. 'Two Designs for Windows by Dierick Vellert', *Master Drawings* II ii 154. The vidimuses are illustrated in Wayment (n. 1) pl. 8.2.
10. 'Een onbekend glaskarton van ca. 1538 in het Rijksmuseum', *Album Amicorum J. G. van Gelder* (The Hague 1973) 54; the contracts do not mention vidimuses to be used for the eighteen windows which Hone, Nicholson, Reve and Bond were to glaze (as Boon implies) but only those to be used by Williamson and Symondes for their four windows.
11. cf. the twice-worked drawing in the British Museum Printroom, *The Lord Appearing to Abraham and Abraham entertaining the Angels*, which appears to be an early work later revised by the artist himself: A. E. Popham, *Catalogue of Drawings by Dutch and Flemish Artists in the British Museum* (London 1932) 52, pl. xix.
12. Wayment (n. 1) 126.
13. A. Oswald, 'Barnard Flower, the King's Glazier', *Journal of the British Society of Master Glass Painters* XI (1951-2) 9.

14. e.g. the Scharfzandt window of 1493 at Munich: E. von Witzleben, *Die Frauenkirche in München* (Augsburg 1969) fig. 37.
15. Compare the arch supporting the profile medallions in the *Nativity* (window III 4) with that high above Jesse's head in J. de Beer's cartoon for a Tree of Jesse in the Albertina, Vienna: M. J. Friedländer, *Early Netherlandish Painting XI* (Leyden 1974) pl. 206D.
16. e.g. *The Legend of Herkenbald* in the Musées Royaux d'Art et d'Histoire, Brussels: M. Crick-Kuntziger, *Catalogue des Tapisseries* (Brussels n.d.) no. 12, pl. 16.
17. Wayment (n. 1) 15, pl. 15.4.
18. H. G. Wayment, 'The windows of King's College Chapel and their relation to French art', *Actes du XIXe Congrès International d'Histoire de l'Art 1958* (Paris 1959) 302-3; the conclusion drawn on p. 304 from the complex of analogies between French (and especially Norman) art and the windows attributed to Williamson, Symondes and Reve, namely that the French examples probably have a Flemish source, is confirmed by the present study. See n. 39.
19. Friedländer (n. 15) IV (Leyden 1969) no. 10 pl. 15.
20. The two figures of St Peter are illustrated in Wayment (n. 1) pl. 13.
21. *ibid.*
22. On this controversy see J. Fuller Russell, 'On the Painted Glass in Fairford Church, and its claim to be considered the work of Albert Dürer', *Archaeological Journal* (1868) 119-36.
23. J. W. Clay, 'The Savile Family', *Yorkshire Archaeological Journal XXV* (1918-20) 6-11.
24. H. G. Wayment, 'A Rediscovered Master: Adrian van den Houte (c. 1459-1521) and the Malines/Brussels School, I: A Solution to the 'Ortkens' Problem', *Oud Holland LXXXII* (1967) 183, fig. 18; Friedländer (n. 19) prints a barely legible reproduction (no. 106, pl. 99, top left).
25. H. Göbel, *Wandteppiche in den Niederlanden* (Leipzig n.d.) I i 140-1, ii 107. The A cannot stand for Aeneas, since it clearly forms part of the dead man's panoply.
26. Wayment (n. 24) 181-7, fig. 13; J. Helbig, *Les Vitraux médiévaux conservés en Belgique 1200-1500*, Corpus Vitrearum Belgique I (Brussels 1961) 203-227, fig. 114.
27. M. J. Friedländer, 'Der Niederländische Glasmaler Aerdt Ortkens', *Amtliche Berichte aus der Königl. Kunstsammlungen XXXVIII* no. 6 (1917) 161-7.
28. In the Pierpont Morgan Library, formerly Fairfax Murray collection: A. E. Popham, *A Selection from the Collection of Drawings by the Old Masters formed by C. Fairfax Murray* (London n.d.) I no. 253.
29. Berlin-Dahlem, Staatliche Museen, Printroom no. 2323: Wayment (n. 24) II 'Adrian van den Houte as a Tapestry Designer', *Oud Holland LXXXIII* (1968) 71-2, fig. 1.
30. Wayment (n. 1) 2.
31. *ibid.* 48.
32. *ibid.* pl. 13.
33. *ibid.*
34. B.72.
35. T. Astle, *The Will of King Henry VII* (London 1775) 6.
36. Harrison (n. 2) 54.
37. Mat. 4:11.
38. Schepenhuis, Mechlin: *Register of Deaths of St Romold's I*.
39. The career of the Master AM, as it is to be followed in a long series of works, largely glass windows, but also tapestries, drawings and painted panels which are firmly linked by style, dovetails neatly into that of Adrian van den Houte, as recorded in the archives of Mechlin and the household account-books of Margaret of Savoy (J. Helbig, *Glasschilderkunst in België* (Antwerp 1943) 235). During the years 1501-05, when AM was probably engaged almost exclusively on the Fairford glass, there appears to be no trace of Adrian van den Houte at Mechlin. In 1506-7 AM was probably in Rouen, where he must have designed several windows which were painted by Arnold of Nijmegen, including the *Execution of St John the Baptist* now in Wells Cathedral (dated 1507). Adrian's activity at Mechlin is recorded in each of the years 1509-21, except 1515, when AM may have been in England preparing the designs for the earlier glass in King's Chapel.



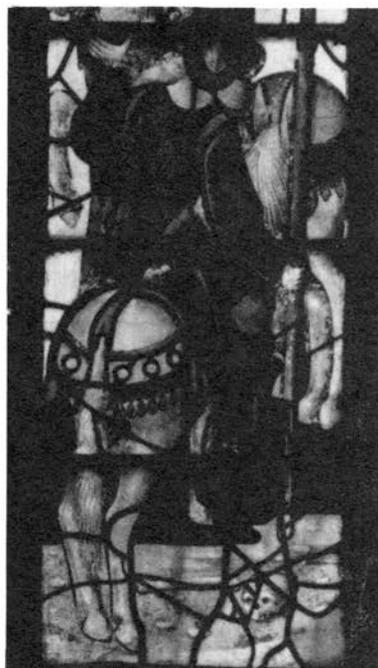
Pl. 1a. Fairford Church, The Judgement of Solomon (detail): head of one of Solomon's councillors.



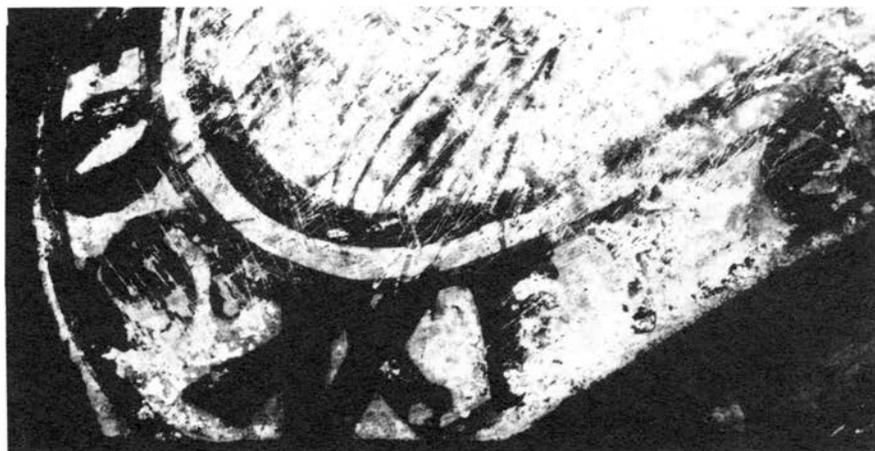
Pl. 1b. King's College Chapel, I, Messenger 2 (detail). P. A. L. Brunne.



a. Footsoldier (Sir John Savile).



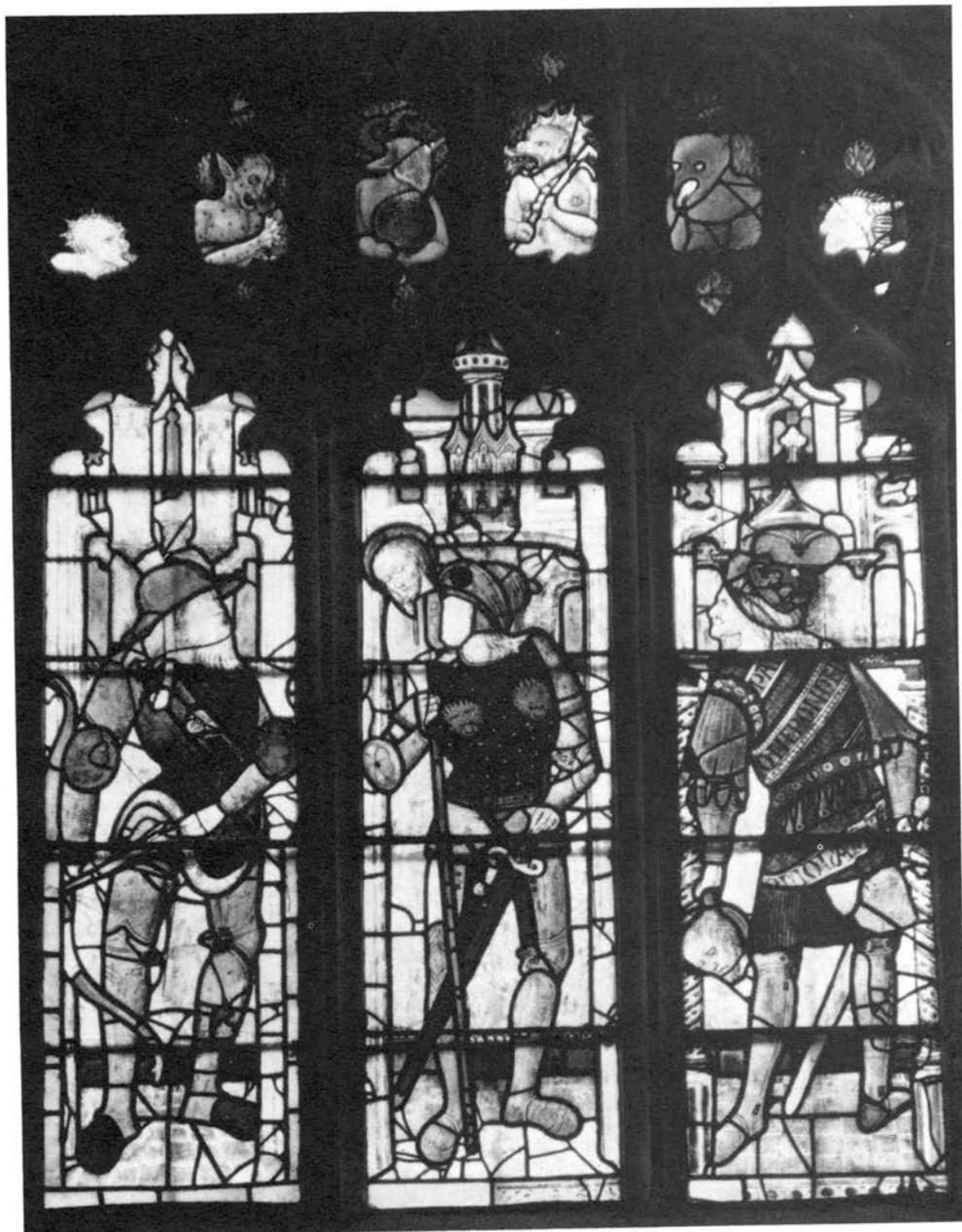
c. Horseman at the Crucifixion.



b. Detail of inscription in (a).



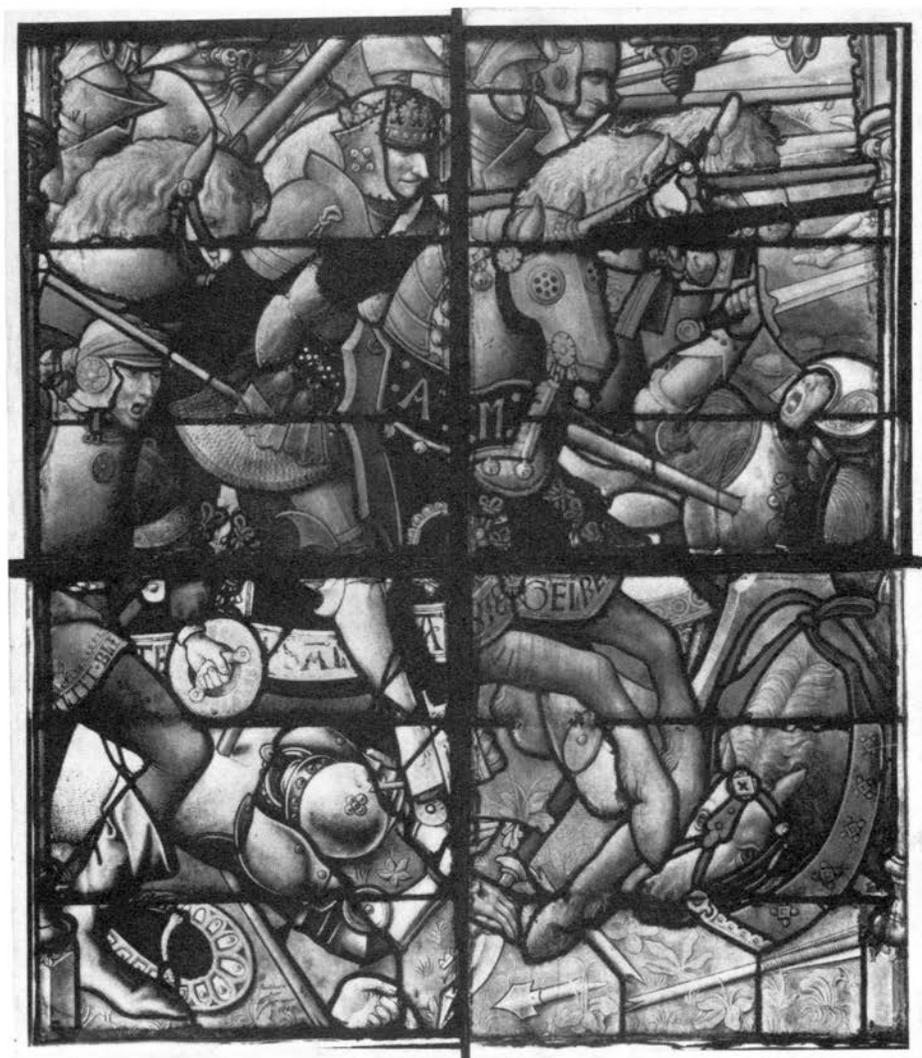
Pl. 3. Tapestry, Funeral of Turnus (detail); Spain, Patrimonio Nacional. *Patrimonio Nacional*.



