

The Anglian Cathedral of North Elmham, Norfolk

Analysis and Excavation by the Ancient Monuments
Branch of the Ministry of Public Building and Works

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HISTORICAL BACKGROUND (FIG. 26)

THE DIVISION OF THE EAST ANGLIAN DIOCESE

THE *locus classicus* for this is Bede, *Hist. Eccles.*, iv, v. When Bisi, fourth bishop of the original see, in the *ciuitas* (i.e. recognizable Roman site) of Dommoc,¹ became incapacitated, not earlier than 673, two coadjutors were chosen, which set a precedent for two bishops, and, subsequently at any rate, two independent dioceses. The earliest contemporary testimony for the northern see being established at Elmham dates from 803,² but there is no reason to discredit William of Malmesbury when he places one of the two parallel series of East Anglian bishops at Elmham from the first.³ Bede does not give the name of the second see. Malmesbury's traditional lists end with two bishops, Hunberht and Wilraed, last attested in 839, and with a plausible, if confused, account ascribing the lapse of both sees to Mercian, rather than Danish, incursions. Though an attempt was made to provide another bishop for the southern see (Dommoc),⁴ it is an unlikely

¹ I attempt to show, in *J. Brit. Archaeol. Assoc.*,³ xxiv (1961), 55, that the identification of Dommoc with Dunwich, customary since the fifteenth century, is mistaken and that Bartholomew Cotton's earlier identification with Felixstowe (meaning probably Walton castle) is preferable. That the see was ever at Soham (H. Wharton, *Anglia Sacra*, i, 403) is no longer considered, though repeated as late as *V.C.H. Cambridge*, II (1948), 141.

The following short abbreviations are used in the notes:

A.S.C.—*Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*

B., GS—W. de G. Birch, *Cartularium Saxonicum*

K., CD—J. M. Kemble, *Codex Diplomaticus Aevi Saxonici*

R.S.—Rolls Series

V.C.H.—*Victoria County History*

² Act of the Council of Clovesho in 803: B., GS, no. 312; A. W. Haddan and W. Stubbs, *Councils and Ecclesiastical Documents*, pp. 545-547; *Facsimiles of Anglo-Saxon MSS.* (1878), no. 4. The bishop signs 'Alhheard Elmhamis ecclesiae' (as distinct from *ciuitatis*), and has not a single abbot in his train. The only other pre-Danish source to name the see is the profession to archbishop Wulfred (*ob.* 832) by 'Hunferdus Helmamensis' (twelfth century copy in B.M., Cott. Cleop. E.1).

³ *Gesta Pontificum* (R.S. no. 52), pp. 147-8. The names are in pairs, suggesting a collation of attestations, rather than two separate series, as might be more likely in a *liber uitae*.

⁴ Profession to archbishop Ceolnoth (*ob.* 870) by Aethelwald of Dommoc (also in Cott. Cleop. E.1). He does not figure in Malmesbury's lists and is otherwise unknown, unless the seal from Eye, Suffolk (*Archaeologia*, xx, 479; B.M. *Guide to Anglo-Saxon Antiquities* (1923 ed.) fig. 123), belongs to him, as the resemblance to an early coin-type of Alfred suggests.

piece of hagiography that makes Hunberht of Elmham live to die with St. Edmund in 870.⁵ For Elmham, at least, there is a lacuna of over a century from *c.* 840.

THE RE-ESTABLISHED SEE

When the reconquest of East Anglia by the West Saxons was completed (*c.* 918), the territory was at first administered as part of the East Saxon diocese of London: Theodred, bishop of London (*ob.* 942-951), had a subordinate bishopstool at Hoxne in Suffolk,⁶ which retained this status after the East Anglian diocese had been re-established, with a single bishop, at Elmham. This took place in the 950s: Athulf, the first of the new series of bishops of Elmham in Malmesbury's lists is first attested in 955.⁷ The break with the past was almost complete. On the archaeological evidence presented below it is arguable that the existing church represents a new foundation of this date, or more probably, a little earlier, in the same locality as its predecessor, but on a different site. It had a secular establishment, and in any case the revived bishopric just antedates the monastic revival associated with Dunstan and Aethelwold.⁸ Nothing is known of the occasion for the refoundation: it is not among the good works of Aethelstan, 'half-king' and ealdorman of East Anglia, recounted in the Ramsey Chronicle.⁹

THE IDENTIFICATION OF THE SITE

Ignoring the visible remains at North Elmham, there is conclusive documentary evidence that the bishopstool was here, not at South Elmham, Suffolk.¹⁰ Described by Malmesbury as *uilla non adeo magna*,¹¹ it had the advantage, for an

⁵ For the legend see Roger of Wendover (EHS ed.), pp. 303, 312, but his and Florence of Worcester's 'Hunferthus' and 'Hunbyrthus' may well be the same person. Malmesbury has only one form, and anyway it is the latter (Hunberht) that attests a charter in 839 (B., *CS*, no. 423).

⁶ For Theodred's will, in which he leaves £ 10 to his bishopric at Hoxne, see *English Historical Documents*, ed. D. Whitelock, no. 106, p. 509. The church at Hoxne is described in *Domesday Book* (ii, fo. 379) as *sedes episcopatus de Sudfolc*. The double entity of the East Anglian see is reflected as late as the profession to Lanfranc (in Cott. Cleop. E.1) by William de Bello Fago, *et australium et aquilonialium populorum antistes*.

⁷ Profession to archbishop Oda (*ob.* 961) by 'Eadulfus Helmeamnensis' (in Cott. Cleop. E.1; names in this MS. are often corrupt); attestations as Athulf (contracted form of Aethelwulf) begin in 955 and are numerous from 956 (B., *CS*, nos. 917, 923, 934, 941, etc.)

⁸ Dunstan's revival had royal support with the accession of Edgar, champion of the 'regular' party, in 959; the later traditions place the foundation or refoundation of Ramsey and Peterborough in the 960s, Ely *c.* 970 and Thorney a trifle later, but it has been questioned whether this implies a regular Benedictine establishment from the beginning, and whether the reform properly penetrated to Middle and East Anglia in Dunstan's lifetime (see F. M. Stenton, 'Medeshamstede and its colonies' in *Historical Essays in Honour of J. Tail*, 1933, p. 325). Bury, a secular establishment from *c.* 945 and regularized when the monk Aelfwine became bishop of Elmham in 1021, may be typical of a general regularization of all these houses in the time of Cnut. In any case, Elmham was re-established under Edgar's predecessor and has no shadow of a regular convent.

⁹ *Chronicon Abbatiae Ramesiensis* (R.S. no. 83), pp. 11-14; Aethelstan was the father of Aethelwine, 'amicus Dei,' founder of Ramsey.

¹⁰ See R. Howlett, 'The ancient see of Elmham,' *Norfolk Archaeol.*, xviii (1914), 105 ff., and *V.C.H. Norfolk*, II (1906), 308-9, appendix 1, 'On the bishops' lordship of North Elmham'. The most critical document is of the early fourteenth century but the earlier circumstantial evidence is large. The so-called minster in the southern moated site at South Elmham is not certainly of pre-conquest date. It seems to have contained no burials (see B. B. Woodward in *Proc. Suffolk Inst. Archaeol.*, IV (1874), 1), but does seem to be a domestic chapel rather than a hall. It is hardly a candidate for the pre-Danish cathedral, being, as Mr. A. B. Whittingham agrees, manifestly of a later period in detail, in spite of the affinities with the early Kentish group in plan, as noted by C. R. Peers in *Archaeol. J.*, LVIII (1901), 423.

¹¹ *Gesta Pontificum* (R.S. no. 52), p. 147.

itinerant *chorepiscopus*, of central position in an area of fairly dense early settlement (FIG. 26). Elmham was an immemorial estate of the bishop and the church here described may have originated as the chapel of his *familia*, and retained this status during and after its life as a cathedral (see next page). Aethelmaer, the last Saxon bishop,¹² increased the surrounding estates by various and sometimes

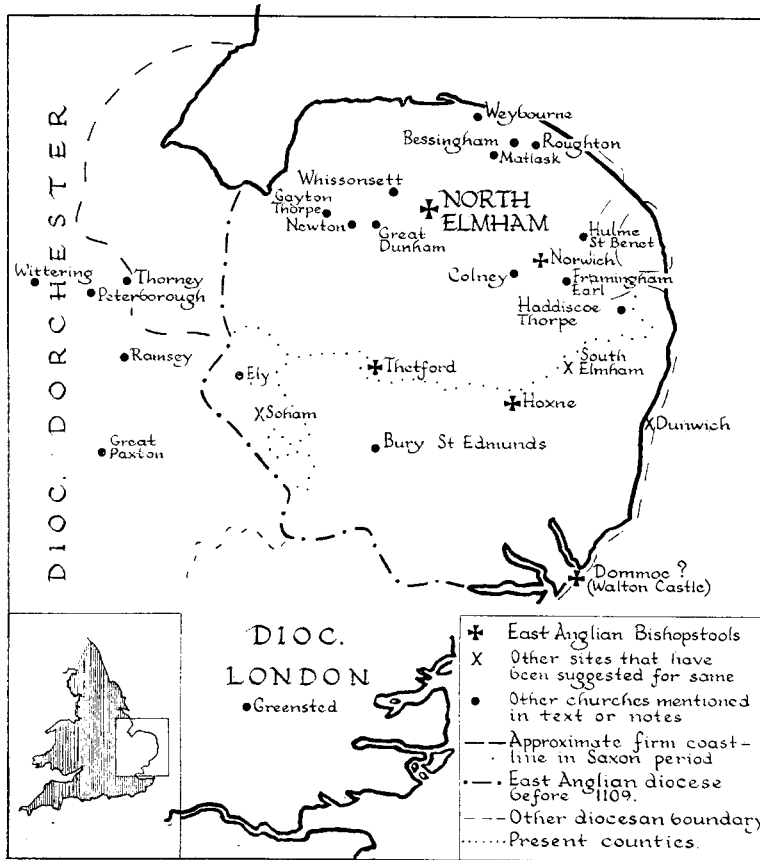


FIG. 26

MAP SHOWING POSITION OF NORTH ELMHAM AND OTHER EARLY ECCLESIASTICAL SITES.

dubious means; his successor Herfast alienated some outlying parts to his kinsman Richard of St. Denis.¹³ The endowments already bequeathed by bishop Aelfric in 1038¹⁴ to the clergy of Elmham and Hoxne testify to the dependence of both chapters (if they had sufficient organization to merit the name) on the bishop

¹² A married brother of archbishop Stigand, with whom he fell. See B. Dodwell, 'The foundation of Norwich cathedral' in *Trans. Roy. Hist. Soc.*, 5 vii (1957), 1. His treatment of St. Mary's church at Thetford as a personal property is comparable with the attitude of other bishops to Elmham.

¹³ *V.C.H. Norfolk*, II, 218-19 and 308-9.

¹⁴ K., *CD*, no. 759 (B.M. Cott. Aug. ii, 85); parallel benefactions to Elmham, Hoxne and St. Benet's Hulme, and others to Ely and Bury.

personally, in contrast to the independence of regular convents, or even of larger secular minsters.

THE TRANSFERENCE OF THE SEE

In accordance with Hildebrandine practice, ratified by a council in 1075, the bishopstool was removed from its rural site to Thetford and thence, by bishop Herbert Losinga in the 1090s, to Norwich.¹⁵ There is reason to believe that Losinga moved the actual stone throne of his predecessors to the new see.¹⁶ A contemporary eulogy of Losinga¹⁷ notes the progress from a timber chapel (*sacellum ligneum*) at Elmham to a borrowed church (Thetford) and finally to a suitably dignified priory (Norwich). Losinga is credited with founding another, presumably the present parochial, church at Elmham. The church which is the subject of this report would then have finally reverted to the status of a familial chapel. From its palpably earlier structural details, this church is certainly not that founded by Losinga, but the account raises difficulties, since the church contains some stonework at least that must, on any reckoning, antedate the translation of the see, until when the wooden chapel is said to have sufficed. Either the wooden construction is to be taken literally, as the excavations suggest, for the greater part of the history of the see, but not for its final years, or the church, though the grandest ecclesiastical structure at Elmham—too large to be fairly called *sacellum ligneum*—was always the bishop's chapel, and never titularly his cathedral. The answer to the problem of the pre-Danish cathedral may be that it subsisted elsewhere, possibly on the site of the present parish church, and retained its nominal primacy.¹⁸

BISHOP DESPENSER

As archaeological evidence confirms, the chapel remained in service, but the thirteenth- and fourteenth-century bishops apparently made little use of the manor, until Henry le Despenser (1370-1406). In December 1387 he received licences to crenellate his manors of North Elmham and Gaywood.¹⁹ Since the repeated alterations about this period include works that antedate the heavier fortifications, it is likely that Despenser's interest may have begun earlier than

¹⁵ See Dodwell, *op. cit.* in note 12; the title of Thetford disappears *c.* 1095.

¹⁶ This is the opinion of Mr. A. B. Whittingham, who kindly communicated it to me; the view has since been expounded by Mr. C. A. R. Radford in the context of a wider study of *synthrona* ('The bishop's throne in Norwich cathedral,' *Archaeol. J.*, cxvi (1959), 115). The remains of the throne at Norwich were carefully studied at the time of their recent resetting. But the stones, which shew signs of burning and prolonged exposure previous to their resetting at Norwich, may in fact have come from Dommoc, not from Elmham, as Mr. Radford assumes. This alternative avoids any call for Mr. Radford's radically different interpretation of the remains at Elmham (*ibid.* p. 120), which receives no support from the examination of the floor strata, where there is no trace of a fire of the required intensity, nor any hint that the transept in its present form was ever tripartite, even if the wall-responses had been obliterated.

¹⁷ Bartholomew Cotton, *Historia Anglicana et Liber de Archiepiscopis et Episcopis Angliae* (R.S. no. 16), pp. 389-90; in a work largely derived from Malmesbury, this part is from a local source: see also *The First Register of Norwich Cathedral* (Norfolk Record Soc., xi), p. 23.

¹⁸ This solution, suggested to me by Mr. Christopher Hohler, might also suit the conditions of destruction and desertion demanded by the remains of the throne at Norwich, if indeed they came from Elmham not Dommoc (see note 16). But why, when rebuilding the larger chapel in stone, did they not so honour the other one? A sanctified material, even though not the original fabric?

¹⁹ *Cal. Patent Rolls*, 1385-89, p. 381.

1387. It is a fair deduction from his martial, rather than clerical, leanings,^{19a} and his ferocious activity in suppressing the local manifestations of the Peasants' Revolt, that he had aggravated a tension such as so often existed between an ecclesiastical lord and his tenants and needed the stronghold for his own protection. While the outer defences, which gained the site its popular name of 'Tower Hills', may never have been completed, Despenser's immediate work was to convert the church into the undercroft of his residence. This act of sacrilege seems to have discouraged his successors from making much use of it. Records are as silent as archaeology on any subsequent occupation except for manorial administration.²⁰ The manor was among those forcibly exchanged by Henry VIII for the temporalities of the abbot of Hulme, but the capital messuage became part of the vicarial glebe of Elmham.