Pl. 4. Fairford Church, north clerestory, three Persecutors of the Church. *National Monuments Record*.



Pl. 5. Fairford Church, east window (detail); the Flagellation and the Carrying of the Cross. *National Monuments Record*.



Pl. 6. Tournai Cathedral, south transept, Sigelbert routing Chilperic's Army; signed AM. A.C.L., Brussels



Pl. 7. The Man Struggling with Death, attributed to the Master AM.
New York, Pierpont Morgan Library.



Pl. 8a. King's College Chapel, IX, 3 (detail); God the Father.
P. A. L. Brunney.



Pl. 8b. Fairford Church, David's Judgement on the Amalekite (detail):
David.

DR. BALAM'S COMMONPLACE BOOKS

Mabel H. Potter

In June 1914 two manuscript collections of the works of John Donne, seventeenth-century poet and preacher, were discovered in England. One of them (Plates 1 and 2) appeared at G. David's bookstore in the Market Place, Cambridge, where it was purchased by Sir Geoffrey Keynes, and subsequently (1916) presented to the Cambridge University Library and catalogued *Add. MS. 5778 (C57)*; the other was discovered at Sotheby's in London, where it was purchased by Percy Dobell, antiquarian of Tunbridge Wells, and later (1932) given by an anonymous donor to the Harvard College Library and named the Dobell Manuscript (*Dob*). Both manuscripts are handsomely bound in old morocco decorated with gold tooling, and probably were made in the early seventeenth century.

In *C57* and *Dob* Donne's poems are inscribed in a clear, graceful hand, and spaced evenly in the centre of the page. In startling contrast to this neat chirography is a quantity of miscellaneous material written in the blank pages and margins in a large, sprawling, and sometimes illegible hand. This writer disregarded punctuation, left sentences incomplete, and often neglected to disclose the source of his quotations. He came into possession of the manuscripts in the latter part of the seventeenth century, and used them as commonplace books. But the marginalia in *C57* and *Dob* vary widely from those of the usual commonplace book, in that they represent the work of a single author rather than an assortment of items from various sources. This writer has filled the pages with a commentary which reveals an extraordinary interest in poets, politicians, and prelates, and also adds to our knowledge of the Isle of Ely during this significant period of English history. Some of his writing is trivial and incoherent, couched in the vocabulary of the tavern. But even these fragmentary records from the pen of a contemporary observer bear valuable testimony to the literary and political trends of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.

The author of the marginalia has been identified as William Balam of Ely, in Cambridgeshire.¹

William Balam of Ely
1651-1726

The little city of Ely has changed in many respects during the past three hundred years, but it still retains an aura of antiquity. Situated on a rise a few miles north of Cambridge it is the focal point of that portion of East Anglia known as the Isle of Ely. At the top of the incline stands the massive Ely Cathedral which dominates the town

and surrounding countryside for miles around. This magnificent example of Norman architecture has endured the ravages of decay and vandalism through many centuries and today is one of the glories of Britain. To the south of the Cathedral is the Bishop's House and the Deanery, protected by the ancient wall, with its famous "Porta", through which one gains access to the cathedral park and monastery, the latter founded in 970 by the Benedictine monks, and in more recent years used as a boys' school. The original Bishop's Palace (now a school for physically handicapped children) stands to the west of the Cathedral, and across the green St. Mary's Church and Vicarage. North, east, and south of the Cathedral lies the close, where in the seventeenth century many of the leading families in Ely lived. Most of the houses in the close are medieval buildings of the monastery which were converted into residences at the Reformation in the sixteenth century (Pl.3. a). North of the cathedral close, across the High Street (originally Stepil Row), stands the Lamb Hotel, in 1584 "The House of the Holy Lamb". The inn signboard still carries a painting of the Agnus Dei - the Lamb of God. Further down the High Street is the old marketplace, square and paved, which comes to life on Thursdays when tradesmen from all over the adjacent counties bring their wares and arrange them under bright-coloured awnings. One can buy everything from fish to fertilizer, and the market swarms with local townspeople and visitors from neighbouring villages. At the foot of the street is the River Ouse with its quayside and little boats painted blue, red, and yellow. This is the site of one of the ancient landings, when almost the only method of transportation was by water. Since the middle of the nineteenth century progress has been assumed by the railway, and a continual procession of small trains with shrill whistles bustle in and out of the railroad station nearby. But three hundred years ago Ely was surrounded by water for the greater part of the year and became virtually a wasteland, except for the fenmen who waded through the flooded areas in high boots or on stilts and did a flourishing business in fishing and wild duck shooting.

Much has been written about the lowlands of this region known as the Fens. During the years before the draining of the fens was achieved, the inhabitants of the Isle of Ely suffered severe hardships from the flooding of miles of flat country between Cambridge and Len-Regis (King's Lynn). Even though they built their villages on high ground, wherever it could be found, and took care to be protected by dikes, the coastal storms and swollen rivers brought destruction each year and often rendered the inhabitants homeless. Sometimes a village was completely isolated, as in the case of Whittlesey, where the farmers for a great part of the year "lived upon bread and water, and went all day into the Fens to get reeds, wood and hassocks by which they got their living".² Insanitary conditions prevailed. A visitor to Ely in the seventeenth century describes the town as "a perfect Quagmire" which "breeds vermin", and "tho my chamber was near 20 steps up I had frogs and slow worms and snails in my Room".³ Today there is little trace of this early menace except an occasional muddy road. One who travels in East Anglia looks out upon a landscape of orderly design, set in a pattern of dark furrowed fields alternating with those of yellow-brown and bright green, with only a windmill or a clump of trees to disturb its symmetry.

The city of Ely was significant in the Civil War. During his army career Oliver Cromwell made Ely his headquarters, and used the Vicarage of St. Mary's as a garrison for his troops. He held the position of farmer of the tithes of the two parish churches, Holy Trinity and St. Mary's (1636-1649), and in 1643 became Governor of the Isle of Ely. Cromwell's association with Ely began at an early age, for his mother, Elizabeth Steward before she married Robert Cromwell, grew up in Stuntney Manor, one mile to the east (Pl.3.b.). Cromwell succeeded to his uncle's estate in 1636. This fine old manor house stood, although precariously, on the hillside until recently, but has now succumbed to destruction like many other landmarks.

Ely was an important stronghold of the Anglican Church in the latter part of the seventeenth century. The Diocese of Ely was extensive and covered portions of several counties. The bishop was Lord of the Isle and held almost unlimited administrative and judicial powers. In the middle of the seventeenth century the bishop of the See was Matthew Wren, whose term of office (1638-1667) was interrupted by a sojourn of eighteen years in the Tower of London. During his early reign as bishop he was overzealous in his efforts to stamp out Puritanism in East Anglia, and his high-handed methods of dealing with the clergy led to his removal in 1642. He was reinstated in 1660.

In this setting William Balam was born 11 July, 1651, to William and Katherine Balam. He was of gentry stock and boasted a genealogy that can be traced back to the eleventh century, complete with coat-of-arms.⁴ Members of this family were great landowners, and tenants of the bishop's manors as well as lessees of messuages held by the Crown. The name of Balam (spelled ten different ways) appears often in the early Court Rolls, and for many centuries the Balam family controlled property in Cambridgeshire and Norfolk. They were respected members of the community and held important positions.⁵

William's grandfather was Robert Balam of Elm (1580-1640), son of Charles Balam, Lord of Isleham, and Mary Peyton Balam (who later married Sir Richard Cox, son of Richard Cox, Bishop of Ely). Robert inherited his father's fortune in 1592 and came into possession of extensive property. One of these holdings was Beaufort Hall, a manor of 776 acres in the village of Friday Bridge near Elm (held by the Balam family until 1699). Another one was a messuage at Stathe Dyche, including St. Roche's Chapel, which housed the Guild of the Holy Trinity for many years. Robert attended St. John's College, Cambridge, and in 1603 married Alice Irby, daughter of Sir Anthony Irby of Whaplode, Lincolnshire.⁶ Eight of their many children lived to the age of maturity.⁷

The fifth son of Robert Balam was William (1620-1684), father of William Balam who is the subject of this chronicle. He attended Clare College, Cambridge (1637), was admitted to Lincoln's Inn (1639), and married Katherine Goodricke (1622-1678), member of a prominent Ely family who claimed relationship to Thomas Goodricke, Bishop of Ely (1534-1554) and Lord High Chancellor of England. The Goodrickes were wealthy landowners, and their name appears on many property deeds in the Isle of Ely. In the annals of the Goodricke family, Katherine is said to have married "Capt.

Wm. Balam",⁸ but no record of his commission has been discovered. It is probable that he served in the Parliamentary forces like his newly acquired Goodricke relatives. At least three of their children, besides young William, survived infancy: John, who died before he reached his majority; Anne, who married James Verdon, Rector of East Dereham (d. 1741), and Mary, who married Henry Towers of Gaywood (d. 1710).

This branch of the Balam family was "one of the principal families of Ely",⁹ and William Balam the elder was a leader in the community. He was a member of Holy Trinity parish and served as one of its prestigious church wardens. In 1660 he was appointed one of the Governors of Parson's Charity Committee (founded by Thomas Parsons in the fifteenth century), an important organization which administered the "Lands and Possessions of the Poor of Ely", and for nearly ten years he signed its accounts.¹⁰ William Balam senior also made a last stand against the draining of the Fens. There was bitter opposition to this gigantic undertaking, chiefly on account of the loss of fish and fowl and reeds for thatching, on which the poor depended for a livelihood. When the draining of the Bedford Level was considered, and received the sanction of Bishop Wren, who gave 961 acres of the "comons and wastes" to the improvement, it was opposed by a group of inhabitants led by William Balam and four other influential citizens of Ely. They lost their case, and the Act was passed in 1664. The elder Balam and Bishop Wren appear to have been at odds for many years. In a letter written after his father's death, the younger William refers to "those hardships my father suffered under Bishop Wren", and there is evidence that the elder Balam openly resisted the bishop's attempt to raise his rent:

1661. 29 July. The Petition of *Wm. Balaam and Tho. Culpeper, Esqrs.* was this Day read.

*Ordered that it be recommended to the Lord Bishop of Ely to renew the Petitioners Lease upon reasonable Terms and Mr. Speaker is desired to move his Lordship effectually from this House.*¹¹

During their lifetime, the Balam family owned a good deal of property in Ely, including a public-house in St. Mary's Street (King's Arms) adjacent to the inn, a tenement in Broad Lane, and a part interest in the manor and grange of Newbarns.¹² Even as late as 1949 there was a large tract of land south of Ely known as "Balam's Pieces".¹³ In 1667 William and Katherine Balam left Ely for Wendling, Norfolk, where they resided for several years. On their return in 1678 they became lessees of the bishop's demesnes in Downham (near Ely), and lived in Downham Manor, where Katherine died in 1678, and William in 1684.

Young William Balam grew up in Ely. The Balam family occupied lodgings in the cathedral close which they leased from the bishop. On one side they looked out on the burial-ground in the shadow of the great cathedral. On the other side they surveyed Stepil Row, with its inn and pub, where villagers gathered to sample the ale and discuss the most popular topics of the day: politics, religion, and weather. One can imagine young William, as a child, listening to the cathedral bells chime the quarter-hours; watching the priests in their colourful regalia proceed to evensong; playing hide-and-

seek among the tombstones; and skipping down through the meadow to the bottom of the street to see the ferryboats come and go at the landing. It was from this same landing that William Balam may have journeyed to school in Cambridge (the road from Ely to Cambridge was not begun until one hundred years later).

William Balam's education followed established gentry tradition. From the meagre records available we learn that he received his elementary schooling in Cambridge and was admitted to St. John's College there at the age of fourteen. His status was that of a "gentleman-pensioner", which included special privileges and distinctive dress, in contrast to the "sizar" who performed various tasks in return for his education. Every undergraduate was required to have a tutor¹⁴ who was responsible for his charge's moral behaviour as well as his intellectual development. But no one could exercise control over the minds of these budding scholars. They were exposed to some of the most liberal thinkers of the age, and much time was spent in the extra-curricular pastime of inflammatory discussion. The curriculum was based on conservative lines and conducted in the traditional method of lecture and debate: Greek and Latin language and literature, philosophy (broadly interpreted to include ethics, logic, metaphysics, and rhetoric), mathematics, and science. Theology was offered to those who were preparing to take orders; but the opportunities to study medicine were meagre, and students of physic often finished their training elsewhere. Prospective lawyers went to the Inns of Court.

William Balam received his B.A. from Cambridge University in 1671 and was admitted to Lincoln's Inn in 1672. In choosing a legal career, Balam had shown wisdom. There was plenty of business for an attorney in the Isle of Ely. In addition to the usual legal cases (debts, divorces, patents, wills, etc.) there was much litigation concerned with flood control. County records contain many petitions by the inhabitants of Ely, all the way from demanding that planks be laid "to prevent man and horse from sinking in the mud", to dismissing the ferryman for his bad behaviour. One interesting document (1676), which suggests an analogy to modern transportation problems, is a petition, with seventy-two names appended, that "the back water be stopt up soe that boats may not pass that way but be constrained to come through the town".¹⁵ Also, there was a great deal of business having to do with mortgages and transfers of property in the Fens, where land could be cheaply bought.¹⁶

In 1674, William Balam became secretary to Peter Gunning, Bishop of Ely, and assumed the legal duties pertaining to this office, a major part of which had to do with diocesan rents. His careful records are neatly inscribed in his notebook.¹⁷ This book was also used to list his personal expenses as secretary to the bishop. Balam's position necessitated frequent travel to the bishop's headquarters in London (a fifteen-hour journey), which provided him with an opportunity to see his friends and enjoy the advantages of the city.

In 1681 Balam was appointed Registrar of the Diocese of Ely *pro termino vitae naturalis*, a post that he held for forty-five years, during which he served under six bishops. This was an honourable position and a lucrative job despite Balam's opinion

to the contrary ("Wee registers are but Church mice, very poor, everyone knows"). In 1682 he received an LL.D. (*com. reg.*)¹⁸ from Cambridge University. But with the death of Bishop Gunning two years later, Balam's future appeared to be less assured. Francis Turner, who succeeded Gunning as Bishop of Ely, did not share his predecessor's enthusiasm for the incumbent secretary. Even before he took office the new bishop showed his antipathy by refusing to renew a lease of property in Downham that had been held by Balam's father, to which the younger Balam felt entitled.¹⁹ In that same year he refused Balam's petition for the post of "Steward of the Bishop's Courts" relinquished by Sir Robert Wright. This antagonism may have dated back to the years when Balam and Turner were students at St. John's College (1666) and Turner succeeded Gunning as Master of St. John's (1670). But it is more likely that it stemmed from their political differences. Bishop Turner was firmly committed to the royal succession; Balam was an advocate of popular rights. During the years when Britain was suffering the growing pains of a two-party system, tension was high in the town of Ely, as elsewhere, and plots and rumours flourished. It was in this period that Balam appears to have suffered depression and disillusionment that amounted almost to a persecution phobia. In a letter to Bishop Turner²⁰ he bemoans the departure of a "Friend" (Gunning?), deplores the Bishop's lack of confidence in him, and denounces the machinations of his enemies who have misrepresented and maligned him. (One of these "unscrupulous men" appears to have been the Reverend Mr Bincks.)

Subsequently, Bishop Turner appointed Balam his secretary, and the rift in their relations appeared to be temporarily mended. For several years thereafter Balam was an important member of the bishop's entourage. He looked after Bishop Turner's correspondence and served as a channel of communication between the bishop and his petitioners. Apparently Balam had great sympathy for the poor, and often contributed to their needs. In a letter to the Inspector of the Registry, he defends his practice of overlooking taxes in the case of an extraordinarily poor client, and in another letter he asks the Chancellor of Ely for his support in a charity case. His notebook contains several entries of small personal gifts ("To a poor man at Hadnam ... 10 sh., To a poor woman05", etc.).

In 1686 Bishop Turner nominated Balam Justice of the Peace for the Isle of Ely.²¹ It probably was about this time that Balam's aspirations for a political career began to develop. In addition to his keen interest in public affairs, he possessed an intense pride in the achievements of his ancestors and was ambitious to carry on the family tradition. Family prestige was important during the latter half of the seventeenth century, and political power was shared among county families who assumed the duties of parliamentary representation. Encouraged by the bishop's apparent friendliness, Balam proceeded to make long-range plans for a career which included a distinguished County post, an ancestral estate, and a brilliant marriage. He cultivated the acquaintance of influential citizens, and became a protégé of Sir William Wren (d. 1689);²² and he made sure of adequate means to promote this scheme. Only one hurdle remained, and that was the sanction of the bishop.

In 1690 Francis Turner was deprived of the bishopric for refusing to take the Oath of

Allegiance to William and Mary. But before his departure, he succeeded in ruining Balam's most cherished hopes. The details are revealed many years later in a letter that Balam wrote to a creditor.²³ According to this account, the bishop told his secretary that "hee should be very glad if I could shape any way to Him by which Hee could serve mee". Balam continues:

I let Him know that I was contractive with Sir William Wren for the Bailiwick of the Isle – a very Honorable place and worth 200 lb. per Annum – that I had a Couz: German and Turky merchant in the City²⁴ that would lay down whatever Sum was necessary for it – and upon obtaining this place would be attended with the match of an Heiress of my own family – and that I should be restored to the ancient seat of it at Elm²⁵ near Wisbech.

Finding the bishop "extremely pleased with all this", Balam went to close the business with Sir William and

found him dead in his Lodgings that very day but half an hour before my coming to him ... I applyed immediately to his Ldp who pitying the misfortune of the deceased told [me] ... Hee woud give it [the post] to Mr Edwards of Wisbech²⁶ ... accordingly sent for Him up to London ...

This Sr was a stab to all my futurity of Life.

The last sentence is an eloquent understatement. Ambition and pride had suffered a shattering blow. His well-laid plans had miscarried; he was shocked and enraged by the bishop's perfidy; and he was humiliated before family, friends, and associates.

The reason for Bishop Turner's refusal to give Balam this coveted position is not clear. Even more puzzling is his appointment of Dr Balam to several County offices that same year, one of which was the Bailiwick of the County of Cambridge except for the Isle of Ely. These offices are recorded in the Cathedral Library:²⁷

1. Seneschallus de Wisbech [Steward of the Bishop's Manor of Wisbech Barton where he would preside at the Manorial Courts].
2. Bailiff of the Liberties in the County of Cambridge (excluding the Isle of Ely) and also in Middlesex and the City of London [including the Bishop's Palace and estate in Holborn].
3. Master of the Game of Deers, Conies, Hares, Pheasants, Partridges, Swans, Cranes, Wildgeese, Duck, Mallard and Herons and of all Beasts and fowles of Warren in and throughout the said Isle of Ely.
4. Bailiff of Fairs and Markets.

All of these posts were for the term of his natural life.

In 1691 Simon Patrick was elevated to the bishopric of Ely and brought with him John Wilson as his secretary. During the following years Balam was a prominent lawyer and consultant on ecclesiastical matters. Also, he was active in promoting various enterprises: a movement to reduce taxes, increase salaries for the clergy, and unite the offices of Registrarship of Archdeaconry and Bishop's Consistory in one

person, which he believed to be advantageous to the Court (and incidentally to himself). In spite of his recent disappointment, Balam still aspired to a political career. In 1695 he again became Justice of the Peace for the Isle of Ely.²⁸ He also ran unsuccessfully for Member of Parliament for Cambridge.²⁹

In 1698 the office of Head Bailiff of the Isle of Ely, held by Thomas Edwards of Wisbech, again became vacant, and Balam's hopes rose once more. He forthwith applied for the post, but to his dismay Bishop Patrick refused to appoint him. Instead, he named the incumbent's son, Thomas Edwards, to succeed his father.

Bishop Patrick died in 1707 and was succeeded by John Moore (1707-1714), who was renowned as a friend of scholars. His successor, William Fleetwood (1714-1723) was a distinguished preacher and antiquary. Apparently, Bishop Fleetwood had a high regard for Balam, for in 1714 he nominated him for Justice of the Peace for the Isle of Ely, among other dignitaries.³⁰ There is no record of Balam's association with Thomas Green, Bishop of Ely (1723-1738), under whom he served less than three years.

Some years earlier, Balam had taken lodgings in Cambridge. The only other member of his household appears to have been his maid, Elizabeth Stagg, who is mentioned in his will. Balam always manifested an active interest in St. John's College, and he was a member of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, known as the "Round Church", with which the college was affiliated. He died in Cambridge and was buried there 28 January, 1726. The major portion of his estate passed to his nephew, William Towers, Master of Christ's College, Cambridge, and (later) Vice-Chancellor of Cambridge University.³¹

Commonplace Books

There is no evidence to determine how or when *C57* and *Dob* came into the possession of Dr William Balam. He may have acquired them through inheritance, gift, or book sale. Neither one of the manuscripts reveals a date of acquisition, but a few dated letters and references suggest that many of the marginalia were written just before or soon after the turn of the century.

The contents of the commonplace books stem from a variety of sources: personal comments and emotional outbursts; transcripts of letters and legal records; verses; quotations from many authors; and finally, a conglomeration of disconnected ideas, hurriedly jotted down, which probably originated in the London coffee houses that Balam frequented.

Like many commonplace books, *C57* and *Dob* abound in aphorisms. Hundreds of these "petty gospels" fill the blank pages, sometimes placed in categories. For example, one page is whimsically devoted to "women" and "hens". Often proper names are appended:

My Lord (Bishop Patrick) – a Hypocrite has his Prayer-book in his hand, God in his mouth, and the Devil in his heart.

Balam issues a few hints on gardening, expresses his interest in natural science, and

subscribes to the astrological pronouncements in Partridge's *Almanack*. Discouraging on music, he recommends "the Airs composed by Lully ..." and waxes eloquent over "the great Italian music of Scarlatti, Corelli, and Bassani". His comments on opera are less enthusiastic:

Mistress Albiniera in damd many languishing scenes and insipid airs ... poor and tiresome ... they swell their throats just like a nightingale ...

Many of Balam's entries deal with business concerns and legal matters (summaries of cases, a treatise defining property lines under the Bishop's Franchise, and two long dissertations on the Divine Right of Kings). A few letters are addressed to friends and relatives. One of these was written to young Tom Steward, Balam's ward, away at school, urging him to study more diligently:

If you think of your great family consider as well how great a merit is necessary to sett you on a Levell with it.

In contrast to this noble sentiment is a communication addressed to Balam's brother-in-law, the Reverend James Verdon, regarding a property title. His reply to the clergyman's claim is filled with ugly threats and invidious charges. A final taunt reads:

You know you carried away part of the house from Wendling to repair the louzy Vicarage ... I found it dismantled both of stable Dayry and Brewhouse.

But there is no trace of rancour in the letter Balam wrote to Sir Christopher Hatton, requesting a recommendation on behalf of a prospective tenant of Stuntney Manor:

Sir your goodness and Candor invites every mans relyance upon you ... if Sir Christopher Hatton is pleased to say that Holmes is a responsible tenant I will admitt Him mine tomorrow.

Another letter offers gratuitous advice to "My Nephew at Inns of Court":

... not Taverns and Plays but Arts and Arms should employ your youth and lay the foundation of an Honorable usefull Life ... a mans mind is certainly what Hee impresses on it - now who would have an ugly daubing instead of a fine beautiful picture ... pleasures want that true inward delight and are nothing but reall deformities to our more serious reflexions ...

And there is a memorandum of an unsatisfactory family gathering "upon a Goose at my Brother Towers his house in Norfolk on St. Luke's Day, 1708", which included Balam's sister (Mary Towers), his nephew (William Towers), and his cousin Jane. Apparently, Balam took this opportunity to be obnoxious in his choice of language ("words of noe ... prophane intention") and was sternly rebuked by his nephew, who was outraged to the point of telling his uncle to "goe to your Companions that are fitt for such discourses as this".

Dr William Balam had an absorbing interest in literature. The abundance of literary quotations and references which he scribbled in his commonplace books manifests a remarkable knowledge of poets and scholars, as well as an astonishing choice of occasion for their expression. The poetry of Milton is "graceful though difficult", while that of Benlowes is characterized as "Bombast"; a line from Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra* ("Age cannot wither her, nor custom stale her infinite variety") is included in a passionate declaration to a lady love; a business letter to Bishop Turner,³² bemoaning Balam's misfortunes, contains nine lines from Spenser's *Faerie Queene*; a humorous letter to a relative refers to Dryden's *Conquest of Granada*. Balam greatly admired Dryden, and may have known him personally ("my friend Dryden"). Obviously, he had less regard for Tom Brown, notorious writer of epigrams.³³ Quotations from many other sources include Bacon, Butler, Cowley, D'Avenant, Oldham, Otway, Prior, and Waller. Balam also uses Biblical and early church history references, as well as quotations from classical authors, Homer, Ovid, Virgil, and particularly Lucretius, a portion of whose *De Rerum Natura* he singled out for extensive critical commentary. His interest in modernization of the classics inspired him to copy more than one hundred lines of satirical verse currently published by Sir Richard Blackmore and Dr Samuel Garth. Often he would change a word or phrase, rearrange a line, or add a comment.

Balam's taste for satire and his zeal for textual improvement are revealed in his treatment of many of the literary quotations. Apparently, he did not aspire to creative writing,³⁴ but preferred to use his talents in the field of critical analysis.