PREVIOUS STUDY AND EXCAVATION

In 1785 *the Rev. T. Kerrich* made a plan (reproduced by Carthew²¹). There seems to have been some digging about this date, since a bronze object in the British Museum was found in 1786.²² Another Kerrich acquired the ivory plaque now in Cambridge,²³ the only other small Saxon *objet d'art* from the site.

In the 1870s²⁴ *the Rev. Augustus G. Legge*, then vicar of Elmham, began excavation at the 'Tower Hills'. His findings were briefly reported by Carthew in 1877,²⁵ together with plans. It appears that Legge removed (*a*) all post-Despenser accumulation within the buildings, and (*b*) parts of the clay banks added by Despenser, exposing walls that these were intended partly to conceal. Retaining walls were built and the site left in the well-tended state seen in the photographs hitherto generally used, which were taken in 1903. Neither Legge nor Carthew recognized any walls as pre-conquest, or, in spite of burials exposed, that it was a church, but they reported:

- a.* A furnace with slag, in the nave (DA; FIG. 29).
- b.* Human bones in several positions.
- c.* Accumulated small finds in Despenser's deep pits, particularly that just east of the tower arch (DD), thimbles, much pottery, floor-tiles, window-glass, including a piece showing a mitre, deer-tines,²⁶ etc.

Fortunately much of this material has been preserved and given to the Ministry

^{19a} As witness his military service to the Pope that earned him his bishopric, and his unruly 'crusade' in Flanders.

²⁰ G. A. Carthew, *The Hundred of Launditch and Deanery of Brisley*, II (1877), 573, 574, describes manorial assemblies at Tower Hills under the lordship of the Cromwells, who received the manor from Henry VIII.

²¹ Carthew, *op. cit.* in note 20, opp. p. 515.

²² Possibly a censer-cover, about 9 cm. high (B.M. no. 97. 3-23. 18), found by the landlord of the adjoining inn, perhaps during the filling of the south moat.

²³ M. H. Longhurst, *English Ivories* (1926), pp. 71-72, pl. 15, no. VII; *ex* S. E. Kerrich, said to have been found in 1847, but provenience not absolutely certain. See also *Proc. Cambridge Antiq. Soc.*, Report XLVII (1887), p. xcix.

²⁴ Not, as usually stated, 1891, which was after Carthew's publication, though work may have continued sporadically.

²⁵ Carthew, *op. cit.* in note 20, II, 517, pls. opp. pp. 41, 517; *id.*, III, 99, gives a 'traditional' site for the cathedral, 100 yards south of the parish church: nothing is visible there.

²⁶ It was probably the hunting that attracted Despenser to Elmham. See *Cal. Charter Rolls*, 1224-57, p. 404, for earlier grant of free warren to the bishop.

of Public Building and Works. It is intended that this material and the Ministry's own finds on the site shall be deposited in Norwich Castle Museum.

In 1903 *T. Butterick* (B.T.R.C.) described the pre-conquest elements in the ruins for the first time.²⁷ His plan is careful and observant, even if his interpretation is incorrect in detail: the slightly better-laid lower courses were ascribed to a primary phase, which had to be pre-Danish, because Despenser's banks were thought to be a Danish 'camp'; the upper courses went with the ashlar tower-arch, and with that the whole W. tower, although that was also buried in the 'camp'. But he noticed the blocked W. door, which Clapham missed, and the early Christian affinities of the whole plan.

G. Baldwin Brown (1925)²⁸ called the church 'enigmatical', but appreciated the Rhenish analogies of the W. tower and stair-turret and consequently dated the whole relatively late—in his phase C1 (c. 1000).

Sir Alfred Clapham treated of the structure several times between 1926 and 1936.²⁹ Considering that it was then deeply overgrown, his plan is very perspicacious, but, like Baldwin Brown, he missed the E.-W. openings. He amplified the early Christian and German parallels and supported Baldwin Brown's ascription of it to the late tenth or early eleventh century.

THE SITE AND BUILDINGS

After the site passed into the guardianship of the Ministry of Works in 1948 the stifling thickets were cut down and detailed description became possible once more. The walling now permanently exposed is much the same as before.

The natural base is either a greenish glacial clay, sometimes with boulders of chalk or flint, or a bright yellow sandy loam. Since the horizontal boundaries between these are steep and contorted, and both were used for back-filling pits and ditches, an artificial profile is often difficult to distinguish from a natural one. The Geological Survey map represents the eastern half of the site as clay, the western as sand.

EARTHWORKS (FIG. 27)

The church occupies a rectangular ditched 'canton' (E1) in the SW. corner of a larger, squarish enclosure (E2) within a formidable outer moat. There are causeways in the middle of the N. and E. arms of the outer moat, and the S. arm has been filled in. There is no proper inner bank, except on the south of E1, where it continues eastwards to intercept the E. arm of the inner ditch. This arm cuts off the tip of the apse and east of it the ground of E2 is slightly mounded, but not banked. Elsewhere the upthrow has been spread fairly evenly over the whole of E2, raising the general level about a yard above that of E1, except at the NW.

²⁷ *The Builder*, LXXXIV, no. 3136 (14. iii. 1903), 267-270.

²⁸ *The Arts in Early England*, II (1925), 339, 343-5, 453; fig. 155. In the earlier edition (1903) he hints at the possibilities of the ruins at both Elmhams, which 'on their face-values would be ascribed to the eleventh or twelfth century'.

²⁹ *Antiq. J.*, VI (1926), 402-9, with W. H. Godfrey; *Discovery*, VIII (1927), 351; *Norfolk Archaeol.*, XXIII (1929), 56; general discussions in *English Romanesque Architecture before the Conquest* (1930), p. 88, fig. 22 and *Romanesque Architecture in Western Europe* (1936), pp. 18-19.

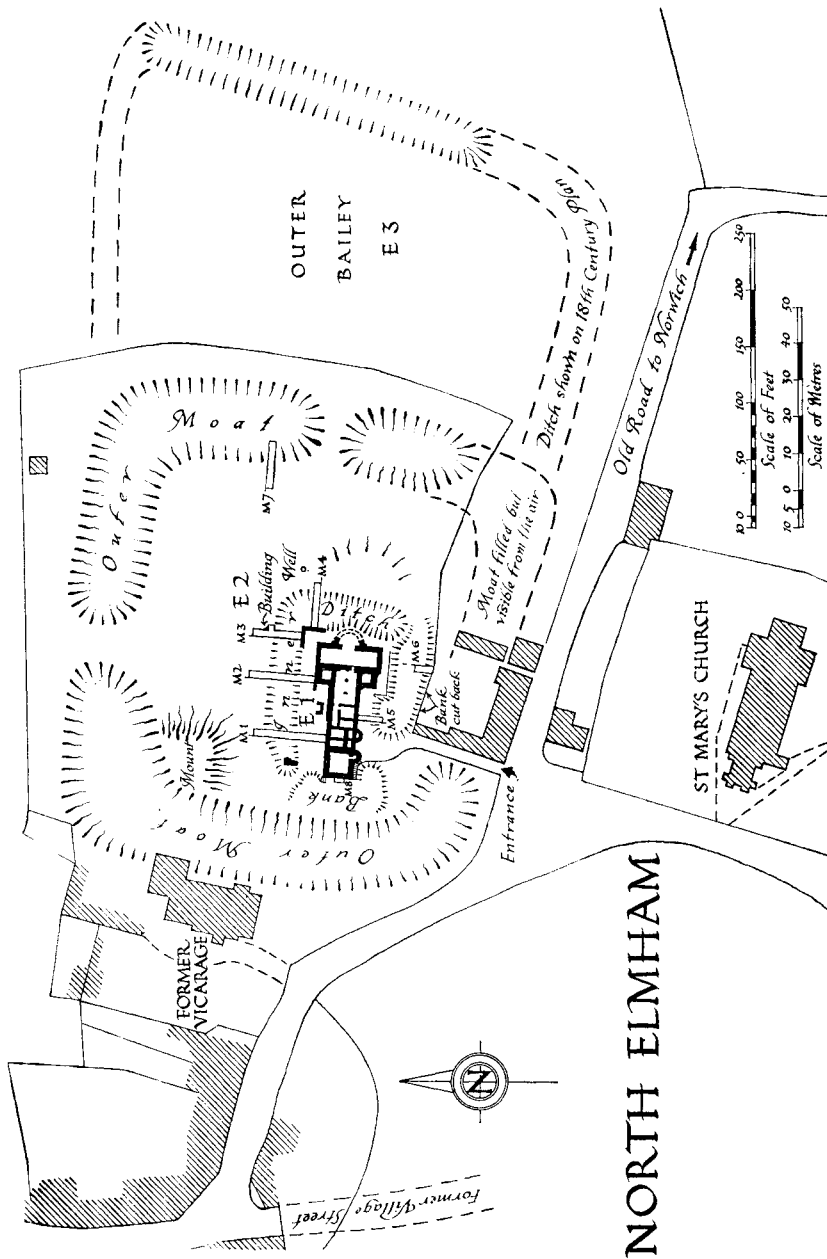


FIG. 27
NORTH ELMHAM, NORFOLK
General plan showing site of excavations (pp. 72, 78)

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corner, where the moat is deepest and rises to an oddly-shaped mount, not separated by a ditch from the rest of E2. This complex resembles neither a motte-and-bailey nor a ring-work of Castle Rising type: if it had been converted from either the alteration would have been gigantic. The bottom of the inner ditch slopes down (against a natural E.-W. inclination) towards the NE. angle, where a retaining wall (DK) stands. This wall suggests that the ditch was originally deeper and steeper-sided, and excavation has shown that this was so. Remains of the bank within the retaining wall appear in a view published by Carthew, but Legge removed this, and cut into the inner bank on the south to isolate the walls of the church. The tail of a bank returning round the NW. corner of E1 remained under Legge's spoil-heap but only at the W. end did he leave the bank as he found it, masking the walls to a depth of 8 ft. (2.4 m.). East of E2 was an outer bailey (E3), with little trace of occupation; only a mutilated fragment of its ditch remains.³⁰

BUILDING MATERIALS

The materials used in the pre-conquest work are:

a. Flint nodules, often large and unbroken: mainly for core, but also for occasional courses of facing.

b. Ferruginous conglomerate, or 'pudding-stone', a very dark brown cemented glacial gravel from the 'iron pan' (no pits known, but local, *not* 'car-stone'): used in large lumps for facing. This use of conglomerate on a flint core, to give a key to heavy rendering, is found elsewhere in the eleventh century (e.g. in the primary nave of Waltham abbey³¹ and parts of St. Augustine's, Canterbury). Finer beds, of more uniform texture, also from the 'iron pan', but not always easy to distinguish visually from *c.*, form most of the early ashlar.

c. Ferruginous sandstone ('car-stone', from the Greensand): very little occurs.

d. Oölite (from beyond the Wash): the small dressed slabs in phase A; rather more in the phase-C work.

e. Roman brick, about 3 in. (8 cm.) thick: a little in phase B, mixed in the flint. There is no known Roman occupation in the immediate vicinity.³²

In Despenser's work the flints are smaller and usually broken; a little 'car-stone' is used; dressings are of Oölite ashlar or a typical late fourteenth-century local brick (see below, p. 97, *b*, 4).

THE BUILDINGS

The final church (FIG. 28), omitting all Despenser's work, comprised:

CA. Apse, a semicircle of 9 ft. (2.7 m.) internal radius, struck from a point a little to the east of the chord. Only the stumps remain, cut off by Despenser's ditch (PL. X, B).

³⁰ Carthew, *op. cit.* in note 20, III, 100: outer bailey levelled by the 'late vicar', i.e. before 1867.

³¹ Revealed in recent, unpublished excavations by Waltham Cross Archaeol. Soc.; see also *Antiq. J.*, XIX (1939), 330.

³² Nothing from the parish but a coin-heap, but much scattered settlement on the left bank of the Wensum about 1½ m. south-east, *V.C.H. Norfolk*, I (1901), 316-7 and O.S. Map of Roman Britain.

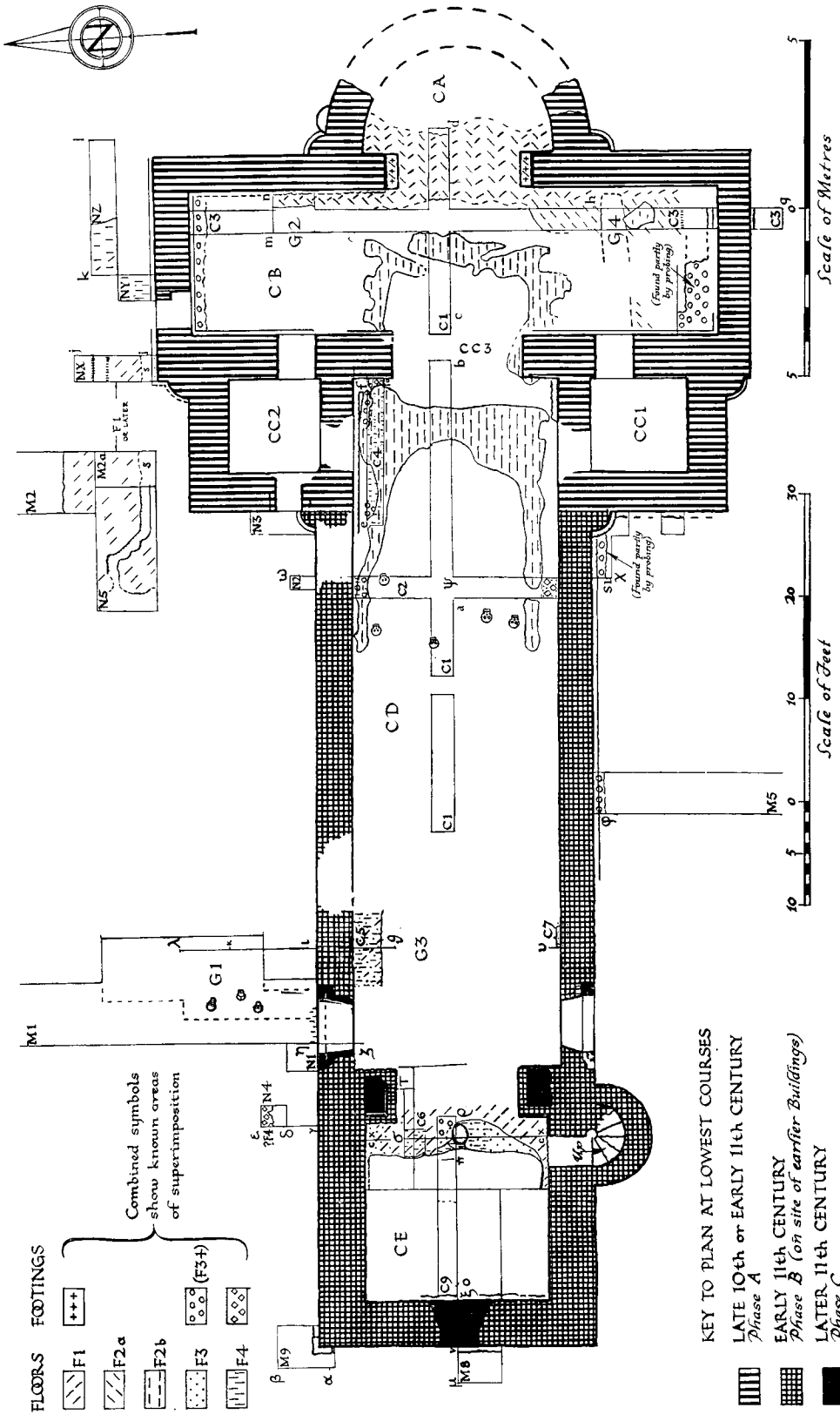


FIG. 28

NORTH ELMHAM, NORFOLK

Plan of church showing ecclesiastical phases (pp. 75 ff.)
Greek, and small Roman, letters indicate points on sections (figs. 30-33)

CB. Transept, 14 by 49½ ft. (4·2 by 14·9 m.) internally; only one external entrance, in the N. wall (PL. IX, A). The W., the N. and the northern half of the E. walls remain above footing level; the foundations of the rest are surprisingly smooth on top, as though either Despenser had prepared them to take a timber sill, before the inner ditch was cut, since pieces so surfaced were cast down into it and the mortar can only be visually matched in the earliest phase of his work (DI: compare also the flint bases in the nave, p. 86), or the transept was never completed in stone and a (rendered?) timber wall on a level rubble footing sufficed for parts of it.³³

CC1 and 2. Two towers (rather more than stair-turrets), 9 ft. (2·7 m.) square internally, in the angles between the transept and nave, and the 'triumphal' arch (CC3) spanning 13 ft. (3·9 m.) between them. There were openings 3½ ft. (1 m.) wide, from the towers into the transept and probably into the nave also (altered by Despenser) and an external W. door into the N. tower (CC2). The head of the better-preserved opening between CC1 and the transept has horizontal corbel-stones, not voussoirs, indicating a triangular 'arch', not a semicircular one.³⁴

CD. Nave, 19½ by 66½ ft. (5·9 by 20·1 m.) internally; walls stand to 6½ ft. (2 m.), i.e. well below window-level, on the S. side, but with two breaks from the foundation upwards on the N. side, the eastern one *possibly* representing an original door. Phase-C doorways were inserted at the western ends of both walls.