Dr Balam's literary interest was centred in John Donne. He carefully studied the poems in *C57* and *Dob*, and also in two printed editions of Donne's poetry which he owned, and evidently considered himself qualified to assume the role of literary critic. He compared texts, changed words, corrected and supplied titles, amended the pagination, underscored lines and added his own interpretation. He also wrote a prose paraphrase of a portion of Donne's *Satire IV* and another satire attributed to Donne (*Satyre VII*), now thought to be spurious.

Balam's preoccupation with John Donne is perplexing, in view of Donne's declining popularity at the end of the seventeenth century and the development of a literary taste that was counter to Donne's style. But Dr Balam's marginal comment (*C57*):

Hee never Leaves a Subject without leaving men Satisfied with what Hee has said upon it

is indicative of his keen enjoyment of Donne's poems, and his comments show no sign of decreasing interest. No other reader of that period analyzed Donne's poetry with such painstaking care, or left a critique of so great a dimension.

The marginalia in *Dob*, and Dr Balam's predilection for John Donne, have been discussed in more detail elsewhere.³⁵ There are fewer pages in *C57*, but the entries

follow the general pattern of *Dob* and contain discourses on clergy, courts, and love. There is a marked absence of correspondence. On the front cover, in barely distinguishable letters, is written:

thes for [?] Coote att his loginge
in bow street next the bull Covent Garden.³⁶

At the beginning of the book, in the middle of the page, Balam wrote what might almost be regarded as a dedicatory title page, if adjacent comments on the composition of salt, the danger of eating sweets, and the function of the salivary glands did not somewhat diminish its effectiveness:

Discountenance the profligate in Life and opinion
Exclude them from all marks of your royall favour
Nature exerted in its utmost force
Strengthen the ordinary Jurisdiction of Ecclesiasticall
Courts now too much restrained and infeeble.

This portion of the manuscript contains Balam's sole poetic effort in *C57*. It appears to be a parody on the metaphorical extravagances then in vogue, particularly in regard to a lady's charms, and is reminiscent of Donne's elegy, *Loves Progress*,³⁷ which satirizes the Petrarchan lover. Balam's textual improvements are in evidence. Entitled *My last nights Dream on my M^{rs}*, it begins:

Last night I saw in instant Dream
The brightest beauty ere was seen
Clad in a veil of azure sky
Whilst hearts hir trophies round hir lye.

The poem continues on a superlative note, praising the lady's hair which resembles "threads of burnished gold", forehead "smooth as marble polish" (Donne: "smooth and plaine"), sparkling eyes brighter than "Orient Gemms or morning starr", "a comely nose of midget size", "Lipps soft and full" (Donne: "swelling lips").

Hir teeth sett even in a row
And full as white as driven snow [Donne: "chosen pearls"]
Hir breath as sweet as any Cows
That only on the rosebud brows[e]
Hir Voice as sweet as Violin
As if Apollo toucht the String [Donne: "Delphique Oracles"]

.....

But mortall man now comes thy woe
If from above such graces flow
Oh what oh what must be below?

The poem ends appropriately with a reference to Donne's *Extasie*:

Tis only known in extasy
When ravisht souls from bodies fly.

Directly following the collection of Donne's poetry that (with Balam's commentary) occupies the middle section of *C57*, there are nine poems written in a different hand:

Francis Bacon: "The World's a bubble" (no title in *C57*).

Thomas Carew (?): *Lippes and Eyes*.

John Donne: *Docter Dunn's Going into Bohemia Himne to Christ*.

Anon.: *Of Friendship* ("Friendship on earth wee may as easily find").³⁸

Francis Beaumont: *An Elegy on ... the Countess of Rutland*,
An Elegy on the Lady Markham.

Sir Henry Wotton: *On his Love's Inconstancy*.

John Donne: *The Broaken Heart*.

Anon.: *Verses on the Excellency of his M^s*. ("Excellent Mistris, brighter then the Moone").

The last poem in the book is written in Balam's hand: *The Hystory and fall of the Conformity Bill being an excellent ballad to the Tune of the Ladyes fall or Chevy Chase*. This is a political poem of thirty-six stanzas, and was popular during the reign of Queen Anne. The name "Robert Wisdome" is appended to the ballad, but it has also been attributed to Arthur Maynwaring and Lieutenant-General Mordaunt.

The last pages of *C57* for the most part reflect "coffee house chatt" like Balam's other commonplace books. Scraps of poetry include lines from William D'Avenant's *Upon the Fables of Aesop Paraphras'd in Verse*, with Balam's emendations, and eight lines of a poem beginning "Rogues are for whores and honest men for wedding". Some space is allotted to "The Case of James and Rebecca Pitts ... one Dr Balam having been appointed ... to enlist union and accord between them". This entry is important in supplying the only date in *C57*, "this last fifteenth of January, 1703". Another page containing Balam's expense account in "The Case of Mr Pitts versus Barnes" reveals a varied assortment of places chosen for consultation:

Shepherds Walk

The lake where wee did meet by the Fleet Prison

Fishmongers Hall

The Globe by Moregate.

An epicurean note reads: "A Flip at the Tippet".

There are more entries of a strictly personal nature in *C57* than in *Dob*. These range from laundry lists to medicinal cures. One notation reads, "Quare my Lord Bacon's Naturall History his cola plasm for the Gout".³⁹ "Dr Baynard" is frequently mentioned as a dispenser of remedies for ailments both physical and mental:

Palsy is cured by mustard seed and Horseradish ...

Joy dilates the senses - keeps the mind bright ...

Walnuts fortify the brain and augment the Animall Spirits ...

Eggs make the hair of head and beard black ...

No doubt it was this peripatetic medicine man who advocated the therapy:

Walk with your bare feet upon Daysies and you cure the Gout.

Dr Balam did not confine his literary efforts to *C57* and *Dob*. At least two other manuscripts contain his writing, both of which are owned by the Cambridge University Library. One of these, *C.C. 95,577*, is a small notebook used for legal records. It contains valuable letters and documents and apparently was compiled over a period of many years. Included in its pages is a copy of a letter from Bishop Cox to Queen Elizabeth, dated 1577 (p. 123); a list of diocesan rents beginning in 1601; the text of the opposition to the draining of the Bedford Level, 1664; a copy of the will of Alice Balam, 1692 (p. 131); a portion of the Hatton correspondence (to 1694);⁴⁰ notations of deeds and patents and lawsuits relating to the bishops of Ely; and many other records. These are written in several different hands.

One unusual entry is a record of the sale of a portion of Bishop Gunning's goods after his decease:

Dr. Balam's Chamber	{	A Bedsted matt and Cord Cantoon Curteins Tester and Head Cloth 1 Featherbed and Bolster 1 Flock Bolster one pillow One Coverlet 2 Blankets 5 Chairs 2 Spanish Tables one grate with Brasses and all ye hangings about ye room	}	2-00-00
		<i>In the Kitching</i>		
		5 Spitts 4 Warming pans 6 pair of Andirons Brasses 4 pair of Doggs and Brasses 1 pair of Iron doggs 1 pair of Fireshovells 1 plate frame 1 frying pan 2 dripping pans 3 Gridirons 1 Fishkettle 1 Brass pot 2 Skillets 1 Iron mortar 2 tinn pastry pans 1 Tinn dripping-pan 1 Tinn roaster 2 Peates 1 poudring Tubb 2 Tables one Beam and Scales - 84 lb. of Leaden Weight 335 lb. of Pewter - 143 of Brass at 8d. per pound	}	10-00-00

Another item (p. 8), "Bishop Wren's Directions for keeping the Assizes", is primarily concerned with privileged guests and protocol. The last part of it reads:

provide horses with good old Hay

for wine you shall do well to have 100 bottles from Linn 65 claret 35 Sack ...
they must be well stopt tyed down and seald and must have good Corkes.

no Tobacco to be had in public room.

Let the Porter be prudent and Stout and admit no man else but according to appointment ... the Judge to be lodgd at the Deanery and there to have 2 beds if need be for his attendants.

The other manuscript, *Add. MS. 5779 (C5779)*, is an alphabetical index to Latin terms, compiled by Robert Stonehouse, and dated 10 March, 1681/2. A distinguishing feature is the bookplate which states that the volume was "sold by Charles Rawson, Stationer at the Golden Ball in St. Paules' Chaine nere Docters Commons London". This announcement is flanked by drawings of three heralds. The book contains 282 folios, most of which were left blank except for the Latin headings, and, since paper was at a premium, they were happily appropriated by Dr Balam for his efforts at self-expression. Like *C57* and *Dob*, much of the writing in *C5779* lacks logical sequence or chronological order. For example, there are quotations ranging from Pliny to Gower on a single page, in which Balam also disposes of Vanity, Chastity, Creditors, Judges, Atheists, Rogues, and Statesmen. Another page presents a golden opportunity for his talents under the Latin headings: *Anabaptismus*, *Anarchia*, *Anatomia*, *Animus*, *Antipathia*, *Antiquitas*, all of which he disregards in favour of an eloquent discourse on the wickedness of kings, the folly of eating salad dressing, and the dangers of philosophy. But many of the entries are of value in supplying the more personal aspects of Balam's life as well as his sentimental musings.

Dr Balam's commonplace books were among his most prized possessions. Whether he was at home, at work, or making the rounds of the coffee houses, one of these books was his constant companion, and his pen was never idle. Even at court he scribbled:

The Room is full as a Jayl and divided into Severall Wards like the Bedds of a Hospitall.

He copied arresting phrases:

A snuff box as long as the face of an old Andiron

Always waspish and dirty like an Actress at a morning rehearsal,

or yielded to an angry outburst:

I will not execute any Commission that has Captain Thomson's Name on it
I tell you plainly for I dare not of all men living venture his Yorkshire
Conscience with soe many prejudices as hang on it at present.

To many of his unidentified quotations he has appended exclamations: "There is a Rogue!" or "Oh mischievous Malignity of Soul!"

This tendency to what may euphemistically be called "roughness" manifests itself in much of Balam's writing, and sometimes deteriorates into violence and abuse. He is particularly allergic to Presbyterians, Roman Catholics, and Tories:

Presbyters ... Confound their babell of religion ... those vile malefactors
against the peace of Church and State

The Pope takes not God as Hee is but makes him new to his own ends and
shapes and forms him as his superstition pleases

The Jacobites always claim kindred with the Papists ... sure wee ought to
be exempt from the superintending of such Rogues as have noe protection
from the Laws of our country

The dismal wide mouth of a Tory rabble.

Balam was aware of this inclination to harshness. He writes: "Oh this unhappy tongue
of mine ... Lawless – Voluble – Destroying ..." But Dr Balam could also express
himself earnestly and gracefully when he hoped to win popular favour:

I always delighted to exercise myself in the open Campaign of the publiq good –
not in the inclosures of my particular ends and respects.

This compelling urgency for self-expression in Dr Balam's commonplace books has
resulted in a collection of memoranda which clearly reveal an active mind and varied
interests. Whatever the subject, he is well-informed and his capacity for
argumentation is boundless.

Political Comments

A large number of the notes in Dr Balam's commonplace books relate to politics
and religion. Toward the end of the seventeenth century political speeches and tracts
were increasingly available in print, and in 1702 the first English newspaper was
published in London. Balam was well-read and articulate. His commonplace books
contain many of his own reactions to the opinions of current writers, and some of his
quotations stem from earlier sources.

The early eighteenth century was a time of critical importance for Britain. No one
was under public scrutiny more than the reigning monarch of England. Extracts from
royal speeches dating back to the time of King Charles I are scattered through Balam's
manuscripts. He quotes with some disaffection a passage from the first speech of
Charles II to his House of Commons:

...the national Harmony is always the sweetest when the Prince and the People
tune well together ... Look not upon this as a threat for I scorn to threaten any
but my equals.

He quotes from a speech of King William III regarding the public debt:

The English (says King William) ought to keep sound this Maxim that they shall
never be losers who trust to a Parliamentary Security,⁴¹

which elicits from Balam the protest:

An extorted revenue disables us by Legale and Voluntary supplies to express our affection to his Majesty and to cherish his to us.

He quotes Queen Anne as saying, petulantly:

I will have noe Godolphin-men ... noe Marlboro men ... noe squadron men. ... I care not what they are soe they are none of these ...

and recites a riddle in vogue:

Here is a health to the Queen and the Lord Keeper right – let her have many summers [Sir John Somers] to ripen her judgment – and never let her Summer set [Duke of Somerset] let noe ominous Birds build in hir palace – noe Rookeries [Sir George Rook] disturb Hir rest nor Finches [Sir Daniel Finch] pinch the buds of the best flowers in hir Garden. let noe Enemies lurk in Hedges [Sir Charles Hedges] ...

Statesmen share the spotlight with royalty and receive their share of criticism. Balam brands as “a piece of studied banter” the sentiment that “all places both in Church and State are filled with the wisest men and most steadfast ministry that ages have seen or known among us”. He quotes several passages from the speeches of John Pym (1584-1643), Parliamentary leader and powerful speaker, famous for having contrived the impeachment of Lord Strafford and other celebrated statesmen. One of them draws from Balam the comment, “Pym in a large studied Oration ... full of hyperbolicall figures and insulting Eloquence”.

The most vehement protagonist in the struggle against the *status quo* was Henry Sacheverell (1674-1724), ecclesiastic and politician, whose inflammatory sermons rocked Britain in the early eighteenth century. In one chronicle alone he is called “trifling incendiary”, “whiffling incendiary”, “impudent incendiary”, and “dangerous incendiary”.⁴² Balam writes, “If moderation be a Vice I will doe the Dr the Justice to acquit him from the least tincture of it”. The most violent diatribes of this Tory fanatic were directed against the heads of state. Maintaining that the Church was in danger due to the negligence of the Whig ministers, he fanned the flames of revolution. His trial in 1710 only increased the agitation, and his impeachment was the immediate cause of the downfall of the administration. Balam writes:

Such seditious flames never broke out from the pulpit upon any well establish Government before ... this Sacheverell is the very Oliver Cromwell of the church as Oliver Cromwell may be said to be the Sacheverell of the House of Commons.