CE. W. tower, with semicircular stair-turret on south, which probably led to a grand upper chamber, perhaps the bishop's 'pew'. The seating for the newel (of stone?) remains. The walls are heavier than in the rest of the church, but the external width is continuous; the whole makes a simple heightened narthex or *westwork*, rather than a *porticus*. The tower arch was rebuilt, wider and on a higher footing, in phase C and the W. door blocked.

Despenser's insertions (FIG. 29; PL. IX, B) are not all easy to interpret. The most advanced features are the straight and relatively wide stairways from the undercroft to the first floor (both visible on PL. IX, B). The earlier, on the south (DG), turned at a square landing; the approaches to this were later blocked and an even wider stair (DH) constructed on the north. But the cross-wall with a door-opening, immediately east of DG, antedates it, and I am grateful to Mr. A. B. Whittingham for the suggestion that this may show that the very first phase of Despenser's adaptations envisaged a ground-floor hall. Bonded with DG is a solid block of masonry rising behind the old S. door; this probably formed the back of a drawbridge-pit, constructed to protect the main entrance to the first floor, which acquired an impressive gatehouse-like appearance when another flanking turret (DI) was paired with the old stair-turret. It follows that the screens-passage was at this point on the upper floor and the broad staircases descended from it to the undercroft; the service-rooms lay in the W. tower, the external kitchen on the N.

³³ Dr. H. M. Taylor tells me such treatment has been observed in the crypt under York Minster, usually regarded as Anglo-Saxon (see C. R. Peers in *Antiq. J.*, XI (1931), 113-22); the date has been disputed (*Yorks. Archaeol. J.*, xxxix (1956-8), 436 and xl (1959-61), 232).

³⁴ Presumably a dilithic lining has been robbed, otherwise tilted quasi-voussoirs would be expected, rather than horizontal corbel-stones.

NORTH ELMHAM: DESPENSER'S TRANSFORMATION

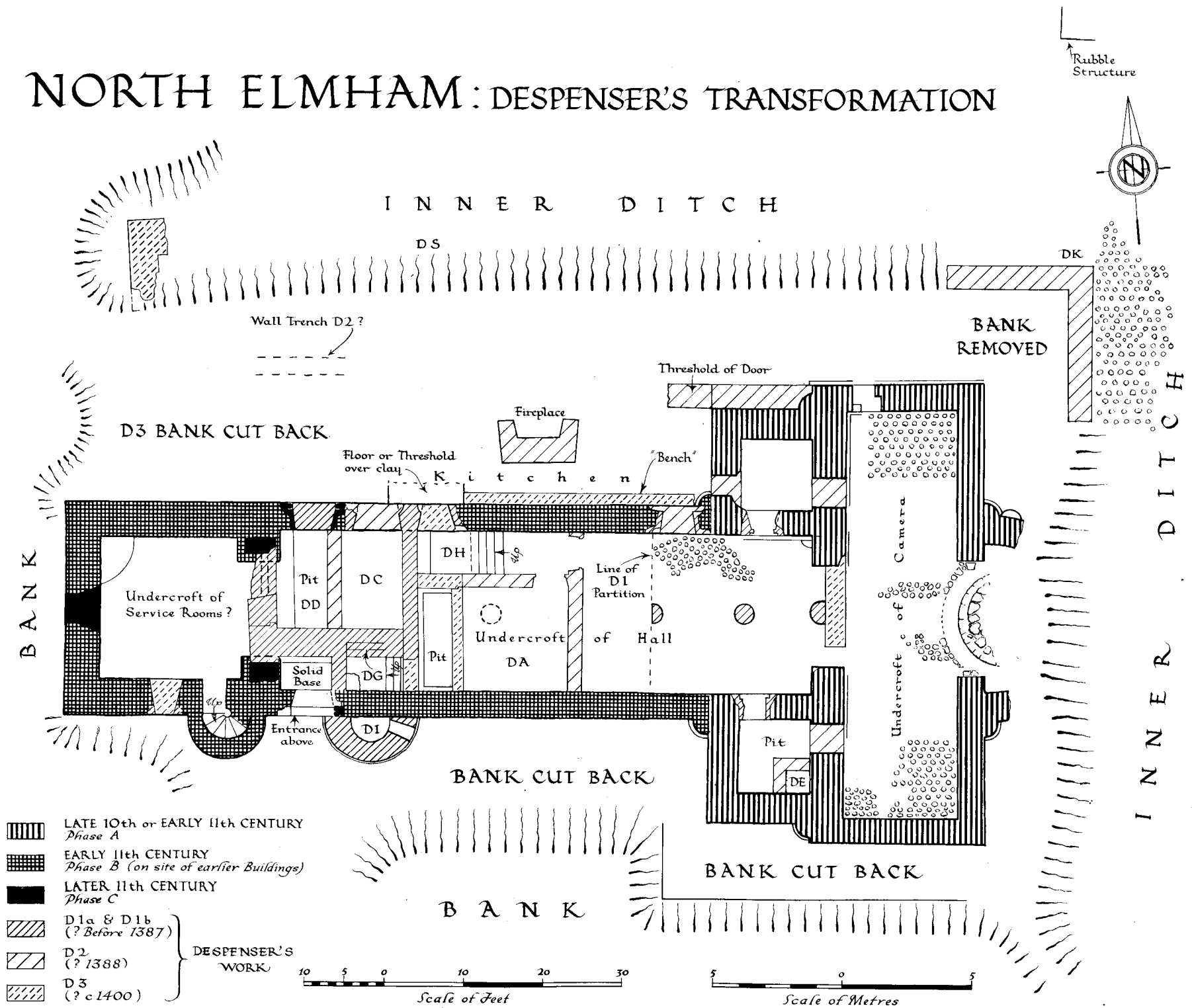


FIG. 29 (pp. 78, 86)

side, the hall in the nave and the *camera* presumably over the transept—a consistent 'first-floor hall' layout.

THE BUILDING-PERIODS (FIGS. 28, 29)

a. Ecclesiastical. Three phases—A, B, C—are evident in the visible ecclesiastical fabric. Though structurally CA, CB and CC1 and 2 might appear to be an extension of CD and CE, stratigraphic evidence shows that, as far as the present walling goes, they are anterior.³⁵

Phase A (in which CA, CB and CC were built) is typically late Saxon in detail, because:

- i. The door-embrasures are without splay or rebate, but have long ashlar stretchers lining their lowest courses.³⁶
- ii. There are remains of a thin Oölite plating, resembling long and short work, on the N. jamb of the opening between CC1 and the transept.³⁷
- iii. All the curious quadrant-pilasters in the angles belong to this phase except two, at the junction of CC1 and 2 with CD. Careful cleaning showed that there was only one additional pilaster remaining on the apse, besides those in the angles, and this was stuck on afterwards (PL. X, A); there was no trace of a continuous row of them, as had previously been suspected. Later or far distant parallels³⁸ have been cited for this rare but widespread early Romanesque ornament, but the nearest in time and place occurs between the nave and round tower at Roughton (Norfolk).³⁹
- iv. The four lowest courses of facing, inside and out, including the pilasters, are of flint; above this the conglomerate courses are uninterrupted (see N. end of transept in PL. IX, A).
- v. A single piece of dressed Oölite occurs at the third course on every angle.

In phase B (which comprises CD and CE) the W. door, though tall and narrow, had a definite splay. There are squarish (neither 'long and short' nor 'side-alternate') quoins of the finer ferruginous cemented gravel on the western corners, and the heavy conglomerate courses rise directly from the foundation (PL. XI, A, left side) even on the two pilasters, but the lower courses are less massive

³⁵ The first hypothesis (as in the interim note in *Med. Archaeol.*, 1 (1957), 154-5) was that CD and CE antedated the eastern arm, since the full sequence of earlier floors was observed in CD and CE only. Examination of the finer stratigraphy makes this unfeasible, but it should be noted that this alternative hypothesis has been considered and rejected.

³⁶ Unrebated openings were recognized by Clapham as most characteristic: see *Engl. Romanesque Architecture before the Conquest*, p. 111.

³⁷ Apparently so treated on one face only, but the 'long and short' plating of jambs is antecedent to and more widespread than a similar effect on quoins. For a Byzantine instance see Baldwin Brown, *op. cit.* in note 28, II, 29, fig. 53; it occurs in England as early as Escomb.

³⁸ Half-round pilasters are widely distributed, e.g. St. Philibert at Tournus; Abbaye aux Dames at Saintes; Modena (C. Ricci, *Romanesque Architecture in Italy* (1925), p. 206-7, pl. xxiii): but quarter-round pilasters in re-entrant angles are extremely rare outside East Anglia. It seems reasonable to regard them as skeuomorphs of unsquared (softwood?) timbers. Less confidently it might be suggested that round pilasters on jambs and piers (see note 74) are also timber-inspired.

³⁹ Roughton is particularly close in its variegated coursing (also conspicuous at Bessingham); similar pilasters occur in the same position at Haddiscoe, Haddiscoe Thorpe (with conical caps), Framingham Earl, Seething, Matlack (less distinct), and Colney (neater, but squared), all in east Norfolk; there are post-conquest examples between the ambulatory and 'bubble-chapels' at Norwich cathedral. A useful series of photographs of several of these is in E. A. Fisher, *The Greater Anglo-Saxon Churches* (1962), pls. 173, 177, 181.

and there are occasional bands of flint. There is nothing here that points to a date before the middle of the eleventh century.

Phase C is distinctly early Norman and of a precise, not rustic, type. The bases of the nave doors are of derivative Attic pattern⁴⁰ (FIG. 35, no. 4; PL. XI, B); the shafts were moulded in drums attached to the jambs (FIG. 35, no. 2). The new tower arch had contrasting courses of Oölite and 'car-stone', and accurately chamfered plinths and (probably) abaci. The contemporary blocking of the W. door also has variegated courses. The blocking of the N. door was partly unpicked and revealed a draw-bar hole and traces of a rebate (FIG. 33, no. 12).

b. Despenser. This period can be divided into four phases—D_{1a}, D_{1b}, D₂, D₃. D_{1a} (the brief 'ground-floor hall' phase) and D_{1b} are the solidest. The work with brick dressings, including the doorways to the eastern towers and the external fireplace, belongs generally to D_{1b}, as does the window in the W. tower, blocked when the bank was raised. Neat, chamfered Oölite ashlar, with pyramid (broach) stops (in foreground of PL. IX, B), characterizes D₂. D₃ is of inferior construction.

THE EXCAVATIONS

THE EARTHWORKS (cuttings M1-9; FIGS. 27, 30)

In 1954 it was decided to turf the area north of the church including the inner ditch, which Legge had not disturbed, at the final (Despenser) level. To determine this level, two long sections (M₁, M₂) were cut northward from the church across the ditch and beyond its margin (FIG. 30, I, II) and two shorter trenches (M₃, M₄) from the retaining wall at the NE. angle—one across the N. arm of the ditch, the other across the E. (FIG. 30, III, V). Subsequently (1957) a half section (M₅) was dug into the N. face of the S. bank (FIG. 30, IV) and another half section (M₆) into the S. face, when the retaining wall on that side was repaired. Finally, in 1958, a long E.-W. section (M₇) was cut into the inner margin of the outer moat (FIG. 30, VI), north of the E. causeway, to see whether there was any trace of a curtain wall and whether the embankment suggested that the outer moat was of earlier date than the inner. Pits M₈ and M₉ are also relevant, though dug principally to investigate the W. tower. Positions of all these cuttings are shown on FIGS. 27-28.

THE INNER DITCH

Both M₁ and M₂ showed a fairly level stratum of sandy soil (G_s) varying in depth up to about a metre (usually including a distinct turf-line at the top) and clearly contemporary with the church. The ditch had been abruptly cut through it into the natural clays and loams below. This soil (G_s) had been frequently turned over, showing no internal stratification, and contained much Saxo-Norman pottery. Burials were widely distributed in it, mainly within the normal profile of the sandy soil, but occasionally dug a little deeper.

The ditch, which broadened towards the west, had originally been cut with a very steep S. face (preserved by the retaining wall DK) and a N. slope of about 45°.

⁴⁰ Attic bases of slightly different profile occur in Losinga's work at Norwich, but they are somewhat rare in English Romanesque.

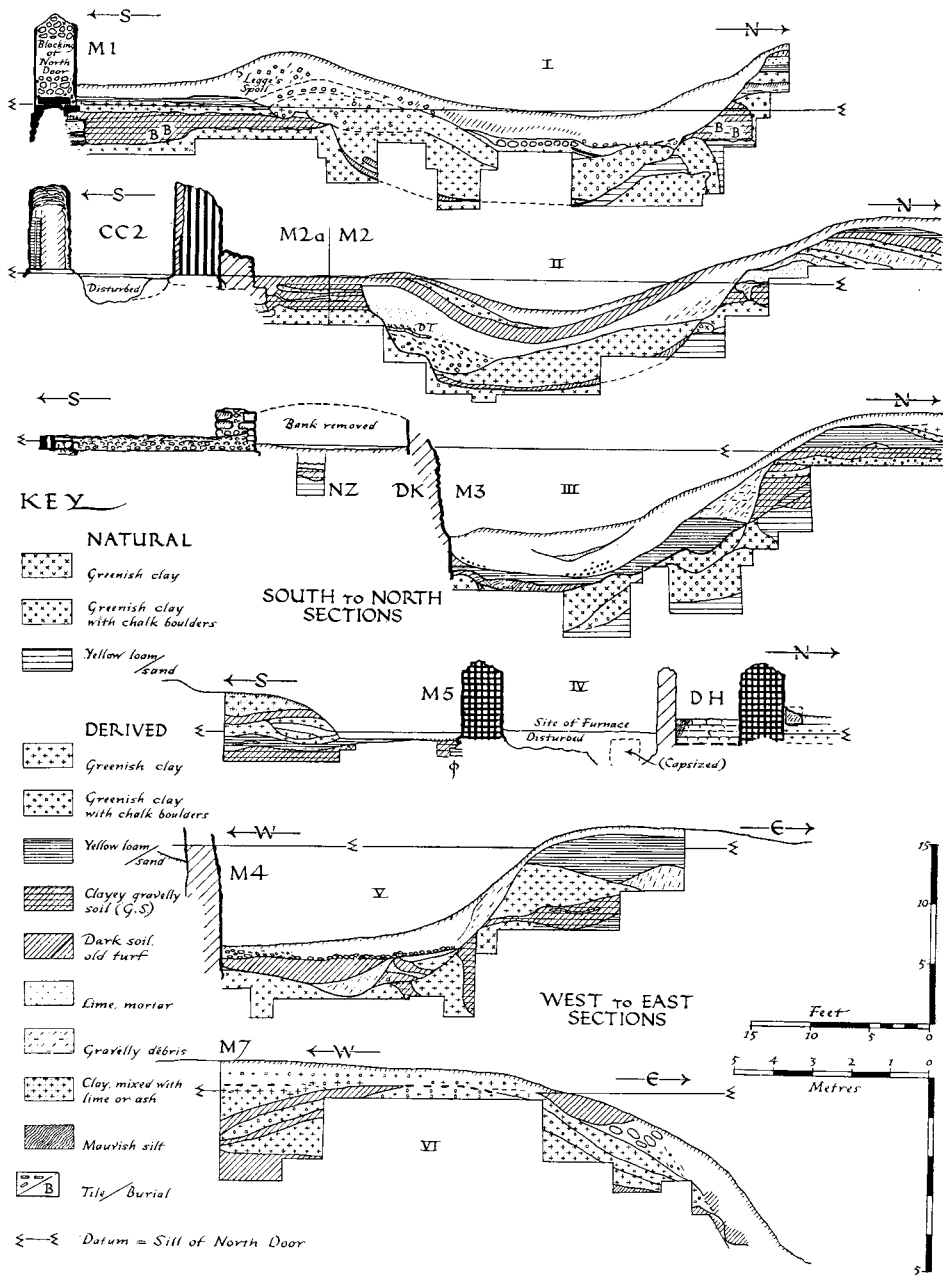


FIG. 30
 NORTH ELMHAM, NORFOLK
 Sections through earthworks (pp. 78 ff.)
 φ refers to point on plan (FIG 28)

easing to a bottom about 10 ft. (3 m.) below the old (G₅) soil-surface. After an interval, during which it had been kept well scoured, leaving on the bottom only a trickle of dark soil (as found in M₁) and mauvish ashy sand (in M₂), it had been back-filled to half its depth and a much gentler profile. This was probably done in one operation, though the filling material was various and was shot in from both sides—boulder clay (probably dug from the outer moat and mainly tipped from the north), and earth, rubble, derived pottery and a little fresh domestic rubbish, including characteristic Despenser wares, mainly tipped from the south. Later rubbish-tips, but still of the Despenser period (D₃), covered the slope of the modified ditch.

In M₁ the filling was capped by a compact but shapeless raft of rubble, and further west at the same upper level was a masonry blocking of late (D₃) Despenser fabric, with a recess on the S. side; both these are of uncertain purpose. The back-filling therefore represents a late Despenser phase, probably D₃, and the original cutting an earlier phase which, if one may judge from the fabric of the retaining wall which preserves its profile, must be D₂. Thus D₂ would seem the most likely context for the licence of 1387.

On the S. berm of the ditch the G₅ layer was always sealed by clay, laid down by Despenser, except where, as in M₂, this had been removed by Legge. But there are some complications. The full, normal sequence appears (FIG. 33, no. 11) in a cutting (N₄) 8 ft. west of M₁. Immediately over G₅ proper, in this case, is a lime grave-capping; then comes the old turf-line, which is directly covered by a layer of yellow, sandy loam, which here, as elsewhere, is assigned to D₁, and is here covered by a mauvish, ashy bed representing the kitchen floor. Over this is a thicker layer of greenish clay representing the raising of the bank in D₂ or D₃. But in M₂ itself the upper clay has disappeared, and the yellow loam, interrupted as though for a wall of the kitchen, overlies a lower clay stratum. Further east yet, in the grave G₁ (FIG. 33, no. 14), even the loam has disappeared (removed by Legge?), leaving only the lower clay. The lower clay is only found in this area and, since it contains infant burials, it is probably earlier than Despenser.

The loam is cut by the original (D₂) ditch, which confirms its D₁ date. But a low bank of clay, mutilated by Legge, obscured by his spoil-heap, and now finally removed, overlay the back-filling in M₁, and was consequently assigned to D₃. It may be the remains of a more substantial inner bank on this side. Further east the upper (D₃) clay reappears as a low platform in continuity with the stone bench, which is also D₃ (see below, p. 82). For the lime-mortar layers, at the G₅ level in M₂, see below, p. 84.

The N. edge of the ditch shows, in M₂, a considerable thickness of lime mortar overlying G₅, suggesting a building which need not be earlier than D₁ (but compare trench M₃). Above this are three layers of clay alternating with earth and rubble, at an inclination which shows that at least the lower two form a counter-scarp to the (D₂) ditch: the uppermost may belong to the extensive 'platform' of clay covering E₁ and assigned to D₃ (see below, trench M₇). At the N. end of M₁ the picture is incomplete, and awaits examination of the mount. The top layer of yellow loam, to be distinguished from the D₁ loam, appears also to belong to the

'platform' of E1, as there is a level layer of soil below it, above the Gs level, comparable to, but deeper than, the turf-line found in M5 and M7, and, like these, probably assigned to the interval between D2 and D3.

M3 (FIG. 30, III) generally repeated the pattern of M2. The silt below the back-filling produced a complete pot of the Despenser period (FIG. 37, no. 5), as well as much roof-tile and some floor-tile. The back-filling itself, also full of tile, was shallower, as the final bottom of the ditch drops eastwards. Associated with the lime mortar overlying Gs on the northern edge (as in M2) was a fragment of the flint walling of the same structure, and this was separated by a seam of earth from the clay counterscarp. This building awaits investigation; all one can say is that it comes after the Gs graves and before the ditch (assigned to D2). One sherd from beneath it has quite a thick olive glaze.

M4 (FIG. 30, V) produced a similar section. Again the back-fill contained a pot of the Despenser period (FIG. 37, no. 3) and was capped by a layer of loose cobbles, which was subsequently traced right round the NE. angle of the bottom of the ditch. The Gs level reflected the natural E.-W. slope (also noticeable within the church) which, from the evidence of M7, begins to reverse itself sharply a short distance eastwards. About 20 ft. (6 m.) from the retaining wall was a pit, perhaps an unusually deep grave, sunk 7 ft. below the base of Gs, filled largely with boulder-clay, but containing Saxo-Norman pottery, including a crucible, and slag. There may be a parallel at the N. end of M1.

Everything is consistent with the hypothesis that the inner ditch was dug in phase D2 and partly filled in D3. It is certainly of Despenser's period. The building to the north, incompletely explored, may belong to an earlier domestic complex or be as late as D1. The grave layer (Gs) below it remained open at least until the thirteenth century, but 95 per cent of the pottery suggests it was little disturbed after the twelfth century. Even if as much as possible of the derived pottery from the ditch-fillings is assigned to the thirteenth century, it does not amount to very much, while post-Despenser pottery from the top-soil is negligible in quantity. For all practical purposes, after the relative neglect of the whole site, including the church, in the thirteenth century, there is one period of occupation only—Despenser's.

THE OUTER MOAT AND BANK

The two sections in the south bank, M5 (FIG. 30, IV) and M6, are consistent with the others. The old soil (Gs) slopes south with the general contour, but is fairly level between 10 ft. and 20 ft. from the S. nave wall. At this point a pattern of iron stains suggesting rivets (FIG. 34, no. 1) was observed in the soil (cf. grave G1) but there was no burial. The same strata overlay it as on the north, namely level yellow loam (D1) and then clay forming a slight embankment (D2). Over this was a clear turf-line and then the gravelly clay of the final (D3) high bank. In M6 only the final addition was apparent, and the moat must have been much enlarged to produce it.

At the W. end of the church (FIG. 33, no. 15) M8 again showed 1 ft. of yellow loam (D1), over Gs, and then 7 ft. of undifferentiated clay representing the final

(D₃) outer embankment. In M₉ (FIG. 33, no. 10) the tail of a low intermediate bank appeared to rise from the NW. corner of the tower, but this is probably part of the same low bank which married in with the back-filling in M₁, and was therefore only a stage in the final (D₃) embankment. It was clear that the bulk of the bank was of this ultimate phase.

In M₇ (FIG. 30, VI) the old soil, evidently in continuity with G₃, was encountered at about 8 ft. (2.5 m.) from the surface some 5 ft. below its level in E₁. It appeared to be sloping southwards as well as eastwards and was quite barren. Thus only 80 ft. (25 m.) east of M₃ there were neither graves nor traces of occupation. Over this lay the counterscarp of the moat, resembling that to the north of the inner ditch (loam and boulder-clay sandwiched between seams of soil), giving a rise and fall of about 12 in 100; this was far too gentle for a defensive bank without a stone curtain or a retaining wall, and there was no hint of either. Over the inner slope, separated by a humic seam (cf. M₅), lay the solid clay 'platform' of E₁, level with the top of the counterscarp. Directly over this was a spread of roof-tile and a few sherds of Despenser's period. Nothing suggests that any part of the rampart was of Norman origin. The counterscarp represents a first cutting of the moat (for which the analogy of the inner ditch would suggest D₂) and the 'platform' (like the final elevation of clay in M₅, M₆, and M₈) a considerable deepening of the moat, in D₃, contemporary with the part-filling of the inner ditch. This work generally looks incomplete, as though from the end of Despenser's occupation. If D₂ phase is *c.* 1387, then fifteen years or so will account for the buried humic layers on the slopes in M₅ and M₇, while the bed of the ditch remained well scoured. Both were sealed in D₃.

The provisional inference is that in D₁ (before 1387) there was little or no earthwork; in D₂ (*c.* 1387) both moats were dug on a moderate scale, but the inner ditch was a serious obstacle; in D₃ (after 1400?) the inner ditch was much shallower, but the outer reached its present gigantic proportions.

THE CHURCH

A. THE EXTERIOR, NORTH AND WEST

Several smaller cuttings were made here which, in so far as they concern the minute stratigraphy below G₃, will be treated under B below, pp. 89-92.

The doors to the nave and N. tower, exposed in M₁, N₁ and N₃ are described above, pp. 76-78.

The 'bench' running along the N. nave wall, sectioned in N₂ (FIG. 32, no. 7), was shown to be Despenser's work (probably D₃). It was mortared, but not bonded into a D₂ blocking in the wall, and lay above two layers of clay with a spill of sand or decayed rendering between them, the lower one possibly earlier than Despenser (p. 80). Where the 'bench' ran out, towards the west, it abutted on to a clay platform, which extended in front of the entrance to the undercroft, blocked in D₃, and partially masked it. This platform (see above, p. 80) appeared to link the 'bench' with the low inner bank, and like both of them, to belong to D₃.

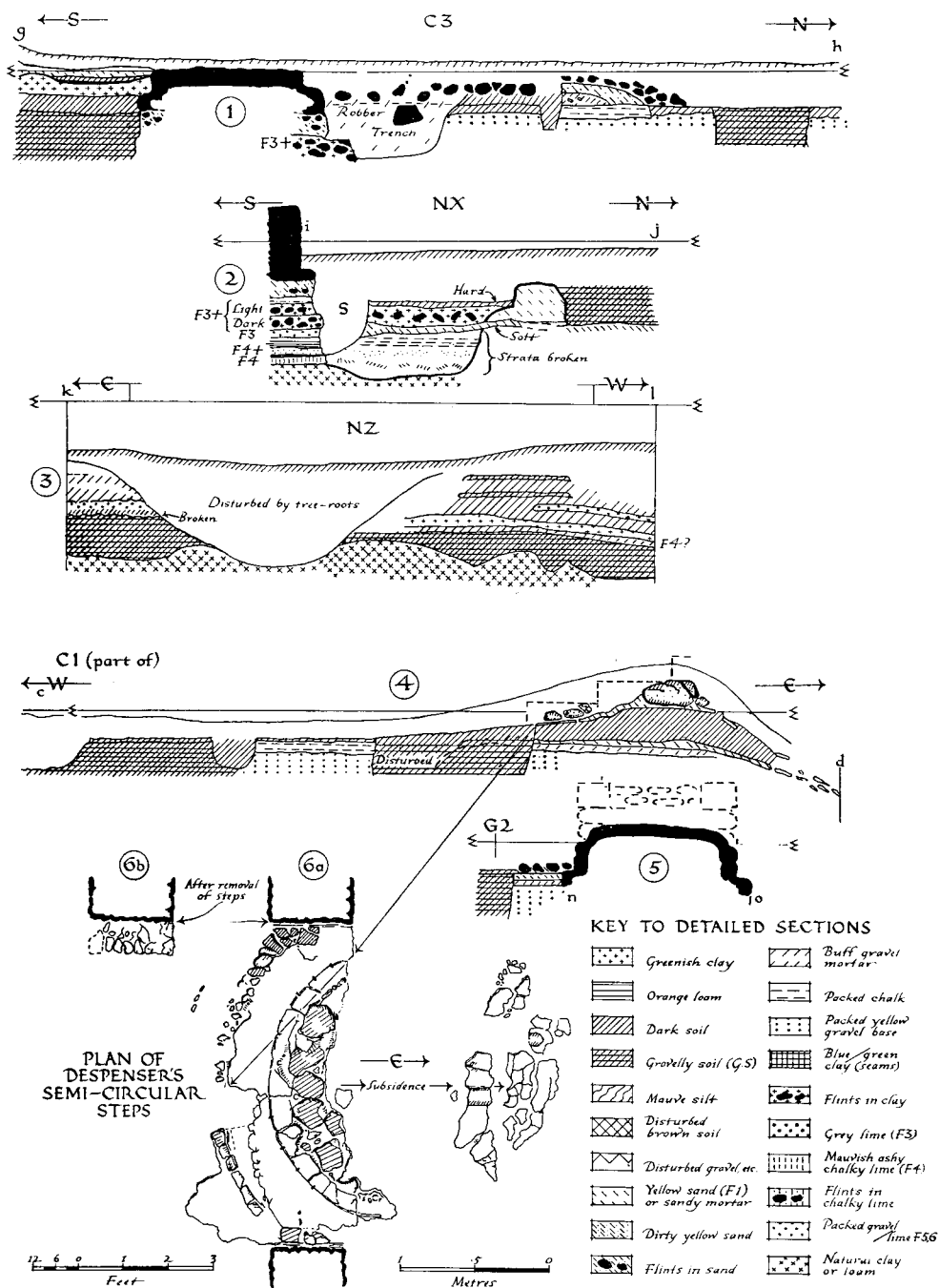


FIG. 31

NORTH ELMHAM, NORFOLK

Detailed sections in and about eastern arm (pp. 84 ff.)
 Small letters refer to points on plan (FIG. 28); ξ = datum line

m8 and m9 (FIG. 33, nos. 15, 10) showed that the footings of the W. tower were similar to, but stouter than, the rest of phase B; the off-set was neatly squared at the corner, with a secondary offset on the N. face only. There was no hint of a narthex or other western extension. Two coats of lime-washed rendering remained everywhere behind Despenser's bank; the upper coat was perhaps repaired by Despenser, but both were recognizable and well grouted, even below the D1 loam, suggesting a continuous maintenance of the church until Despenser began his work. A patch of rendering was removed to examine the outer jamb of the blocked W. door. This was turned in undressed conglomerate, not ashlar (PL. XI, D).