Sacheverell is to be tried by Numbers and not Leviticus – Law and Righteousness may flourish where there is poverty but only Corruption where there is power and wealth.

Under the heading, "Sacheverell's Sermon", Balam writes:

His wondrous Vanity has hammered upon his brains soe long that it has beat them as thin as Leaf Gold ... you may blow away the sense of them like a Cobweb ... all their Glories Sullied and betrayed by a malicious and disingenuous Misrepresentation.

Probably no event of the early eighteenth century stirred the pride and imagination of the British people more than their military triumphs over the French, under the leadership of John Churchill, Duke of Marlborough (1650-1722). The wars had been bloody and costly, and it was primarily due to this military wizard that the enemy was vanquished. There was universal rejoicing after the Battle of Ramillies (1706), temporarily transcending party lines, and elevating Marlborough to the status of hero to both Tory and Whig. Balam writes, "Marlboro the only man that has awak't remembrance of those Valiant deeds done so long ago in France". With patriotic fervour he quotes lines from Matthew Prior's famous poem celebrating this victory:

The Foe with lessen'd Rage disputes the Field
And Blenheim's Fame again is in Ramillia known.⁴³

Another comment shows the prestige that Marlborough commanded, "Marlboro made mee great in hope Hee himself should Govern England and mee".

On the other hand, John Cutts (1661-1707), Member of Parliament for Cambridgeshire, did not inspire Balam with enthusiasm. Although Cutts was a popular hero, and fought beside Marlborough in the Battle of Blenheim, his military career appears to have resolved itself into constant attendance on the King, and the writing of mediocre poetry:

My Lord Cutts – tis great pittty that any man should be more a favorite and less a Soldier then Himself ...

Balam also expresses disappointment in "Argile", who presumably was Archibald Campbell, first Duke of Argyll:

A young nobleman of great hopes ... had Hee inherited the principles of his family Hee must have been the Head of the very party Hee acted against ... but with his morals abandoned ... Hee flew in the face of his grandfather's injured grace ... Joynd with his murderers ... the betrayers of their Country and placed himself at the head of that very party who had trampled on the blood of his family.

No one receives more praise from Balam than John Tillotson (1630-1694), Archbishop of Canterbury, eminent preacher and creator of a unique literary style. Bishop Tillotson adhered to a rationalistic philosophy, and was a leader of the group of liberals called Latitudinarians:

Of Dr Tillotson – tis true that never any man knew how to use his reason better

or make it more prevalent by those naturall but strong and pressing Turns that Hee gave it – Hee says nothing but what gives weight force and dignity to his discourse.

Balam was interested in philosophy. He refers to Aristotle, Plato, Pythagoras, and he had digested the theories of Bacon and Descartes. He had been exposed to the Cambridge Platonists, who laid the foundation for the liberalism of the eighteenth century. The doctrines of John Locke and their political implications were being widely discussed. Balam quotes Locke (“the Originall of all Ideas are Sensation and Reflexion”),⁴⁴ and brands as “noble nonsense” the contrary view held by some Cambridge Platonists that “there is a natural union between the will of man and the representation of Ideas which Gods immensity conteins”.

A little earlier Thomas Hobbes was making himself heard on politics and religion. Balam characterizes him as:

Old Hobbs – that new evangelist that makes the Joys of Heaven more indifferent and the pains of Hell less formidable than anyone before him has done.

Hobbes’ doctrines as outlined in his *Leviathan* (1651) were sufficiently revolutionary to arouse Edward Hyde, first Earl of Clarendon (1609-1674), historian and statesman, who vigorously refuted them (1670). Apparently Balam carefully followed this debate, for he copies quotations from Clarendon’s critical work,⁴⁵ complete with page numbers:

My Lord Clarendon is of the opinion that Thucidides⁴⁶ teaches the Art of Mutiny and sedition – answer to Hobbs, p. 85.

says my Lord Clarendon, with the Schoolmen I am not very much in Love ... do wish that very many of them had been bred artificers and Handicraft Men in which they woud have done this world much more good and Learning much less hurt – agt. Hobbs, p. 302.

Balam could never resist an amusing aside:

My Lord Clarendon observed that the half-hearted and half-witted people made much the major part of both Houses.

Balam comments on George Berkeley’s *Discourse of Passive Obedience* (1712):

All our Lives and fortunes are subject to the Laws and not to the Queens Will – but this Irish Priest tells us all our Lives are given by a Divine Commission into hir power,

and adds, with prophetic vision, “Hee hopes to swallow down a good Bishoprick for this”.⁴⁷

One of the most colourful personalities in the early eighteenth century was Richard Bentley (1662-1742), Master of Trinity College, Cambridge. This brilliant classical

scholar and divine was at variance with his Fellows for many years, and he is almost as famous for the succession of arrests, petitions, suits, and trials that plagued his career as for his scholastic achievements. It is not clear to what extent Balam was involved in the interminable quarrels between Bentley and his colleagues, but as Registrar of the Diocese he undoubtedly knew him and followed his case carefully. Bishop Moore was legal "Visitor" of Trinity College, and presided at Bentley's first trial in 1714, but did not live to pass the final judgment that would deprive Bentley of his degrees. Moore's successor, Bishop Fleetwood, declined to act, and the next trial took place in 1718, in the Court of the Vice-Chancellor, Dr Thomas Gooch, who presided as Judge. Balam's name appears only once in the legal records, at the end of a detailed account of this famous case, and adds drama to the already supercharged proceedings.

*The Grace had not passed above Half an Hour, before Dr Balam came to Town, who was sent for on Purpose to exclude Dr Otway, and to give a 2^d Stop to the Business. This is said to be a Mistake.*⁴⁸

The last sentence is ambiguous. The "Mistake" could refer to an error in the record, signifying mistaken identity, or to an individual opinion deploring Balam's presence. But Balam clearly made the mistake of arriving too late to block proceedings against Bentley. The reference to Dr Otway is significant. He was a member of the Caput,⁴⁹ and hostile to Bentley. But Dr Otway was also a non-juror, and, had the oath been administered to him before a vote was demanded for Bentley's censure, he could have been removed, and his place filled by a supporter of Bentley. Dr Gooch was well aware that this would alter the outcome of the trial and, since he opposed Bentley, refused to administer the oath. Apparently it was then that Bentley's friends made a last-minute effort in his behalf, and sent for Dr Balam to force the Vice-Chancellor's hand.⁵⁰

Balam offers several comments on Richard Bentley. One of these is a harsh indictment:

Dr Bentley seems to have noe regard to either Vertue or learning otherwise as they may be coincident with his Vanity or interest.

Another comment reads:

Bentley tells you it were noe difficulty if the publiq had a regard to it to make the English Tongue inimitable.

Another refers to Bentley's personal extravagances and expensive improvements to his lodge:

A commutation for the Master's perquisites of bread beer fuel Coach and Garden allowances woud have been agreed in one Day had this incendiary meteor been out of the Way.

Still another comment contains an amusing personal reference:

Dr Bentley said of the Queens bounty of 100 lbs. that it was not above 3 farthings a man – nobody can deny that Hee has laid the Varnish on thick – tis pity soe

many fine words and sentences so well put together and soe artfully turnd shoud have neither truth nor sense it them ... when at prayers by his careless behaviour Hee plainly discovers that Hee thinks Himself above that business and is continually giving Himself airs with his Snuff-Box ... when at St. Mary's Hee continually sleeps in despite of his snuff-box.

Balam concludes:

I doe affirm that tis now in the power of the Vice Master and Seniors to shutt up his Lodge and expell him the College for what Hee has done.

Balam also mentions, with some irritation, four associates and adversaries of Bentley: Edward Miller, Fellow of Trinity College, who led the initial opposition against Bentley ("You shoud have been quite sure Mr Miller before you dared to say it was a falsity"); Francis Atterbury, Bishop of Rochester and Jacobite fanatic ("soe spruce and dapper in his stile"); Joshua Barnes, historian and orator and an unsuccessful rival translator of the classics ("all your fatt is quickly in the fire, Mr Barnes"); and William Sherlock (1641-1707), English divine and Dean of St. Paul's, who was the inspiration for a large number of satirical poems, one of which was copied by Balam:

An Epitaph on the Late Dr Sherlock

Here lyes within this Holy place
the Lord have mercy on Him
A Wesill in a wooden Case
Exempt from Human plagues unless
You lay his wife⁵¹ upon Him

Some people think if that were done
The Dead He woud be ready
To rise before his time and runn
The Lord knows where in Hopes to Shunn
That Termagant his Lady

Since Hee is gone tis hard that shee
Soe long shoud be deserted
Why Death coudst thou soe cruell be?
Since all good people doe agree
Tis pity they were Parted

But when She comes bid her not prate
but cease hir teasing Nonsense,
For if the Weasell smell a Ratt
Heel shun his wife Ile tell you that
As once Hee did his Conscience.⁵²

Bishops have often been the target for satire. One poem which Balam quoted refers to William Laud (1573-1645), Archbishop of Canterbury, who was charged with introducing popish opinions into his High Church doctrine:

Our Canterbury great Cathedral Bell
 Seldom rings out but makes a fatall Knell
 Hir loud unpleasant roaring Jarring sound
 the noise of all our sweet tun'd Bells doth drown'd
 Shee sung soe loud of late I am in doubt
 Shee struck good Tom of Lincolns Clapper⁵³ out
 It is imported by the men of Kent
 She sounds such discord Shee gives no content
 Though she is ponderous and so great the people
 Woud gladly have hir quite out of the Steeple
 She makes as hideous noise with hir Bome Bome
 As did the roaring Bull that came from Rome
 But seeing that Shee's made of Romish Dress
 Sheel serve the Catholicks to ring to mass.

Another widely circulated poem may refer to Bishop Bancroft (1544-1610), Archbishop of Canterbury:

A Learned Prelate of the Land
 Thinking to make Religion stand
 At equal poise on either side
 A mixture of them Choose Hee cryed
 An ounce of Protestant Hee singled
 And with a Drachm of Papist mingled
 One scruple of a Puritan
 All these Hee put into his Brainpan
 And when Hee thought they woud digest
 The Scruple troubled all the rest.⁵⁴

Dr Balam was a staunch supporter of the Church of England, although like every Low Churchman he deplored its Romish tendencies:

Why should the fundamentall points of religion which command general Love to God and man be neglected for particular differences on an Enterprise of bringing the whole world into one Regularity and Uniformity?

And he clearly states (*Dob*):

The world supports itself by three things – law, religion and good works.

Three other prose writers come under Balam's scrutiny. One of these is Charles D'Avenant (1656-1714), political economist, whom Balam criticizes for straddling the political fence:

Dr Davenant ... writing for a bribe against his conviction ... not one proposition or principle laid down but a thin harangue of perhaps or peradventure ... He has dully acted that Character (of Tony Doubts) ... He that woud say something but knows not what it must be.

Sir Roger L'Estrange (1616-1704), journalist, "the great oracular Sir Roger", provokes several comments from Balam:

Le Strange who thought himself as great with a goose Quill in his hand as King Charles was with his Scepter ...

In 1681 Le Strange writ an apology for the Protestants with fair and practicall proposalls for a reunion to the Catholick church ... a medling ambitious Turbulent mixture ... a political sort of Imperious Zealot for the reconciliation of the two churches ... which when united together woud grow into a much stronger Tyranny then it had been.

Balam adds the current squib:

Le Strange his Character of Himself – thou standst condemned by nature to be soe arrant a dredge to an Inke-Pott that thou canst as well forbear Writing as Breathing.

Dr Balam's association with James Drake (1667-1707), Tory pamphleteer and erstwhile physician, originated through their mutual friend Tom Brown the satirist, and the three of them often met with their cronies at Castle Tavern in Fleet Street. This is clarified in a humorous letter that Balam wrote to his cousin Tom Steward in London (1695), which concludes:

...my service to Dr Drake and all other friends in Town that are so kind to remember me in that glorious Claret that I thirst for here amidst a wicked conversation ... when the Spirits of each good Lyer might possibly refine if you woud think fitt to send a pint of it to

W.B.

Although Balam had no high opinion of Drake's literary output ("Hee is noe good writer"), and sometimes made fun at his expense ("Drake shruggs Himself as if Hee was always in an itch of thought and his own witt tickled Him"), nevertheless he was willing to imbibe with him, and evidently found him intellectually stimulating. Balam includes a humorous verse featuring Drake and two notorious quacks, Thomas Saffold (d. 1691) and John Case (fl. 1680-1700):

Tom Saffold expiring that Sovereign Quack
Bequeathed his possessions to Case and to Drake
To share them betwixt them the Dr thought fitt
Soe Case had his Practice and Drake had his Witt
On each side of Pauls each sett up his Throne

Dispensing their Guifts as their Fathers had done
 The one made the Philtres the other the Bills
 The younger made Verses the elder made Pills
 Till envy and Avarice tempted poor Drake
 To encroach on his Brother and pose for a Quack
 But Case who to loose his profession was loath
 Grew mighty in Witt and excelled Him in both
 Soe Drake mett the fate which Pretenders deserve
 To be damd as a Witt as a Dr to starve.