The thin lime-mortar strata observed in a gs level at the S. end of m2 looked like floors that had been trodden into a concave profile, though something similar was seen elsewhere in the capping of graves. An area, N5, to the west of m2 was stripped and the topmost stratum was defined, or interrupted, by what looked like the blurred matrix of a timber sleeper (s) and three vertical split trunks running in a line north-west. It is uncertain whether this represents a building or just a fence, nor need it be much before Despenser, but the evidence from three short trenches (NX, NY, NZ; FIG. 31, nos. 2, 3) opened north of the transept suggested that this area had been generally roofed over in the cathedral period. It is therefore possible that it represents a light building of this period with stave walls.

In the eastern half of NZ only one, broken, lime stratum was seen, but elsewhere in NX, NY, NZ there were three or four such layers in succession below the offset-level of the transept, all cut off on the line of the apparent sleeper (s). Beneath these, in NY and NZ, and directly underneath the transept wall in NX, was another grey lime stratum covered by a layer of clay, grey-green in NZ, bright orange in NX; in this feature, and in its situation, it appears to agree with the floor in the church called F4 (see below, p. 88).

There were no burials in the area, and pottery found between the lime strata was exclusively of Thetford type. One sherd was actually beneath the lowest (F4?) stratum, which came very close to the natural loam. Hence, even the lowest lime stratum, or floor, could not antedate the Thetford pottery period (that is, late ninth century at earliest) and even when the floors were broken up, later wares had not intruded, except at high level, in the actual sleeper-trench (s). The implication is that the area had been continuously covered by a series of subordinate buildings preceding the transept, the uppermost, with the apparent sleeper (s), being the latest. Both the outer doors belonging to the phase-A building give on to this area. In NX the two upper lime layers bonded into a solid lime footing north of which only the lower of these two layers was found. The level is too high for a mortar-lined grave, and it may well be part of the sleeper-wall of one of the subordinate structures in the area, which preceded the sleeper-trench (s). It did not extend into NZ.

B. THE APSE, TRANSEPT AND EAST NAVE (FIGS. 31, 32)

A pit, lined with rendered rubble, 5½ ft. (1·6 m.) deep, constructed by Despenser, containing a smaller shaft (DE) in the SE. corner, occupies the whole of

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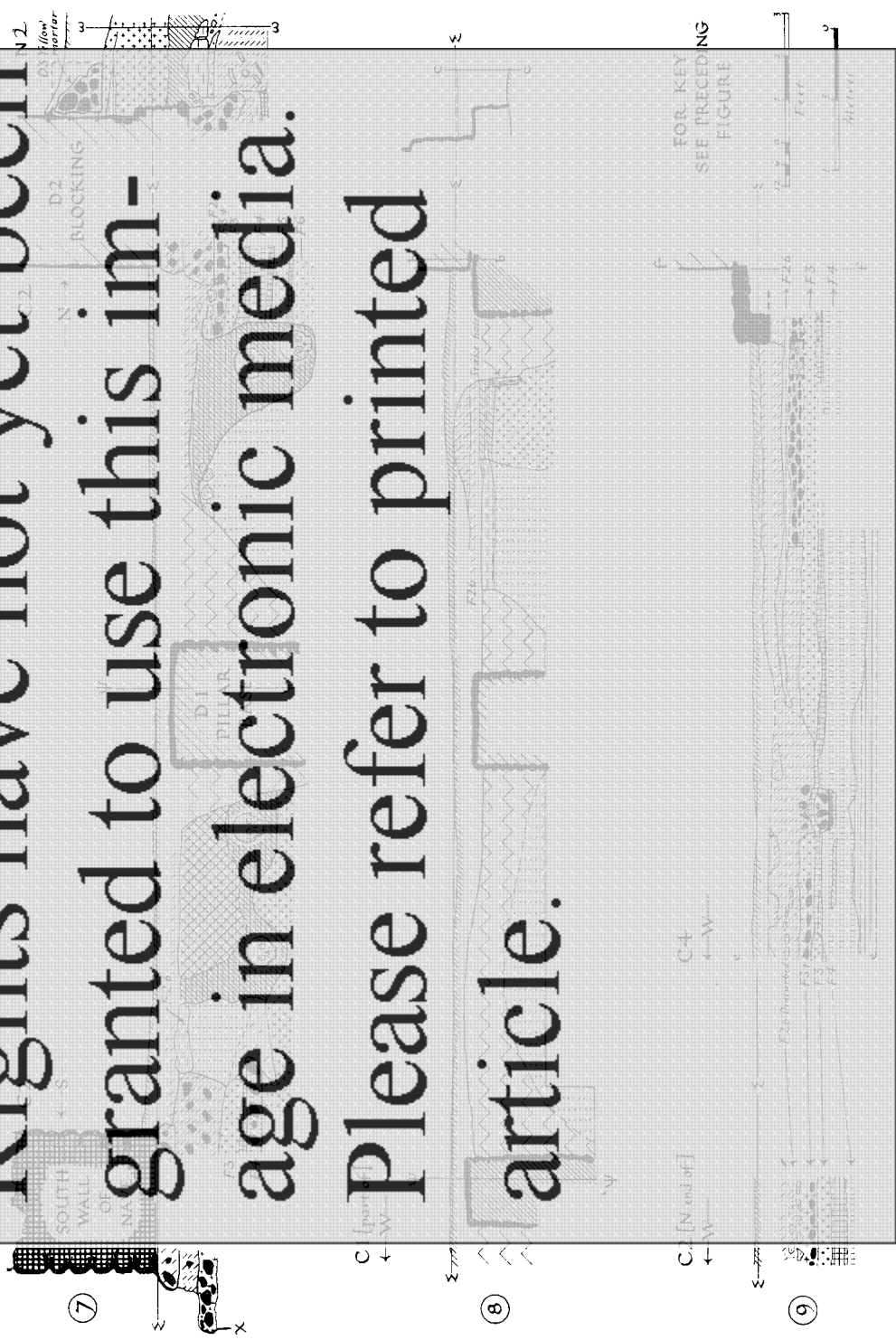


FIG. 32
 NORTH ELMHAM, NORFOLK
 Detailed sections in east nave (pp. 86 ff.)
 Greek, and small Roman, letters refer to points on plan (Fig. 28); Σ = datum line

CC1. Despenser's staircase (DH) encumbers much of the centre of the nave, and the floors in CC2 and DA were hopelessly disturbed, probably also during Despenser's operations. But most of his other obstacles lie further west, and the eastern half of the nave, together with the transept, is relatively undamaged and can be treated as a unit. The floor-sections in this part are slightly different from those in the W. part, indicating changes of level somewhere in the unfortunately mutilated central region.

Three exploratory trenches were dug:

CI, west-east, from the D2 cross-wall to the inner-ditch (FIGS. 31, no. 4, 32, no. 8).

C2, north-south, across the nave, linking with N2 (FIG. 32, no. 7).

C3, north-south, along the transept, 4 ft. from the E. wall (FIG. 31, no. 1).

Grave-digging had removed a great deal of the church floor. Much of the finer sectioning had to be done very close to, or even under the lateral walls. The most valuable longitudinal section (C4; FIG. 32, no. 9) was in the extreme NE. corner of the nave. Subsequently the whole area was stripped and photographed with Despenser's deposits *in situ*. These were then partially removed, and the more significant of them will be described first.

Despenser features

The apparent chord-wall of the apse, shown on Clapham's plan, appeared in CI as a flimsy and irregular piece of rubble lying on a thin mortar bed, above 9 in. of earth which contained one or two late and derived potsherds, and below which were two levels of church floor—a yellow sand over a buff, gravelly lime. Stripping showed it not to be chord-wall at all, but the rubble core of a set of concentric, semicircular steps. In front of the rubble the mortar bed showed the outlines of robbed ashlar treads (FIG. 31, no. 6a; PL. X, B). Eastwards the mortar bed had broken and slipped towards the ditch, but showed impressions of what might have been squared timbers laid on it. This was clearly not altar-steps, but a Despenser fabrication, probably of phase D3 and possibly the landing from a bridge. Preservation would have entailed complete remaking, and so, after recording, it was removed, and the church level reinstated.

At either end of the transept was a rough flint floor, set in yellow sandy mortar not easy to disentangle from the final church floor; there was a patch of similar floor in the N. half of the nave. These may reflect internal partitions in phase D3 (FIG. 29; PL. IX, A, far end).

A line of circular and semicircular flint bases (FIG. 29, and in section, FIG. 32, nos. 7, 8) was discovered. Three were in the eastern compartment, one of which continued under the D3 blocking wall of the triumphal arch, and one, in DA, had been capsized because it was not needed when the D2 walls were built. They therefore date from D1 and the semicircular base was shaped to accommodate a timber partition of that period. Their surfaces are smooth, as though prepared for timber posts, not brick or ashlar columns. Their erection had caused a vast disturbance in the nave, giving the area, already pitted with graves, the appearance of one vast grave.

Ecclesiastical features

The ultimate floor. A grave (G₂; FIG. 31, no. 5) in the N. transept, cut by c₃, was sealed under Despenser's yellow mortar floor, but penetrated another, lower, yellow sandy seam, then a layer of buff, gravelly lime beneath it, and finally at least a foot of undifferentiated and tightly packed yellow gravel, bonded with lime and clay. Beneath Despenser's semicircular steps the apse arch had been made narrower by an inner arch of which the pebble footings remained (PL. X, c); these were bonded with the yellow sandy seam and overlay the buff, both layers being present, as already noticed, under most of the area of Despenser's steps. The transept walls are clearly of one construction with the lower, buff layer; the nave walls in their present state march with the upper (but before-Despenser) yellow sandy seam; they never penetrate below it, and where the internal offset is missing the facing courses actually terminate above it. The yellow floor matches the facing mortar of phase B; the buff is closer to the harder, paler mortar of phase A; neither is like the pinkish mortar of phase C. The yellow floor, here designated F₁, thus clearly represents the primary floor of the phase-B building but a secondary floor of phase A, and presents the strongest evidence that the nave, in its present form, is subsequent to the eastern arm.

The penultimate floors. The buff gravel lime floor beneath F₁ appeared also in the S. transept. But in the centre of the transept and in the E. nave at the same level there was a very compact chalk floor of varying depth, resting on the same well-packed, but certainly artificial, yellow gravel base as appeared beneath the buff lime. Stripping gave a clear plan of what remained of the chalk floor after the grave diggers had finished. It continued the width of the nave into the centre of the transept and stopped 5 ft. from the line of the transept's E. wall. The outer edge had a regular indented formation (see middle ground of PL. IX, A), suggesting that it was interrupted by timber posts, but careful search showed no trace of an independent timber wall at a short distance outside them, such as might have been expected in a stave construction. The timber posts were therefore presumably on the line of the enclosing wall. There was no trace of any sleeper-trench connecting them.

The buff gravel floor is designated F_{2a}, the chalk floor F_{2b}. Both are absent in the W. nave. F_{2b} certainly precedes the phase-A walls, since it runs under the jambs of the triumphal arch. This either represents a screened quire providing a tripartite division within an earlier eastern arm, which was not repeated in the phase-A rebuilding; or, and this is more likely (since the floor in question runs over structural footings that run with floor F₃ and appear immediately to precede it, and has no comparable solid footings of its own), it represents an unaisled timber termination to the chancel, perhaps temporary, and soon superseded by the phase-A transept. If the latter is true, the floor would have been extended at the same level, in buff lime (F_{2a}), with the building of the present eastern arm, but incorporating an isolated chalk patch in the S. transept. Throughout the transept F₁ is very thin, but towards the west it increases in depth, showing that the floor of the whole nave was levelled up to that of the transept.

No evidence was found to say whether these floors were the walking surface

or whether they were covered with stone paving (hard to come by in East Anglia) or, more probably, with wooden boards.

F2*b*, though disturbed, is thicker on the north side of the nave than on the south. Cutting N2 revealed a similar thick section of chalk, at much the same level, outside the building (FIG. 32, no. 7), but lying over a dirty sand containing broken Roman tile and other building material. This external chalk is therefore probably not in continuity with F2*b*, but subsequent to the building of phase B, and more likely to be associated with a thick wad of chalk, like a secondary threshold, found in the W. door of C2. Both, perhaps, are remains of a pathway, close to the nave wall, laid down after phase B.

F2*a* was laid bare throughout what remained of the apse. Beneath it was undifferentiated clayey loam with a thin trickle of chalk (hardly F2*b*) towards the walls. No trace was seen of altar, or tribune-seat (*synthronon*).⁴¹

Earlier floors. Deeper stratigraphy was confined to C4 and the ends of C2 and NX, the basis of F2*b* having been completely relaid in yellow clayey gravel in the centre of the nave and through most of the transept. But in C2 floor F2*b* lay on flints packed in clay (F3+) which protected in turn a grey lime floor (F3), an even 2 in. (5 cm.) seam of greenish clay, and below that, a floor of mauvish chalky lime with a little ash (F4). This was the only floor that gave even the smallest hint of fire but it was not reddened: there was nothing to suggest violent destruction at any period. On the south side at the same (F4) level was a gravelly lime bed containing large flint pebbles, as though it were not a floor but the foundation for a wall within the line of the present S. wall. Below this was another seam of clay, then two completely clean layers of sandy lime, F5 and F6, separated by a thin seam of dark clay. It is doubtful whether F6 is a floor at all, and not just a preparation for F5; it blends imperceptibly into the native loam. Precisely this sequence was observed, in whole or part, everywhere else, F4 being represented by the cobbled bed near the S. and W. walls only, being consistently at a lower level than the flints in clay on the N. side (F3+). Under the W. wall the setting of the cobbles is yellower and sandier, suggesting that this narthex or W. bay was perhaps an addition.

In C4 (FIG. 32, no. 9) the same sequence was seen at a rather higher level, suggesting a raised chancel floor in this position. This reflected a slight rise in the native loam, but was accentuated by an unusual depth in F4, containing chalk and some charcoal throughout. F5 and F6 were absent. Above F4 was the distinctive 2-in. seam of clay and then the well-packed grey lime of F3. At the extreme W. end of C4 the grey lime suddenly cut into the clay. Evidently the F3 floor had dropped at this point to the lower level observed further west; at the same point the chalk of F2*b* became thicker. Above F3 again there were flints packed in clay (F3+), and here came the clearest evidence that this feature, where present,

⁴¹ The Norwich throne fragments, if ever at Elmham, may of course have been assembled in the W. tower, not in the apse (cf. note 16). Comparable fragments at Monkwearmouth are described by Sir Alfred Clapham in *Archaeol. Aeliana*, 4 xxviii (1950), 1. Dr. H. M. Taylor has recovered the evidence for a *synthronon* in the eastern chapel at Hexham. The slight bench at Muchelney is not strictly analogous. The only other English solid *synthronon* is at Reculver, which may well have been closely analogous to Dommoc. *Bema* as an alternative name for *synthronon* is ambiguous, as it also applied to the whole area within the screen.

represents a footing, presumably for a timber wall. At the E. end of c₄ they were carefully bedded in a definite shape, like one side of a small apsidiole (c₂)—possibly a rounded internal corner, or, more probably, the packing of a half tree-trunk (PL. X, D). The less finished clay-bedded flintwork appears to be the bed for a sole-plate. It rests upon the F₃ floor, but probably belongs to the same structure and hence is designated F₃+. The space not taken by flint footing was filled with dirty sand, and the chalk floor (F_{2b}) covered everything.

10 ft. (3 m.) west of the apex of the 'apsidiole' the F₄ floor was divided by a transverse sleeper-trench, about 1 ft. (30 cm.) wide, filled with stones and sealed, like the rest, by the clay seam. This clay seam was still running eastwards, beyond the line of the 'apsidiole' (c₂), but owing to the total remaking in yellow gravel of the basis of F_{2b}, it could not be traced in the centre of the transept. The transverse sleeper-trench lies a trifle east of the change in level in F₃ and roughly on the line of the W. walls of towers cc₁ and cc₂, suggesting that these towers had an ancestry in some sort of *porticus* to the timber building of F₄. A gap in F₃, but not F_{2b}, above the sleeper-trench and again packed with stones, would indicate that something similar had followed this line in the next phase.

Examination of the N. and S. ends of the transept seemed to confirm the *porticus* hypothesis. At the S. end a footing of stones in clay carried the line of the S. wall of cc₁ about half way across the transept, and a robber trench at the S. end of D₃ suggested that it continued even further east, beyond the observed E. end of F_{2b}. In NX and NY a grey chalky stratum, perhaps F_{2b} again, lay over a similar stratum of stones in clay, represented internally by a sort of secondary offset, much narrower than at the S. end, and detectable across nearly the whole width of the transept. These suspected long *porticus*, though not of equal depth, at least in relation to the present central axis, seem to have flanked the E. end of the church on both sides in the F₃ building. At the N. end of the transept, however, we have the complication of the external subordinate structures, as well as the complete disturbance of the interior by graves, and it is not absolutely certain that all the stone-in-clay footings belong to F₃. But they all lie on a grey lime stratum (very thin, and only detected in the eastern third, in NX) presumably F₃, and this is separated from the F₄-type floor below by a thick deposit of bright orange loam corresponding to the clay in this position elsewhere, and, in NX only, an additional grey lime layer (a secondary F₄?). The change in plan would seem to come with F₃, and the lower levels are not detected at the S. end.

It should be emphasized that these floors and footings are far too extensive and complicated to be explained as a mere foundation for phases A and B, made up of successions of lime and clay.⁴² Though fragmentary, they are unambiguous and constitute what evidence we have of the plan of the previous buildings. If the floor of the presumably isolated building in NZ is correctly equated with F₄, the whole series, except the clean and ephemeral-looking F₅-6, must post-date the

⁴² They should be contrasted with the footings of the early Norman W. front at Rochester, shown in Canon Livett's valuable sections (*Archaeol. Cantiana*, xviii (1889), 272, pl. ii, 2-7). These consist of five or six courses of flint, alternating with mortar and sometimes sandy mould, but they did not extend beyond the line of the wall, and could not be superimposed floors, since they went deeper than the base of the early Saxon church.

introduction of Thetford wares, which probably took place in the late ninth century, and therefore must be post-Danish. From the laying-down of F₃ onwards the chancel appears to have extended at least as far east as the succeeding F_{2b} floor, and to have been flanked by oblong *porticus*, the line of the southern one being preserved by the S. wall of c₁₁, and that of the northern one by the N. wall of the transept, the present broken N. and S. façades being a concession to symmetry. That the general axis of the F₃ building lay to the south of the present one is seen by the presence of F₃ footings in c₂ and c₄ within the nave on the N. side, and by a footing of stones in clay at the same level on the S. side of the nave in the external cutting s₁. This consideration shows that the disparity in depth of the surmised *porticus* was even greater. It may be that F₃ represents the first actual cathedral of the new foundation, and F₄ and its shadowy antecedents represent a smaller church in the earlier tenth century.

C. THE WEST NAVE AND WEST TOWER (FIG. 33)

Two areas unoccupied by graves were large enough for systematic stripping, namely c₅, in DC on the N. margin of a grave (G₃), which had, like many of the graves, a lime capping (FIG. 33, no. 13), and c₆, under the tower arch, with a transverse strip 4 ft. wide across the tower. c₆ had always been an area of structural division and all levels above F₅ showed a change on this transverse line (cx; FIG. 33, nos. 17, 18).

In addition three 'free sections' were afforded by the sides of graves, namely c₇, behind Despenser's added turret (DF; FIG. 33, no. 19), c₈, below the sill of the N. door (FIG. 33, no. 12), and c₉ and m₈, below either face of the blocked W. door (FIG. 33, nos. 15, 16).

The general stratigraphy is fairly consistent. F₁ is recognizable everywhere. F₂ is absent as a floor (unless the trickle of chalk under the wall in c₇ represents F_{2b}). It seems likely that the F₃ floor, very well preserved in c₅ and c₆, subsisted until the laying of F₁. However, the layer of dirty yellow sand (here called F_{1b}) underlying F₁ (which is clean) in c₅, c₇ and c₈, though only marked by a slight darkening in c₆, may possibly represent the under layer of a destroyed F₂ floor rather than of the F₁ floor. It is too soft for a floor itself, but is not unlike the filling of the 'apsidole'-space in c₄, and of the oval pit or 'post-hole', c_Y (see below, p. 92) in c₆.

A projecting bed of flints in sand, found over F₃ in c₈, and as a secondary offset in m₉, and also under the tower arch in c₆, might correspond to the clay-bedded structural footings (F₃+) above F₃, but would seem rather to be simply a firm footing for the phase-B structure. Here and in c₅ the F₃ floor is observed on both sides of the N. wall, and it would appear that the W. nave, at this period, still extended well to the north. If there really was an F₂ floor in the W. nave, then the levelling-up in F₁ was less marked than it now appears, particularly near the jambs of the tower arch, where 1 ft. (30 cm.) of soft matter separates F₁ and F₃. West of the W. door (m₈), however, a chalk stratum like F_{2b} does occur, at a lower level, lying not on F₃ but directly on the clay seam beneath it. This may represent a reconstruction of the western bay or narthex in the F₂ period, only

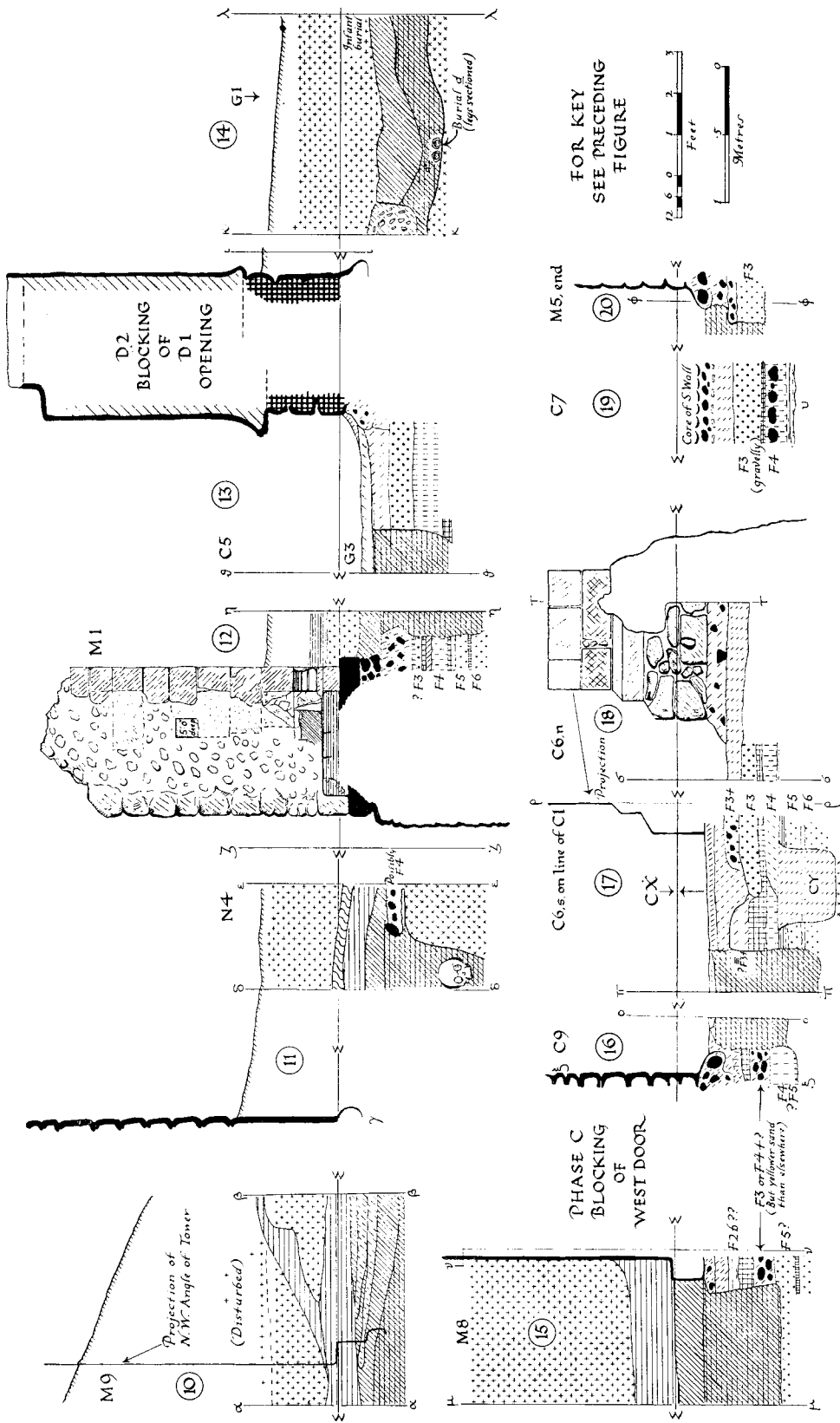


FIG. 33
 NORTH ELMHAM, NORFOLK
 Detailed sections, W. nave and W. tower (pp. 81 ff., 90 ff.)
 Greek letters refer to points on plan (FIG. 28); Σ = datum line

fractionally above the subsisting F₃ floor, and hardly allowing for a general reflooring of the W. nave at this period. It is actually below the footing assigned to F₃+ in the W. nave. F₃ stops short a little west of the tower arch and does not reappear, its place being taken by a thickening of the clay seam beneath it. In c7, and externally at the N. end of m5, F₃ is found to a maximum depth of 8 in. (20 cm.).

F₄ is found in its characteristic mauvish form east of the tower arch on the N. side: just west of the tower arch it is represented by a gravelly base, and on the S. side and under the W. wall by a gravelly lime containing large pebbles, as at the S. end of c2. Under the W. wall, again at a lower level, is a footing of flint in yellowish lime, not corresponding exactly to F₄ or any comparable deposit. It may be an intermediate (F₄+) addition and the earliest manifestation of the narthex-bay. In n4 a patch of footing, more characteristic of F₄ and well outside the nave wall, lay directly on the native clay.

These scattered and confusing wall-footings, if rightly so interpreted, would indicate an F₄ building whose S. wall lay within the standing, phase-B, S. wall and whose axis lay correspondingly to the north. But the westward (F₄+) extension, and, as far as the evidence goes, the N. wall in the W. nave area only, may have sufficed for F₃ also, though the nave was narrowed in F₃+. Since there was a progressive stepping-down of the early floors towards the west, it may indicate a multicellular plan with a short and relatively broad nave on the site of the later W. nave (see tentative reconstruction in FIG. 38).

F₅ and F₆, where found, are clean, as elsewhere, and featureless.

Just south of the central axis, on the transverse line of structural division (cx) was an oval pit (cy; FIG. 33, no. 17), about 1 ft. by 2 ft. (30 by 60 cm.) with vertical sides, penetrating through F₅ and F₆ into the natural loam (PL. XI, c). The top was less well-defined, but it appeared to cut F₄ strata but not certainly F₃, and was filled with loose gravel. If it belonged to the F₃ structure, it might have been axial, but the axis of the F₄ building probably lay north of the present one. To test the possibility that it might have been the hole for one of a pair of door-posts in F₄, the F₃ floor was stripped and then cut a metre to the north and beyond (a suitable dimension for a door of stave-church type).⁴³ The result was negative: both F₃ and F₄ showed continuous floors. It is perhaps better to regard it as axial and belonging to F₃ or a later arrangement, but earlier than phase B.

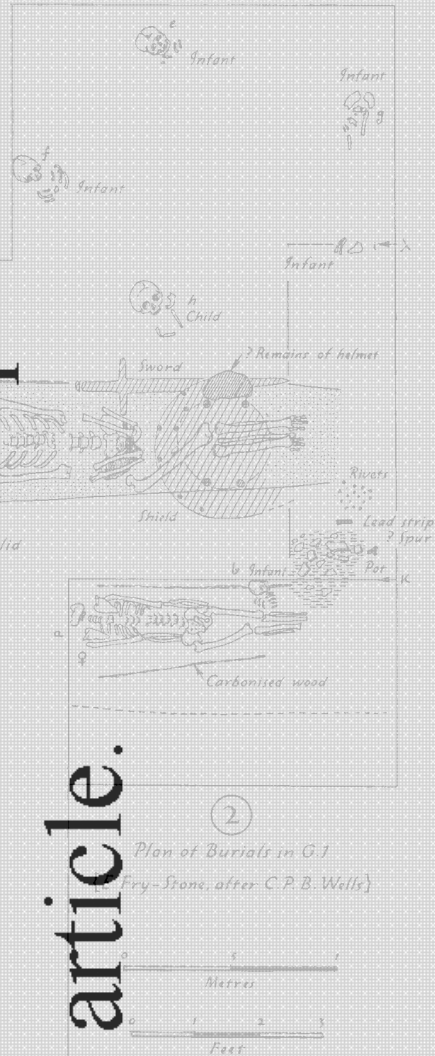
The excavation of the interior of the church was not exhaustive. The lower floors were disturbed as little as possible, and much remains intact for investigation, when our knowledge of comparable structures is greater. Considerable lengths of 'free sections' could be obtained by emptying the graves.