Many other names appear in Dr Balam's commonplace books: there are excerpts from the State Letters of Lord Arlington (1618-1685) regarding revenues from the Sale of Dunkirk; several pages copied from the Marquis of Huntley's speech at the time of his imprisonment in 1640; a long Latin passage eulogizing the Earl of Shaftsbury; a quotation from Bishop Stillingfleet; a reference to Bishop Gunning, "youth's great patron", and Dr Henry Hammond, "a great divine and casuist", and so on. Sometimes his subject cannot be identified, as for example, "Dr Wright - the poor man keeps such a fiddling about a Text which he calls preaching".

Local politics play a large part in Balam's commentary. The reader is projected back three hundred years into the pulsating life of the Ely community, with its petty jealousies and rivalries. Balam introduces several of his associates: Sir Roger Jennings, respected judge and a leader in the community, who lived in an elegant mansion on College Green; his brother, John Jennings, lawyer and High Churchman, and bitter rival of Balam; Samuel Gatward, lawyer and (later) Recorder of Cambridge, rich enough to lend Balam money but too shrewd to continue the loan; Granado Piggott, politician with Jacobite leanings, Member of Parliament in 1702 (unseated in 1705); Judge (Jack) Walsham, "that Chief Bastion of iniquity"; John Wilson, secretary to Bishop Patrick, whom Balam secretly envied.

There is evidence that Balam received encouragement to publish some of his critical comments. One entry reads:

Look you Jerry,⁵⁵ you know what the press is ... I can't go to the charges of a Coppy ... such an edition of myself woud undo me - i.e. to marry.

Added to this is an interesting comment of plagiarism:

Another tacks a few things to it and gives it a new dress so the first Author is undone and the Publisher undone ... like a Pompous Frontispiece to a lousy building.

Another passage is enlightening:

I think these extraordinary men that write, but I think Him a much greater man that can write and will not ... everything is difficult because I dare not do it.

Again, in an outburst directed against a current pamphleteer:

I wish he had my Laziness – These bread-getting Calumniators that turn their pens into flails and Lay about them like the Iron Man in Spenser.

The reason for Balam's hesitation is obscure. He was not likely to have been affected with modesty or restraint; he moved in a circle of hack writers where keen competition was to be expected; and if he feared that his image would be impaired, in his various County offices, he had only to look around him and count the multitude of political writers who wore the traditional habit of legal pomp and ceremony. It is true that lawyers were the target for a good deal of ridicule. The irrepressible Tom Brown characterized a lawyer as needing "nothing but a strong pair of Bellows, call'd Lungs, and a Forehead of the Corinthian Order". Another satirist who discountenanced lawyers was the poet John Oldham who wrote in his *Satyr in Imitation of the Third of Juvenal*:

Flippant of Talk, and voluble of Tongue
With words at will, no Lawyer better hung.

This could have been an apt description of Balam. It is a coincidence that Dryden, in his poem *Absalom and Achitophel*, refers to "the well-hung Balaam". But Balam may not have feared ridicule as much as the danger of exposing himself in print to his political enemies. Another explanation can be found in the veiled reference to his prospective marriage, which presupposes some reserve toward his literary aspirations on the part of his betrothed and her family.

On the other hand, we cannot rule out the possibility that Balam may have published something of his own. There is a vast quantity of anonymous and pseudonymous writing in printed editions, miscellanies and pamphlets that have never been identified; and some of Balam's perpetrations may be concealed in one of these media, or lost in the literary debris of the early eighteenth century.

Personal Relationships

There is no doubt of Dr William Balam's disaffection for Simon Patrick, Bishop of Ely. The reader of *Dob* can scarcely credit the abundance and vehemence of the diatribes in its pages, castigating this distinguished prelate and culminating in the thrust, "I hate hell the Bishop and his wife Ile swear". Although these vituperations are usually addressed to a nameless "My Lord" or "Bishop", there can be no doubt of their objective, for Balam himself supplies the information:

He has lived thoro a Prebend a Dean and a Lord Bishop – and yet the Sonn of a Hatter is but the Sonn of a Hatter still.

Simon Patrick was Prebend of Westminster, Dean of Peterborough, Bishop of Ely, and the son of a mercer. No other bishop of that period falls into the first three categories except Francis Turner, who was the son of Thomas Turner, Dean of Canterbury.

Bishop Patrick is a celebrated figure in ecclesiastical history. He was an eminent preacher, although not to be compared with Donne and Tillotson, and a prolific writer. More than fifty of his sermons and discourses were published, one of them running into sixteen editions. His interest in philanthropy is well known. One of his famous schemes was to divert the revenues from a stockyard in Wisbech⁵⁶ into a fund to provide clothing for the poor. He was dedicated to the charity-school movement initiated by Archbishop Tillotson. Patrick had a keen interest in foreign missions and was a founder of the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge. His concern for his clergy manifested itself in repeated attempts to provide them with better housing and revenues.

Bishop Patrick was a Latitudinarian and adhered to the doctrine of non-resistance. His acceptance of the Glorious Revolution (1688), and his ready allegiance to William and Mary on their accession to the throne, appeared to be inconsistent with this philosophy, and he was censured, particularly by the Jacobites, who accused him of being an opportunist. Patrick, however, stoutly maintained that tolerance was necessary if the Church was to survive, and he is considered to be one of the chief instruments for revitalizing the Anglican Church in the late seventeenth century.

It is not difficult to imagine a situation in which a bishop and the registrar of his diocese might disagree, and the powerful Bishop of Ely would have been a formidable adversary in any confrontation. However, the early relationship between Balam and Bishop Patrick appears to have been amicable, when Balam was trying to curry favour. His letters contain passages which are respectful and even obsequious: "Your Lordship's great wisdom", and "Whole colonies my Lord are evidence of your Care for the Distressed". He writes of sending "two Potts of Sweet meats" ("marmalet") to Mrs Patrick, and requests permission for "Master Patrick"⁵⁷ to accompany him to the Assizes. Politically, Balam was in agreement with the bishop, and it is clear that he voted for Patrick's candidate in the Parliamentary elections, for Balam warns him of "a certain party" who is working against him, and criticizes John Wilson, Patrick's secretary, for "soliciting Votes for Piggott and Jennings" against his own Lordship's interest.

But Balam's letters applying for the office of Head Bailiff of the Isle show a marked difference in tone from his earlier communications, and reveal disappointment and injured pride: "I am sure I have lived soe as nothing can be said ill of mee with truth ..."

I think it noe ambition to aspire to what my family⁵⁸ has borne but believe it a great deal of injury to be degraded from it.

Inevitably there is a political implication:

Your using mee thus will extremely gratify the Jacobites ... there is nothing soe terrible to their apprehensions as that I should come into your favor.

No one could accuse Balam of lack of persistence. He pleaded his cause with increasing intensity and mounting displeasure, which eventually resulted in mutual hostility:

["Bishop" in margin] I hate any man that shall make stones of my stories and translate my contrary meanings into his own wretched applications.

But the main reason for Balam's hatred of Bishop Patrick had little to do with administrative office or politics. Balam was in love with Mrs Patrick's niece, and the bishop and his wife would not sanction their marriage.

The bishop's wife, Mrs Simon Patrick, née Penelope Jephson (1646-1725), belonged to the distinguished Jephson family of Ireland.⁵⁹ She was the great-granddaughter of Sir Thomas Norreys, Lord President of Munster, and Bridget, daughter of Sir William Kingsmill, and she claimed kinship with several illustrious families of Britain.⁶⁰ Apparently, Mrs Patrick was "a Lady of great Piety and Charity"⁶¹ and aided her husband in his philanthropic endeavours. Simon Patrick's devotion to his wife, twelve years his junior, is revealed in his *Autobiography*,⁶² which contains many affectionate references to his family, and a highly entertaining account of his courtship of ten years' duration, in which Penelope bravely allowed him to address her as "sister". After eight years of brotherly affection, he was emboldened to present her with a little book he had written for her, entitled *Advice to a Friend*. Two years later they were married.

There is a suggestion throughout Bishop Patrick's *Autobiography* that Mrs Patrick was the dominant personality in the Patrick household. One reason for this may have been the bishop's awareness of the importance of his wife's family: "she was much above me"; "I had not an estate to maintain her suitable to her fortune and breeding"; "my wife's brother, Secretary to the Treasury";⁶³ and so on. This sentiment is expressed more forcefully by Balam:

Patrick was always bigotted to his wife – very uxorious and submissive to all shee dictated – for shee never askt but commanded everything.

The details of the romance between Balam and Mrs Patrick's niece are meagre, but it is possible to piece together the fabric of a love story from scraps of comments and letters in the manuscripts. Apparently, Balam met this young girl (whose name is not divulged) at the bishop's house. It was love at first sight:

I was not there two days but I could have staid two years for the delight I had in the Conversation.

At first, Balam seemed to be acceptable to the bishop and Mrs Patrick, but later they turned against him and he was summarily dismissed. The reason for this change of heart is not revealed, although one suspects that Balam may have been too precipitate in his advances. A letter, presumably written by Bishop Patrick, asserts that "she loved at first but your very manner of Courtship has taught hir to scorn and deny you".

Balam's reaction to his repudiation by the Patrick family is a masterpiece of angry expostulation:

I used your niece with all possible Honor and respect – and you mee with all possible obloquy scandall and contempt that an enraged malice could heap upon a man – with the most ungentleman unChristian Unbishopleike usage in the

world ... I beseech your Lady to take it into her most Xtian mind to consider whether perverting the Love of one of the most beautiful Creatures in the world and to whom my heart is soe inseparately tyed and that by your first permission, and encouragement, be not the most wicked thing in the world ...

But his pleading and ranting were in vain. The years that followed did nothing to heal the breach, and the relations between Balam and the Patrick family continued to be strained.

The story of Dr William Balam would not be complete without a brief consideration of the object of his affections, whom he calls "Jephsinda". From the multitude of references to this superlative creature, it is clear that she was constantly in his mind, and his rapturous declarations are those of a man deeply in love. In a lighter moment he is carolling gaily:

From the east to the western Inda
There's nothing like to my Jephsinda ...

or chanting foolishly:

No witt nor power nor Fame to mee are charms
I scorn all wreaths but my Jephsinda's arms.

In a more serious mood he writes, "I only love the world for her being in it", or ecstatically cries, "Oh my dear Unison to every heartstring of mee". A few pages are completely filled with paeans of love and devotion.

We are told that Jephsinda is "a sprightly girl about 18 with a breath Violet sweet and wholesome as dying leaves of strawberries, cheeks mingled with such a redd as the blushing morn never wore", that "an Eternity of Joy dances in those Lipps and Eyes", and that "each Shake of her Voice strikes my very Soul with Rapture". But this description, often repeated with variations, is almost all we know about the young woman.

These expressions of ecstasy are all too soon replaced by lamentations:

I am weary to death of what this world calls Life ... in some lonely desert
unfrequented Joyless place let mee endeavor to forget myself and Hir ...

On the theme "Say, is not absence Death to those who love?" Balam penned these mournful verses:

Jephsinda's dead and Love is now noe more ...
See where on earth the flowery glories lye
With her they flourisht and with hir they dye
All which avail the Beauties nature wore
Jephsinda's dead and beauty is no more.

the silver Swans hir hapless fate bemoan
in sadder notes then when they sing their own ...

One might assume that this was the end of the love affair. But Balam did not give up hope. There are several letters addressed directly to Jephson which demonstrate his tenacity. One concerns a malicious rumour, linking his name with hers, which Balam repudiates forcefully, castigating the scandalmonger, and reiterating his abiding love and constancy. Addressing her as "My dearest Couz", he asserts with surprising candour, "I writ to my Couz: Arthur to renew his suit when I found my own lost", adding with wry humour, "It was the Charity of Dives when Himself was damd to save his kindred". There is an expostulation, obviously in response to criticism, "Drink has been often the Cure of my grief and disappointment but never the master of my reason". And there are many extravagant declarations, as for example, "I have never enjoyed one minutes conversation with any one of your sex since I saw you".

Another letter is a clumsy attempt at reconciliation. After pointing out the opportunities he has sacrificed for her sake, and the disappointments she has suffered on his account, Balam suggests that they begin a new life together. Apparently, the response was unsatisfactory, for Balam's last communication to his Jephson is a stiff letter to "one who has used mee soe extremely ill". Yet this unhappy ending could not dim the radiant memory of their romance, and Balam remained faithful to his passionate assertion, "I woud rather choose to dye yours then change my Life to any other hopes".

The identity of Jephson is not definitely established. Nowhere in these pages is her Christian name revealed, but since she was Mrs Patrick's niece, and is addressed as "Mistress Jephson", the search has been considerably narrowed. In the genealogy of the Jephson family,⁶⁴ Mrs Patrick appears to have had four brothers, two of whom died without issue, a third had one son only, and the fourth (Anthony Jephson) had two sons, William and Anthony, and three daughters, Frances, Mary, and Catherine. Since Jephson, on Balam's authority, had two brothers, William and Anthony, and several sisters, she can probably be identified as either Frances, Mary, or Catherine Jephson. Of the three, Mary is the most likely, as the genealogy has no record of her marriage,⁶⁵ while Frances married once and Catherine twice. This conclusion cannot be considered positive proof, however, and Jephson must remain a nameless image of youth and beauty.