THE GRAVES

Burials, in general, were not disturbed, except where sectioned. Their distribution conformed with the present church, rather than earlier ones. None was

⁴³ This is approximately the breadth of the surviving W. portals of early and late Norwegian stave churches, e.g. Borgund (A. Bugge, *Norwegian Stave Churches* (1953), pl. 2), Heddal (*ibid.*, pl. 98). The plans are easier to gauge in H. Fett, *Norges Kirker i Middelalderen*; it is appreciated that these are much later, but the technique could dictate the dimensions.

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Blocked North Door of Nave

FIG. 34
NORTH ELMHAM, NORFOLK
Plan of burials (p. 94) and vestiges in m5 (p. 81)

found directly under the present walls, in a position that might have been clear of earlier walls. The areas of internal flooring which were not disturbed by graves are:

- a. Within and in front of the apse.
- b. Between 3 ft. and 6 ft. (1 and 2 m.) west of the triumphal arch, suggesting a *pulpitum* or screen of some thickness here.
- c. Under the tower arch and some 3 ft. (1 m.) westward.

The rest of CE was crowded with graves; in the nave they were more concentrated and closer to the walls towards the east. The external graves contained much pottery, predominantly type 1, *c* (p. 100), which suggests an intense occupation in the close vicinity at the time, and tends to date the type after the completion of the church. As might be expected, the internal graves were free of refuse, except those in CE, which contained pottery not only of type 1, *a* (p. 98), which might antedate a westward extension of the church, but also a little of type 1, *c* (p. 100). If, as seems probable, this was a narthex or *porticus* going back at least to F3, it might have been used for burial at an earlier date than the body of the church. Judging from their pottery content, the outermost of the external graves at the N. end of M1 (G4) and the E. end of M4 were the latest.

One grave (G1; FIGS. 33, no. 14, 34, no. 2), NNE. of the N. door, was systematically excavated by Dr. Calvin P. B. Wells in 1954, who will consider all the skeletal material in a larger context. The following bodies were in this grave:

- a. Female, lying face down, with carbonized sides of a tapering coffin.
- b. An infant, near the lower limbs of *a*.
- c. Male (?), disturbed, above and south of *a*, removed in the preliminary section.
- d. Aged male, the head 1 m. north-west of *a*.

A little to the north five articulated infant burials (*e—i*) were found, above the old turf-line, in the lowest part of the clay capping (see above, p. 80).

Burial *d* had features of outstanding interest. Again there were traces of coffin-boards, including, apparently, a lid; more remarkably, ferruginous stains in the loamy soil preserved the 'ghost' of an otherwise completely decomposed sword and shield, disposed in such a way that they must have been laid on the coffin after it had been set down; a more massy, but amorphous deposit on one side of the shield might represent a helmet, and at the right foot of the coffin was a cluster of studs or rivets.

The sword had a blade 77 cm. long (96 cm. including the very long tang), tapering from 8 cm. in width at the top. The cross-bar was 27 cm. long and nearly straight. The pommel was evidently of the 'cocked-hat' form, i.e. in a persistent tradition of Viking origin, but without any recurvature underneath. The broad and moderately long blade is typical of the whole Viking and early medieval period, but the length of the quillons, and, still more, the length of the hilt, point to the second half of the eleventh century at the earliest.⁴⁴ The presence

⁴⁴ Compare, for sword-typology, R. E. M. Wheeler, *London and the Vikings* (1927), types v-vii, and R. E. Oakeshott, *The Archaeology of Weapons* (1960), additional types viii, x (the latest and nearest), and pommel types A-C; the example of the tenth to eleventh century from Mileham, Norfolk (R. R. Clarke, *East Anglia* (1960), pl. 53) has conspicuously shorter quillons, and, even more so, has that from the Wensum at Norwich (*Norfolk Archaeol.*, xxx (1952), fig. 14, no. 5).

of 'early medieval' (I, c, p. 100) sherds at all levels in this undisturbed grave confirms this relatively late dating.

The shield was apparently circular, though the lower part was indistinct. It was certainly not elliptical and the position hardly allows for a full-length kite-shaped shield. It had four studs for the grip, symmetrically disposed around the hypothetical centre, but no umbo,⁴⁵ and two concentric rows of binding-rivets.

The burial of weapons with armigerous persons, though no doubt a survival, does not necessarily indicate an especially pagan sentiment. Some of the finest surviving thirteenth-century swords come from the tombs of outwardly *christianissimi* notables in Italy and Spain, and the alternative practice of hanging such things over the tomb is not certainly known before the fourteenth century.

THE FINDS^{45a}

ARCHITECTURAL AND DECORATIVE DETAILS FROM THE BUILDING

a. Saxo-Norman

A number of worked pieces of Oölite exist, either from the upper filling and silting of the ditch, or found by Legge (and therefore from similarly high layers).

1. (FIG. 35, no. 5). Part of a stone ring; internal radius *c.* 6 in. (15 cm.); external radius, *c.* 9 in. (22 cm.); triple beading on external face, smooth on internal; both faces worked with an interlacing of tendril and chevrony leaf (or zoomorphic tail and body?). It shows no Scandinavian affinities, but the ornament seems Anglian, rather than Romanesque, lacking the profusion of pellets so common on Norman foliage-patterns, even on the capitals from Norwich cloister.⁴⁶ Possibly from the circle of a wheel-head cross. One such cross is known from Norfolk (Whissonsett),⁴⁷ with simple, and late, interlacings. Has been reused and damaged by fire (L).

2. Fragments of thin plating, 2 in. (5 cm.) or a little more in thickness, such as is used in the near 'long-and-short' work in CC1 (phase A).

3. (FIG. 35, no. 3). Voussoir certainly structural, from a plain stone arch-ring; internal radius *c.* 9 in. (22 cm.); external radius *c.* 14 in. (35 cm.); thickness 4 in. (10 cm.)

4. (FIG. 35, no. 1). Monolithic window-head, for narrow (3 cm.) light, with splay towards the better-worked face. This suggests that the splay, though not great, was external.

5. Half of dilithic window-head (?); radius *c.* 12 in. (30 cm.). Slight chamfer to better-worked face, acute splay to very rough, diagonally-tooled face.

6. (FIG. 35, no. 2). Drum of shaft to N. door, with section of jamb worked in same piece. From the blocking of the door.

7. Various pieces of chamfered plinth or abacus. These and no. 6 are certainly from phase C. In view of the lack of ashlar elsewhere nos. 3-5 are probably of the same phase. (A piece of square capital with a fairly mature stiff-leaf ornament (L), if from this site, would suggest that some work was done in the thirteenth century.)

⁴⁵ The kite-shaped shields of the Normans on the Bayeux tapestry have four or six studs and sometimes no prominent *umbo*, but the round or oval shields of the English (and, e.g., St. Michael's shield on the Southwell, Notts., and Moreton Valence, Glos., tympana: L. Stone, *Sculpture in Britain in the Middle Ages* (1955), pls. 29A, 30A) have prominent *umbones*.

^{45a} Items marked 'L' are from Legge's excavations; their precise find-spot is seldom known.

⁴⁶ The nearest parallel is from Colerne, Wilts. (T. D. Kendrick, *Anglo-Saxon Art to A.D. 900* (1938), pl. lxxxiii), but this is considered by D. M. Wilson to be tenth-century. For the contrasting capital from Norwich see G. Zarnecki, *English Romanesque Sculpture, 1066-1140* (1951), pl. 76. Both the grooved 'tails' and chevrony 'bodies' are strikingly paralleled on the screen fragments (ninth century?) from Müstlin, Grisons (*Germania*, xxxvii (1959), pl. 26).

⁴⁷ R. R. Clarke, *op. cit.* in note 44, pl. 55; *V.C.H. Norfolk*, II (1906), 556.

b. Despenser

1. Two small corbels of fine limestone, with different, but typically late fourteenth-century, cyma mouldings, and simple ribbed leaf ornaments beneath. Delicate and typically East Anglian detail, such as might be expected from the rest of the work (L, presumably from within the building).

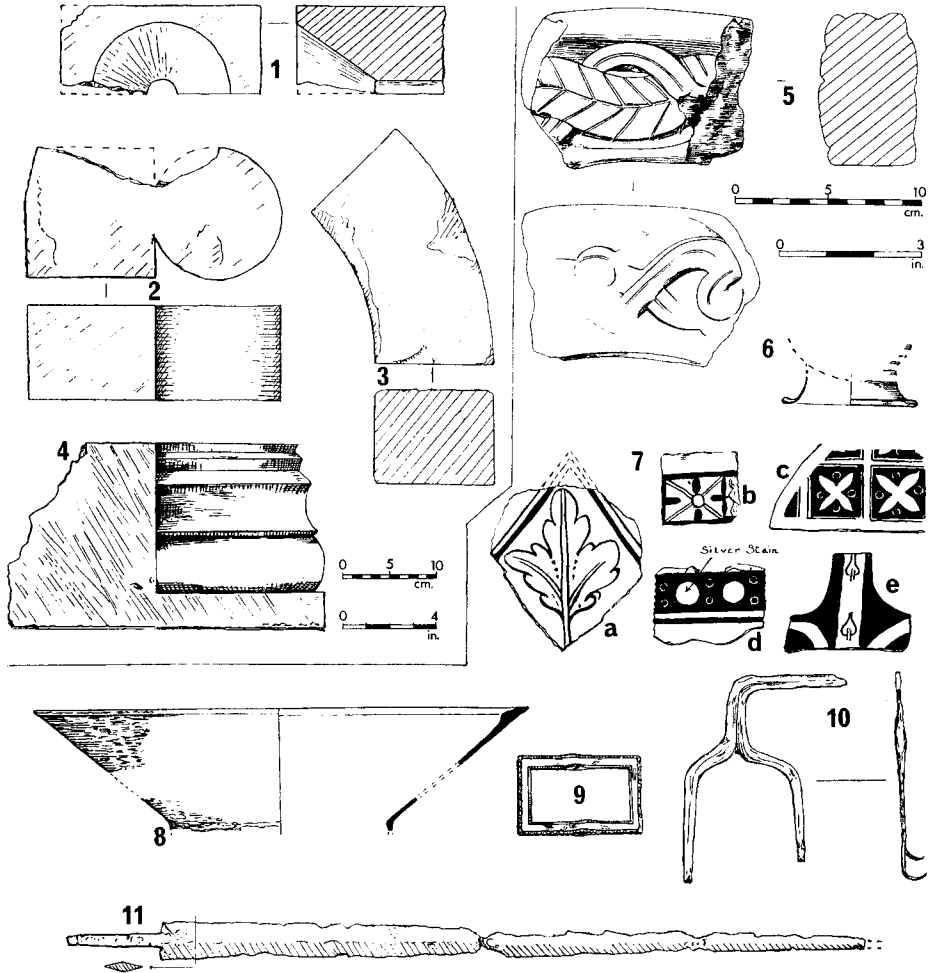


FIG. 35

NORTH ELMHAM, NORFOLK

Architectural and decorative stonework (nos. 1-5), glass base (no. 6), window-glass (no. 7) and metalwork (nos. 8-11) (pp. 95 ff.)

2. Decorated Bawsey floor-tile; figured by Carthew but lost.⁴⁸ This is another example of Eames's type 1, with an *orate* for Nicholas of Stowe, vicar of Snettisham (recently deceased in October, 1376).⁴⁹

⁴⁸ Carthew, *op. cit.* in note 20, II, 3rd pl. after p. 516, no. 1.

⁴⁹ E. Eames in *Antiq. J.*, xxxv (1955), 162 ff., pl. xxiv, 1.

3. Plain, glazed, unkeyed floor-tiles, doubtless from Bawsey. The complete examples are all 5 in. (12·5 cm.) square and 2·2·5 cm. thick, but there are fragments of other sizes. Yellow or dark green glaze, precisely as described by Eames,⁵⁰ and no doubt intended to be laid checkerwise in the late medieval fashion.

4. Bricks, typical local medieval fabric, rose-pink to buff; standard size, 10 in. by 5 in. by 2 in. (25·5 by 12·7 by 5 cm.), as in constructions of phase D1*b*.

5. Roof-tiles, generally rose-pink, like the bricks. Bits of wasters were crumbled into the clay, which may indicate manufacture on the site. Surface uneven and texture hard, compared with south-eastern medieval roof-tiles. Standard size, 6 by 9½ in. (15 by 24 cm.). Thickness 1·2–1·5 cm. No nib;⁵¹ one peg-hole only, about 2·5 cm. from the top. From BF, but showing signs not only of torching but re-use; may possibly be earlier than Despenser, but hardly before the thirteenth century.

6. Painted wall-plaster (mostly L), on soft, yellowish mortar (i.e. D2 or D3). Straight lines in grey-black and petals in brown-red—a heavy and tired survival of the thirteenth-century false-ashlar and foliage motifs. One piece of plaster moulding, on the other hand, looks forward to the Tudor period.

7. (FIG. 35, no. 7). Window-glass. Many fragments, mostly from the E. front, where the *camera* probably was; some painted, but almost entirely in grisaille, or sgraffito. Border-ornaments, quarries with a leaf motif. Some still in cames. Consistent with a late fourteenth-century date; the leaf design and general style are closely paralleled in glass recently excavated from Pleshey castle.

BRONZE OR LATTEN

1. (FIG. 35, no. 8). Two pieces of the same funnel-shaped vessel (spittoon?), diam. 30 cm., interior burnished, exterior rough. From back-filling of ditch, and W. tower (Despenser level).

2. (FIG. 35, no. 9). Oblong buckle, 4·2 by 7·5 cm., border of stamped arcs. Probably later than Despenser.

3. Two Nuremberg jettons, both early (c. second quarter of sixteenth century) examples of the common type that predominated in the latter part of the century—Reichsapfel in trilobe/three crowns and three lys:

- a. From rubble spread in N. inner ditch, loosely associated with the stoneware jugs of similar date (p. 103); obv. garbled Lombardic legends, crown initial-mark, annulet stops: rev. garbled Roman legends, PAMIGHV PAM?; diam. 25 mm.
- b. Garbled Lombardic legends, annulet stops; diam. 24 mm. (L).

IRON

The soil was not kind to iron. The following objects, except the last, are all probably from a Despenser context:

1. (FIG. 35, no. 11). Rapier-dagger, lozenge-section blade, 2 cm. broad at top, and at least 40 cm. long, excluding tang, i.e. longer and narrower than the ordinary anlace or baselard;⁵² (L, apparently from within the south-west bank).

2. Tang (10 cm.) and top of blade of single-edged (hunting?) sword (L).

3. Several broad knives, very corroded.

4. Rowel-spur, with long (2 cm. or more) points (L).

5. Medium-weight hammer-head (length 10·2 cm. breadth 2·2 cm. throughout: both the tapered and the square end flattened with use); and light hammer with iron handle.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 163-4.