The history of the Steward Case reads like a modern thriller. From scattered notes and letters in Dr William Balam's manuscripts, it is possible to re-weave a tale that combines fraud, intrigue, and seduction. In 1642 Thomas Steward, of Stuntney, married Mary Balam, William Balam's aunt, of Elm, thereby uniting two prominent families in the Isle of Ely. Thomas Steward traced his lineage to an ancient family of Scotland, whose descendants were wealthy landowners and held positions of

importance in the community. In the seventeenth century they were lessees of the tithes of Holy Trinity and St. Mary's parishes in Ely. Apparently, Thomas Steward was a captain in the Parliamentary Army under his cousin Oliver Cromwell. In 1660 he was appointed Justice of the Peace for the Isle of Ely and held this post for several years.

Captain Steward and his wife lived at Stuntney Manor. Several of their many children died in infancy, but in 1665 at least three sons and one daughter were living. It was in that year that misfortune overtook the Steward family.

On 10 April a new dairy maid arrived at the manor. Her name was Elizabeth Smith, and her wages were two pounds five shillings per annum. Without delay the ambitious dairy maid set out to exercise her charms on her employer. Balam writes darkly:

that Day dated the ruine of His family for Shee made no scruple to serve Him in all hir bodily Capacities the first Minute Shee came to Him.

She extracted large sums of money from the amorous master of Stuntney, and carried out with dispatch her well-laid plans to be rid of his wife and sons. In 1666 the Captain disowned his eldest son; in 1668, his wife, Mary, died "under the sorrowful impressions of hir husband's ill conduct with hir maid"; in 1669 a second son (Thomas) was rejected; and in 1670 a third son (Charles) died from "ill usage and grief".

In 1675 Elizabeth Smith "pretended an intermarriage" with Captain Steward, and in the next year gave birth to a son, Charles. Meanwhile, the new mistress of Stuntney had astutely destroyed the Captain's will. Little mention is made of Thomas Steward during the ensuing years. Whether he became disillusioned with his amour and suffered remorse is not recorded. A portion of a letter criticizing Captain Steward for "being absent from the Session in favour of Mrs Smeggergills who now keeps the Dolphin Inn" [Ely Market Place]⁶⁶ suggests that he may have drowned his sorrows in drink. Certainly matters were not going well for the captain, for in 1692 he was arrested and imprisoned due to a "Fob-action" by his second wife and her friends, who subsequently extorted from him a Deed of Settlement. According to the records, Captain Steward (d. 1696) rewrote his will⁶⁷ in favour of Elizabeth and her son Charles, but he shrewdly included a proviso leaving the property to his son Thomas (by his first marriage) in the event of Charles's death without male issue. In 1701 Charles Steward died without male heirs, and his property passed to his half-brother Thomas Steward, then living in London.

William Balam was fond of his cousin Tom. The two boys had played together as children and attended St. John's College at about the same time.⁶⁸ After Tom's "merciless ill-usage" and repudiation by his father, he and William met frequently in London. No doubt there was mutual rejoicing at Tom's good fortune in retrieving the ancestral homestead. But the celebration was short-lived. Four years later Tom Steward was dead.⁶⁹ In his will he had named William Balam executor and legal guardian of his two children.

Balam viewed this responsibility with mixed feelings. He would need courage to undertake the commission, for the Steward property was heavily mortgaged, and ready money must be found to save it from creditors. On the other hand, family pride

was strong. He hated to see this "elder branch of the family ... cut off from the vital sap of the estates that should nourish it", and he felt compassion for the two orphans committed to his care. Although not obligated "to sacrifice a penny of myne to second Cousins when I have nephews of my own", Balam decided to assume this financial burden.

His first responsibility was to care for the children. The boy, Tom, was apprenticed for his education, near Ely, and the girl was sent to a distant relative, "Madam Stewart", in Lynn. The relationship between Balam and the Stewart children provides one of the few light touches in an otherwise sombre story. Balam's attitude toward them is one of parental pride and affection. He writes, "The Boy is my Charge now and never to be neglected"; and in a letter to "My Dear Child" (the little girl), he exhorts her to "study to please the good Lady you are with ... and make yourself one of the best Women in the world".

Balam's next move was to appeal to the children's relatives for financial assistance. In a letter to Sir Nicholas Stuart, advising him of their predicament, he writes:

Not one farthing is left for his [Tom's] only son of great hopes Courage and Ingenuity of Spirit ... this soe hopefull a branch of your Hon^{ble} family must wither without your Cultivating help.

But there was little response to Balam's pleas, and he was left to face an almost hopeless situation. Through months of litigation he fought against creditors, family opposition, and machinations of unscrupulous lawyers until he was on the verge of bankruptcy. To add to his troubles, Madame Stewart was demanding more subsidy for her youthful charge in Lynn and, even more disturbing, young Tom was growing restive and threatened to leave school.

Finally, in desperation, Balam confronted Elizabeth Stewart. The widow of old Captain Stewart, his erstwhile dairy maid, had been of no help during the months of Balam's monetary torments. Indeed, she had taken every opportunity to thwart and debase him ("this woman is Cunning as the Devil"). Balam stated his case succinctly: he had paid her promptly, under the terms of the will; he was not responsible for unpaid interest on the estate dating back to 1697; already three writs of ejection had been served by Sir Roger Jennings; the orphans were penniless and their predicament was scandalous. Balam may have added a veiled threat to expose her shortcomings to the clergy, toward whom she had some apprehension. His eloquence prevailed, and Elizabeth Stewart promised to pay the delinquent interest.

This brief respite encouraged Balam to carry out a cherished plan to send young Tom to sea in the service of the Crown. Under the auspices of Edward Russell, Earl of Orford,⁷⁰ he was able to secure an Order from the Queen, permitting Tom to volunteer for service on the *H.M.S. Salisbury Prize* (July 1, 1708). Realizing the importance of the occasion, Balam made elaborate plans to equip his cousin ("I will doe my utmost to sett him out genteely") and deliver him punctually to the ship ("I myself will take Coach with Him to Portsmouth"). Hasty preparations were made for Tom's departure. Letters were dispatched in all directions: to Mr Holmes (a tenant) asking

for the rent (20 pounds) to buy "cloaths and necessaries"; to Samuel Newby (Balam's clerk) telling him to collect the money from Mr Holmes in person and take no chances; to Mr Bentham, Tom's Master,⁷¹ asking him to send Tom home with all haste; to Captain Harland, requesting notification of the hour of embarkation, in which Balam took the opportunity to add a glowing recommendation of his young cousin, including a reference to his ancestry: "The gentleman is well born being of Collaterall Line to hir now Majesty".⁷² Balam's efforts were successful and he had the satisfaction of seeing Tom Steward a full-fledged seaman.⁷³

But Balam's troubles were not over. It had cost him 60 pounds to send young Tom to sea, and his funds were running low again. During the following months Balam lived dangerously. His commonplace books contain copies of frantic letters to creditors, lawyers, and tax collectors. Some of these are belligerent, some obsequious, and almost all repeat the same refrain (with variations), "poor supportless Orphans". Very soon, Balam had used up his credit with Ely associates, and his enemies took advantage of the situation to plot his ruin. The blow fell in December 1710 when Dr William Balam was arrested for default.

Inevitably, the process of law was tied in with political rivalry and intrigue. This is clearly indicated in Balam's correspondence with John Jennings, Ely lawyer. The original mortgager, Sir Roger Jennings, had assigned the legal business to his brother John, assuring Balam that the latter would be a "mild, gentle Creditor". But John Jennings was an ardent Tory, and took no pains to disguise his antagonism to Balam. Moreover, John Jennings was running for Parliament, and may have suspected that Balam was plotting against him. At the first opportunity he sued Balam for 60 pounds and, without the courtesy of a letter, sent the bailiff to make his demands.

The effect on Balam was profound. This peppery lawyer was enraged at having received no warning, and humiliated at having been duped. It was "a meer trick", and "scandalously barbarous"; "all the world cries shame on you".

Balam did not go to jail. It was "either Jayl or Security for the Debt", and apparently Balam's friends rallied to his aid. In 1711 he was again writing to creditors. One of these letters is of special interest in that it contains a personal tribute to Dr Humphrey Gower (1638-1711), Master of St John's College, Cambridge. The correspondence is between Balam, who had borrowed money from Dr Gower, and Stanley West, Dr Gower's nephew, who is trying to extract from Balam the interest left unpaid before his uncle's death. Mr West intimates that his uncle had been impatient also; Balam counters that he was "Dr Gower's Friend":

Dr Gower was a man soe irreversibly constant in his Friendships that I never knew him to alter the first choice Hee had made ... I dined with your uncle but the year before Hee dyed at Thriploe and never found myself more welcome. I begunn that fatal year with Him upon New Years Day at St. Johns where I told Him that Mr Jennins our new Mobb-Representative had perfidiously arrested mee which disabled mee from the return of his money to Him. Dr says Hee, one of the faulcon Clubb as you are, can't expect less from them ... keep out of their

reach. You shall always find mee as I have been ... your true friend.

Both Balam and West were members of the politically motivated Falcon Club,⁷⁴ but they disagreed on religion. Stanley West was "one of those Presbyterians", and Balam rudely refers to his "Presbyterian Covetousness". This relates to an incident at Dr Gower's funeral, when Balam, who had arrived "to pay my last Duty to those Solemnities" (and, incidentally, to pay his debt to Stanley West), was told that he would not be welcome, since the congregation was limited to Presbyterians. In high dudgeon, Balam returned to Ely ("I carried myself and my money in a great warmth of resentment back again"). Perhaps Mr West might have relented had he known that Balam carried in his pocket 10 pounds earmarked for overdue interest.

Inevitably a question arises concerning Balam's integrity in his business dealings. He appears to have been a sharp businessman, in spite of being outwitted by John Jennings. In his manoeuvres with loans and interest, and his dealings with courts, creditors, lawyers, and tenants during those frustrating years, it might have been a temptation to stretch a point of ethics. But the manuscripts give no proof of underhanded dealings. A significant piece of evidence in his favour comes from Bishop Fleetwood, who nominated Balam for Justice of the Peace for the Isle of Ely. Bishop Fleetwood maintained that he would never appoint a man of whose character he disapproved.⁷⁵

Less can be said for John Jennings. A personal item in a manuscript of William Cole, noted Cambridge antiquary, reads:

Mr Jennyns who wronged my father of 600 pounds finally went bankrupt and lives on 300 pounds allowed him by his creditors.⁷⁶

It would be futile to attempt a full characterization of this Ely lawyer of three hundred years ago on the basis of his scribblings in a few commonplace books. Yet there are some distinguishing qualities that recur frequently in his writing and help provide a partial analysis of his personality. He appears to have been opinionated, often intolerant, and sometimes abusive; self-righteous and inclined to moralize; proud and ambitious; intelligent and knowledgeable; kind and conscientious. Much of his writing is in a humorous vein and shows a keen imagination. He possessed the indispensable quality of being able to laugh at himself, and sometimes wrote in the third person ("Dr Balam always sparkles ... in his wit"). One of these amusing passages, apparently written toward the end of his life, contains the only direct reference to his person, when he admits "a wadling heavy gate like a toad", and, borrowing a phrase from Shakespeare, characterizes himself as "Old Dr Balam - time-honored Register - all tempestuous in his rage - Deaf as the Sea and hasty as fire itself".⁷⁷

Perhaps Dr Balam's general philosophy can best be summed up in his own words, evidently addressed with some emotion to a client at the conclusion of an unsuccessful

lawsuit. In a margin of *Dob* he wrote, "If I have not done what I woud, I have fairly wisht to do what I ought". We may assume that this was William Balam's credo.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am grateful to the many archivists, genealogists, historians, librarians, and members of the clergy who have generously provided me with material and references. Especially I appreciate the kindness of the Librarians and Staff of the Cambridge University Library; and I must thank Mr A. E. B. Owen, Keeper of Western MSS, for bringing to my attention *Add. MS. 5779*, and Mrs Dorothy M. Owen, Diocesan Archivist, for supplying me with ecclesiastical records. I am extremely grateful to Mr R. Holmes, Historian of Ely, for his valuable assistance in tracing the local history of the Isle of Ely.

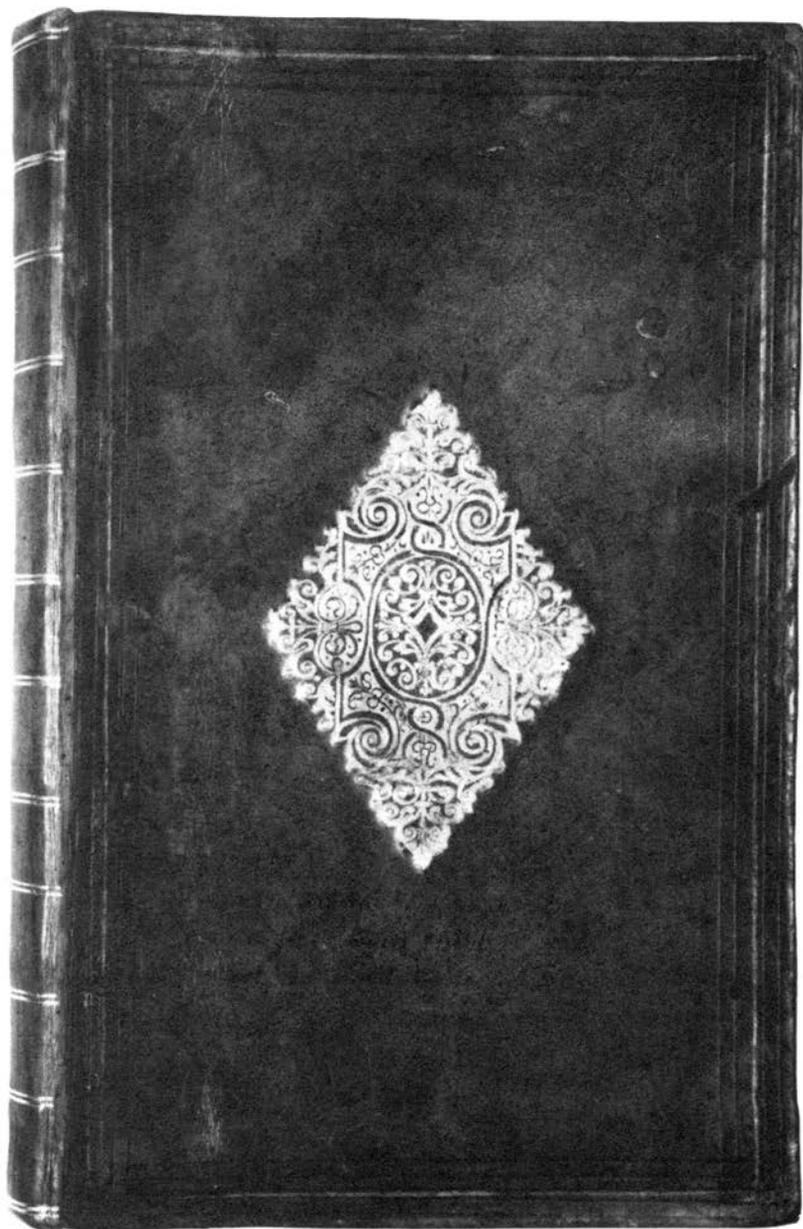
I am deeply indebted to the Librarians and Staff of the Harvard College Library; to the Radcliffe Institute, under whose auspices this project was developed; to the American Philosophical Society, whose support of a grant enabled me to continue my research in England; and to the late Evelyn Simpson of Oxford for her interest and encouragement. My greatest debt is to my husband, George R. Potter, whose discovery of this material provided the incentive for more extensive research.

NOTES

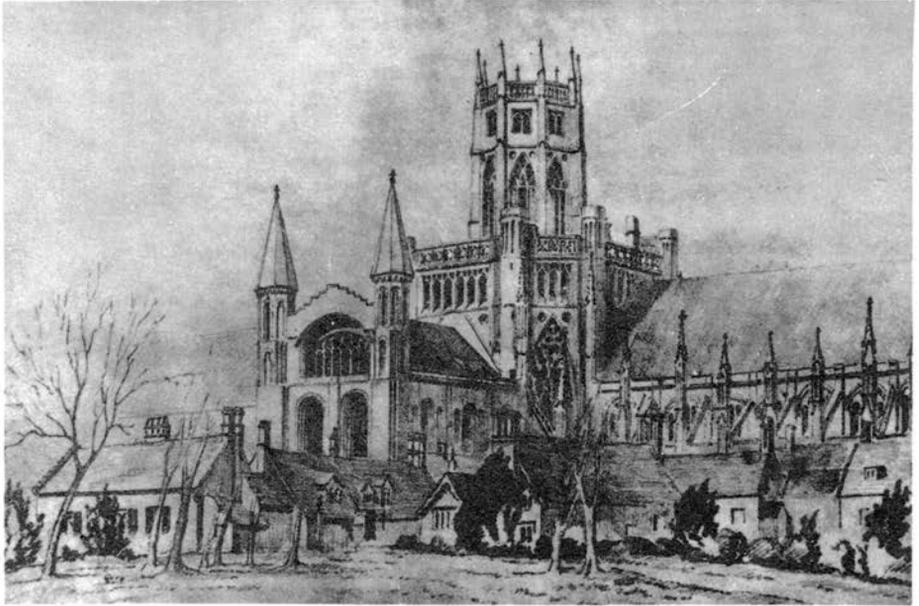
1. Identification was made by Professor George R. Potter, University of California, Berkeley.
2. *C.C. 95,577* (Cambridge University Library), p. 179.
3. *Diary of Celia Fiennes* (1888), p. 128.
4. Francis Blomefield, *History of Norfolk* (Lynn, 1739-1775), "Balam bore sable, on a fess, between three stars, argent, as many pellets".
5. It is significant that in a map of Marshland drawn by Sir William Dugdale in the seventeenth century, two of the five houses depicted in a welter of bridges, churches, dikes and windmills have the appellation, "Mr Balam's". (Wisbech Museum.)
6. Claude and Lois Scanlon and Sydney Warner, *The King's England: Lincolnshire*, p. 415. "The fine old church at Whaplode contains the splendid canopied monument of Sir Anthony Irby, shown in armour and baggy breeches with his wife by his side in long flowing gown; by the tomb kneel three boys and two girls in rich lace collars".
7. Charles, Robert, John, Alexander, William, Anthony, Anne, Mary. See *Harl. MS. 6830*, fol. 51 (British Library). Six sons received a good education, married well, and became leaders in civic and ecclesiastical affairs: alderman, bailiff, clerk, justice of the peace, proctor, royal commissioner, sheriff. A more detailed genealogy of this branch of the Balam family has been placed on file at the Headquarters of the Society of Genealogists, Harrington Gardens, London.
8. *History of the Goodricke Family*, ed. Charles Alfred Goodricke (privately printed by Hazel Watson and Viney Ltd., London, 1885).
9. Richard Blome, *Britannia* (London, 1673).
10. An interesting description of the activities of this organization is given by Mr R. Holmes of Ely in *Fenland Bulletin*, no. 1 (1967), pp. 11-14, under the title "A 17th Century Health Service".
11. *Journals of the House of Commons*, Vol. 8, p. 315.
12. See Harold Archer, "Ancient Ely Byeways", *Cambridgeshire Times*, March 17, 1922, for an amusing tale of Newbarns Droveaway, over which there arose a controversy regarding the trespassing of cattle.

13. This information was supplied by the late Colonel Goodwin Archer of Ely. Evidence for the location of this property was discovered by Mr R. Holmes in a map of West Fenland (1857), which depicts a road "from Cuckold's Haven to Balam's Pieces".
14. William Balam's tutor ("Mr Saywell") was probably William Saywell, Fellow of St. John's College (1666-), author of "The Reformation of the Church of England Justified" (Cambridge, 1688) and other controversial tracts.
15. These documents are preserved in the County Record Office, Shire Hall, Cambridge.
16. Many of these transactions under such suggestive titles as Grunty Fenn, Broken Helmet, Eau Brink, and Swine Coate Dole, are recorded in the Woodgate Papers (Wisbech Museum).
17. *C.C. 95,577*.
18. *Comitia regia*: certain gatherings of the Senate of the University at which royal personages were present and degrees were specially conferred. *N.E.D.*
19. *Rawl. Letters 93*, fol. 278 (Bodleian Library). In this letter Balam manifests family pride, embarrassment at being "a rejected tenant" of Downham Manor, and dismay at the "prophanation of the chapel" ("milk-bowls where the altar stood").
20. *MSS. Rawl Letters 93*, fol. 311 (Bodleian Library).
21. *Chancery Records*, 193/12/5.
22. Son of Bishop Wren; Member of Parliament for Cambridge, 1685-1687; Head Bailiff for the Isle of Ely, 1661-1689.
23. *Add. MS. 5779*, fols. 279v-280 (William Balam to Stanley West, 1711).
24. Anthony Balam, his cousin.
25. Beaufort Hall.
26. Thomas Edwards of Wisbech, Head Bailiff, 1689-1698.
27. *Dean and Chapter Records*, 2/6/3. The appointments probably were sinecures and entailed little more than the drawing of salaries attached to them.
28. *Crown Office Warrants*, Index 4215.
29. Balam's "Circulatory Letter for a Parliament Man" follows the usual pattern. See *Add. MS. 5779*, fol. 183.
30. *Bishop Fleetwood's Diary*, January 7, 1714 (Cambridge University Library).
31. Cambridge University Archives, V.C. Court Wills IV. f. 599.
32. *MSS. Rawl. Letters 93*, fol. 311.
33. An exchange of letters between William Balam and Tom Brown occurs on pages 530 of *Dob*. See author's note in *Notes and Queries*, October 1973, p. 593.
34. One exception is a parody of 50 lines, apparently a refutation of atheism, which begins: "What is Religion a thing known or not/Fathered by whom and how was it begott?"
35. Mabel Potter, "A Seventeenth-Century Literary Critic of John Donne: The Dobell Manuscript Re-examined", *Harvard Library Bulletin*, January 1975, pp. 63-89.
36. This may have been the Bull and Mouth Inn, St. Martin's le-Grand, "established as an Inn (1630) in premises erected ... on the site of Northumberland House" (Bryant Lillywhite).
37. This poem (*Elegie 13* in *C57*), censored for many years, was not included in a printed collection of Donne's poetry until 1669.
38. Printed in *Poems written by William, Earl of Pembroke* (London, 1660).
39. Sir Francis Bacon, *A Naturall History* (London, 1658), "His Ld^{ps}. Usual Receipt for the Gout".
40. These letters deal with the lawsuit involving the Hatton family's hold on Ely House, London.
41. Speech delivered to both Houses of Parliament, December 31, 1701.
42. *Life and Works of Arthur Maynwaring*, ed. J. Oldmixon (London, 1715).
43. *Ode to the Queen* (London, 1706), p. 9.
44. *Essay Concerning Humane Understanding* (London, 1690).
45. *A Brief View of Mr Hobbes's Book ... Leviathan* (Oxford, 1676).
46. A reference to Hobbes' translation of Thucydides.
47. Dr Berkeley became Bishop of Cloyne in 1734.
48. *Sloane Add. MS. 5852* (British Library), pp. 56-57.
49. The ruling body of Cambridge University.
50. Dr Gooch was challenged by Balam's nephew, William Towers, Fellow of Christ's College, who in an address to the Senate publicly criticized the Heads for this degradation. See William Cole, *Add. MS. 5821* (British Library).

51. Dr Sherlock's wife is believed to have persuaded him to take the Oath of Allegiance to William and Mary.
52. Thomas Brown, *Works*, IV, 346.
53. Thomas Winniffe (1576-1654), Bishop of Lincoln, who had Puritan leanings.
54. This poem is found in several Bodleian Library and British Library manuscripts (in *Harl. MS. 4955* the caption is "Dr Andrews"). See *First Line Index of English Poetry 1500-1800 in Manuscripts of the Bodleian Library*, ed. Margaret Crum (Oxford, 1969).
55. Probably Jeremy Collier (1650-1726), political pamphleteer, who specialized in attacking contemporary writers.
56. Butchers Shambles in the Market. A document reappraising this stockyard "at the yearly rend of 6^d and a quarter of a pound of pepper which ... is worth 13.13.4" and signed by William Balam, Notary Public, occurs in *C.C. 95,577*.
57. Symon Patrick (b. 1680), eldest son of Bishop Patrick.
58. Alexander Balam held this office in the sixteenth century.
59. Mallow Castle, County Cork has been the seat of this family for more than 350 years.
60. Mrs Patrick was connected with the Derby, de Vere, Russell, and Sackville families.
61. *The Political State*, LVI, 91. Mrs Patrick's "frequent and liberall benefactions" are cited in the inscription on her tomb in Ely Cathedral.
62. *The Autobiography of Simon Patrick, Bishop of Ely*, ed. J. H. Parker (Oxford, 1839), pp. 70-79.
63. John Jephson, secretary to William III.
64. M. D. Jephson, *An Anglo-Irish Miscellany* (Dublin, 1964), p. 72.
65. A note in *Fenland Notes and Queries*, II, 43, "Arthur Stewart who married Mary Jephson" appears to contradict this.
66. *Rawl. MSS. Letters 94* (Letter to William Balam from Robert Mingay, 1686).
67. Ely Consistory Wills (C 35:79).
68. Thomas Steward was admitted to St. John's College in 1668, aged seventeen.
69. June 14, 1705.
70. First Lord of the Admiralty.
71. The Reverend Samuel Bentham, Vicar of Witchford.
72. See *Genealogist*, New Series (1885), II, 34-42, "The Steward Genealogy and Cromwell's Royal Descent" for discussion of the relationship of the Steward family to the Royal House of Stuart.
73. In the Pay-books of the *H.M.S. Salisbury Prize* (1710-1714) occurs the item: "Wages owed Thos. Stewart Jan. 30, 1710 - £18.1^s.9^d". Later Tom Stewart returned to civilian life. He died in 1744, and was buried in Ely Cathedral near his father and grandfather.
74. This group of political activists may have held their meetings at the Falcon Inn in Cambridge. See Charles G. Harper, *The Cambridge, Ely, and King's Lynn Road* (London, 1902), p. 168: "...the remains of the galleried, tumble-down Falcon stand in a court off Petty Cury - the inn in whose yard Cambridge students entertained Queen Elizabeth with a blasphemous stage travesty of the Mass".
75. *Bishop Fleetwood's Diary*.
76. *Add. MS. 5809*, p. 97 (British Library).
77. *King Richard II*, Act I, Scene 1, line 19: "In rage deaf as the Sea, hasty as fire".



Pl. 1. Manuscript collection of the works of John Donne
(C.U.L. Add. MS. 5778 (C57))
The seventeenth-century binding
*Reproduced with the permission of the Syndics of the
Cambridge University Library.*



Pl. 3. *a.* Ely cathedral and Close.
Pencil sketch by Henry Baines, 1847.



b. Stuntney Hall.
Pen and ink drawing by unknown artist, early 19th. century.

*Both drawings reproduced by permission of
Miss H. M. Thompson, of Ely.*

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