⁵¹ Kentish roof-tiles of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries invariably have two peg-holes; nib-tiles came from a building *demolished* in the third quarter of the thirteenth century at Bishops Waltham, Hants.

⁵² The dimensions are comparable to the longest dagger on fig. 5 of the B.M. *Guide to Med. Antiquities*; this has an almost unguarded grip, like the earliest 'misericordes' shown on brasses (late fourteenth century), which are sometimes knee-length. But cf. also *London Mus. Med. Catal.*, pl. vi, 2 (which is guarded).

6. Numerous clout-nails (*c.* 8 cm. long, heads 1.5 cm. across). There were no lath-nails.

7. (FIG. 35, no. 10). Forked object, with unequal, hooked prongs. From upper filling of G1.

LEAD, GLASS AND STONE

1. Several small rectangular tags (*c.* 2.5 × 4 cm.) of sheet lead. From G8 (including G1).

2. (FIG. 35, no. 6). Base of drinking-glass; possibly Despenser period.⁵³

3. A piece of light schist whetstone. From clay in back-fill of ditch.

POTTERY⁵⁴

The stratified pottery falls into two main categories:

i. Saxo-Norman wares, sealed in the soil, and, particularly, the graves, beneath Despenser's strata, the typologically later forms being mainly from the ditch area; derived sherds came from the silting and back-filling of the ditch (marked 'BF'); a few were inherited from Legge, who did not generally penetrate the old soils. The series probably covers most of the tenth, eleventh and twelfth centuries. Not one recognizable middle Saxon sherd was found.

ii. Late fourteenth-century wares (Despenser period); some invaluable pieces came from the back-filling of the ditch, actually trodden into the clay back-filling (D3), others from the silt above it and from a spill of rubbish (DS) on the S. slope of the ditch and a seam in the filling (DT). These include all the varieties of ware, but the best Despenser deposits had been removed by Legge, particularly from pit DD, which was again scoured, and more found. The strong presumption is that most of the larger pieces inherited from Legge, and marked 'L', came from this pit.

I. SAXO-NORMAN WARES⁵⁵

*a. Thetford ware.*⁵⁶ The well-known, fast-thrown, sandy, dark grey fabric, attested at least from the late ninth to early eleventh centuries. By weight about 15 per cent. of the site total, but about 25 per cent. of the finds in M1. The only ware sealed beneath the early floor in NZ. Since two-thirds of the rim-sherds are derived and more or less eroded, there may be more on the periphery of the site.

i. Cooking-pots. Thirty rims (nine stratified), normal type, diam. *c.* 13 cm. There were two sub-types:

1. (FIG. 36, nos. 1-2) with a sharp angle beneath the rim (this included most of the sealed rims, but not that from NZ, and about half the rest).

2. (FIG. 36, nos. 3-4) with a blunt or rounded soffit.

Ten bases, with usual 'cheese-rings'. Wall-sherds include four thin pieces, ornamented with a roller-stamped trellis-pattern (FIG. 36, no. 5).

ii. Storage-vessels. Heavy sherds (FIG. 36, no. 7) with applied strips and trellis or thumb-ornament.⁵⁷ One (FIG. 36, no. 6) has decoration in stamped rings and incised lines, in the 'pagan' tradition, and a slight surface burnishing, but the ware is pure Thetford. This is the nearest thing to middle Saxon found.

b. Stamford ware. One sherd, typical fine whitish fabric with yellow glaze, and crossed scorings, from grave at N. end of M1.⁵⁸

⁵³ Glass vessels with this elementary foot are common on sites of the early sixteenth century, but the type was known in the thirteenth century; see J. Barrelet, *La Verrerie en France*, pl. xxii, A.

⁵⁴ I owe much to the guidance of Mr. G. C. Dunning in this section.

⁵⁵ G. C. Dunning, 'Pottery of the late Anglo-Saxon period in England,' *Med. Archaeol.*, III (1959), and J. G. Hurst, 'Saxo-Norman Pottery in East Anglia,' *Proc. Cambridge Antiq. Soc.*, XLIX (1955), L (1957) and LI (1958) now provide standard general references for this series.

⁵⁶ Dunning (1959), p. 35, fig. 12; Hurst (1957), pp. 42 ff., fig. 6.

⁵⁷ Dunning (1959), fig. 14; Hurst (1957), pp. 53 ff., fig. 8.

⁵⁸ Dunning (1959), p. 37; Hurst (1958), pp. 37 ff.

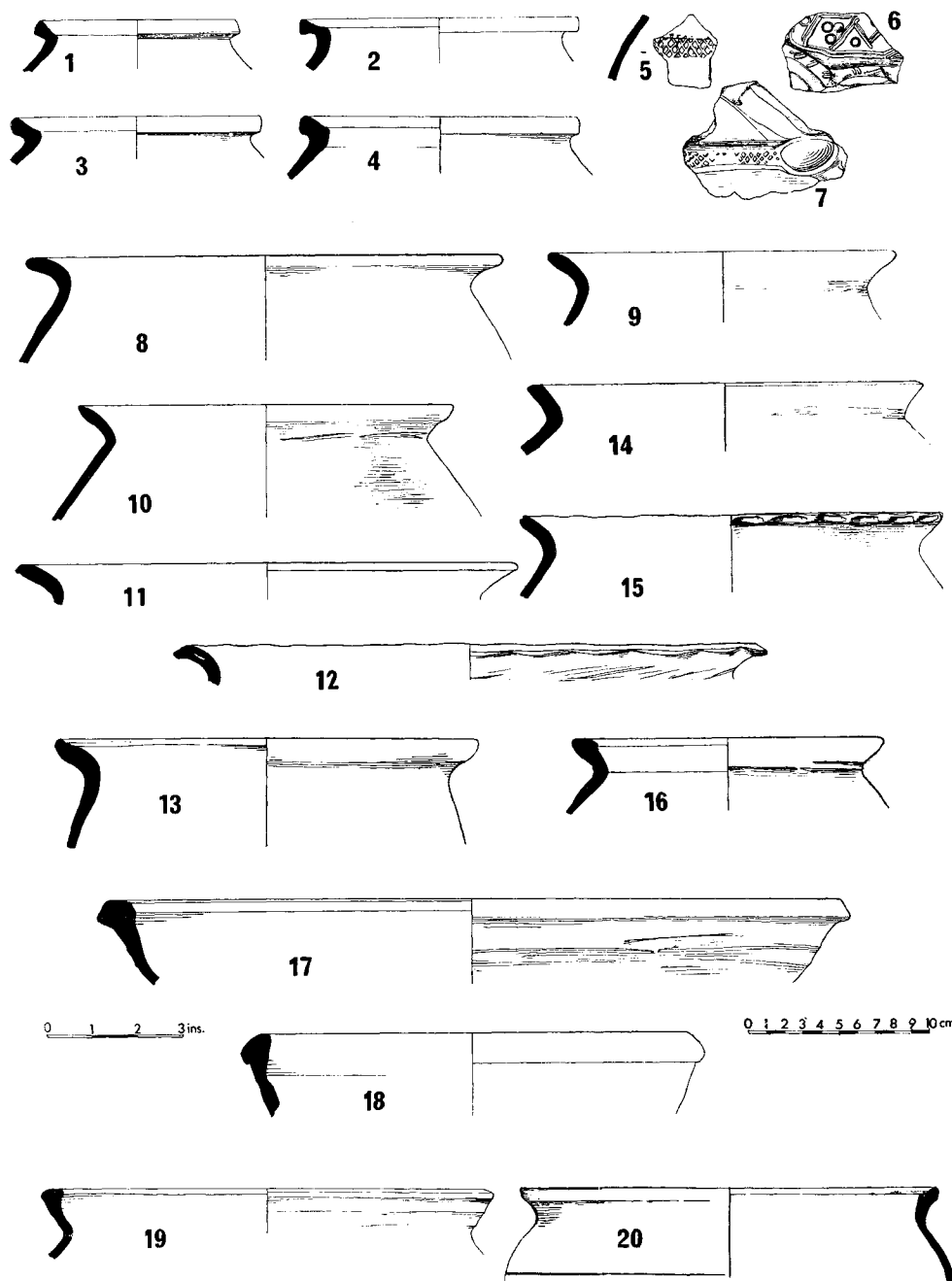


FIG. 36

NORTH ELMHAM, NORFOLK

Saxo-Norman pottery (nos. 1-18) and later coarse ware (nos. 19-20) (pp. 98, 100)

c. 'Early medieval' ware. A newly-described 'native' ware, in East Anglia, running parallel with Thetford from the early eleventh century.⁵⁹ Slow-thrown (not hand-made, here at least), uneven coloration of red to grey-black (often oxidized externally only), but thin and even in texture. Sandy, with a little flint grit and less shell. By weight 85 per cent. of the site total, but vessels usually much larger than Thetford ones.

i. Cooking-pots. Fifty-four rims (forty-six stratified), diam. *c.* 30 cm., usually with oblique scratch-marks on neck. Not one base-herd, which indicates that they were globular. There were six sub-types:

1. (FIG. 36, nos. 8-11). Normal, with simple, rather tapering, sharply-everted rims; various thicknesses. Twenty-three examples, including two from grave G1, where it was the only sub-type represented.

2. (FIG. 36, no. 12). Similar, but wavy edge to rim. Six examples.

3. (FIG. 36, no. 13). Thicker and rather smoother; rim still everted, but rounder and less tapering. Seven examples.

4. (FIG. 36, no. 14). As 3, but lip bevelled and less everted. Thirteen examples, mostly from the E. ditch area.

5. (FIG. 36, no. 15). As 3 or 4, but wavy edge and rim nearly vertical and squarer. Four examples.

6. (FIG. 36, no. 16). Convex rim with marked inner bead, approaching or imitating a late twelfth- to thirteenth-century profile (cf. type 1A, *a* below). This suggests that the ware may linger until *c.* 1200. Two examples.

ii. Bowls. Two examples, found together in M4, with later cooking-pots (nos. 3-5) and glazed ware of type 1A, *c* below:

1. (FIG. 36, no. 17). Sharply-beaded rim section, diam. 34 cm.

2. (FIG. 36, no. 18). Down-folded rim, smoother, untypical pink fabric, diam. 25 cm.

d. *Crucible.* From the pit at the E. end of M4 were fragments of a small hand-made crucible of reduced-fired, refractory laminated clay, about the shape and capacity of a small egg-cup without a foot. Base *c.* 0.9 cm. thick; sides irregular, but *c.* 0.5 cm. The exterior was encrusted with fused material, doubtless fuel-slag, flecked with green (probably Cu); the interior bore fragments of copper-based metal. Clearly a casting crucible for remelting, not smelting. A comparable example was found at Thetford.^{59a}

1A. INTERMEDIATE WARES FROM A CONTEXT EARLIER THAN DESPENSER, OR DERIVED

a. *Local cooking-pots.* Fine buff to grey sandy ware, convex rims with inner beads; only five rims and three sagging base-herds represent the common local thirteenth-century type (FIG. 36, no. 19),⁶⁰ and one (FIG. 36, no. 20), with a slightly concave rim, which is from Despenser's back-filling, may be as late as his period.

b. *Non-local glazes.* Two pieces of sandy jug with orange glaze, one from grave at N. end of M1.

c. *Local grey ware, with thin, pale olive-green glaze.* Quite a number of sherds, mostly small and unreconstructible, a few from the graves (particularly near the E. ditch, but one from G1), many more from the silting. Apparently this ware begins in the twelfth century, and some of the sherds must represent the intermediate period, but, in view of the paucity of cooking-pots of this date, surely not all of them. One accredited late thirteenth-century type represented is a 'face-jug' (FIG. 37, no. 7), with a bridge-spout

⁵⁹ Dunning (1959), group 5, p. 44; the example he illustrates, fig. 9, no. 9, is distinctly evolved, but comes from Norwich, where I have examined sherds from several sites indistinguishable from much of the Elmham material: cf. *Norfolk Archaeol.*, xxxi (1955), fig. 12, no. 12.

^{59a} A full study of similar crucibles is in preparation by L. Biek.

⁶⁰ These wares are numerous at Norwich, e.g. from the G.P.O. site: for the general type compare *Norfolk Archaeol.*, xxx (1952), fig. 11, nos. 5, 7.

and grotesque mask and limbs, a rough local copy of a midland type (eroded sherds from BF, and L).⁶¹

It seems certain that the ware continues locally well into, and perhaps beyond, the fourteenth century. An almost identical paste and glaze, with different profiles, occurs at Baconsthorpe in a largely late sixteenth-century context. Indistinguishable wares from DS and DT, and large pieces, usually with a deeper glaze, from L, surely from a like context (mostly DB). For these see under II, *d* below.

II. DESPENSER PERIOD

a. Unglazed stoneware. Imported, probably from Sieburg.⁶² Parts of at least six tall and extremely thin (2–3 mm.) 'off-white' jugs (FIG. 37, no. 2), from DS, and L.

b. Yellow-glazed wares. The most characteristic type, including some with sgraffito decoration. The glaze varies from greenish lemon to bright yellow and is found on (type 1) a fine pale buff sandy body, coarser examples being greyer and approaching group *d* below; or (type 2) a brick-red ware, farther from the thirteenth-century tradition, with a pale buff slip, which is used for sgraffito and approaches group *c* below.

i. Plain

1. (FIG. 37, no. 5). Lipped casserole, with sagging base, thumb-pressed loop handle and internal glaze on a body of type 1 with whitish lining (BF-M3).

2. (FIG. 37, no. 8). Something similar, glazed both sides, on a coarser, greyer body of type 1 (L).

3. Similar, but fragmentary, whitish body of type 1 (BF-M1).

4. (FIG. 37, no. 3). Two-handled cooking-pot with sagging base, imitating a metal cauldron; glazed both sides, on a body of type 2 (BF-M4).

ii. Sgraffito⁶³

1. (FIG. 37, no. 10). Tripod chafing dish, with oak-leaf design and escutcheons with a schematic version of Despenser's arms (quarterly ar. and gu. fretty or, with a baton sa.)—a bespoke piece (L).

2. (FIG. 37, no. 15). Leg of tripod skillet with oak-leaf design.

3, etc. (FIG. 37, no. 12*c*). Parts of huge (diam. up to 42 cm.) almost cylindrical jugs or vats, with broad strap-handles, glazed both sides, oak-leaf design (DS, L, etc.).

4. (FIG. 37, no. 12*b*). Flat flanged lid (for no. 3?) with oak-leaf design, and knobs (FIG. 37, no. 12*a*) for two of these (L).

c. Brown-glazed wares. Brick red ware, like group *b*, type 2, red-purple slip and bright red-brown glaze. Paste akin to the floor-tiles. Possibly from Bawsey, which may also be the source of the sgraffito ware.

1 & 2. (FIG. 37, no. 14). Cooking-pots, with gently everted convex rim with slight ledge for a lid and internal glaze (BF).

3. (FIG. 37, no. 11). Flanged lid with knob as group *b*, type 2, no. 2, but with design of spearheads in yellow slip (L). There are fragments with similar decoration, including lattices, in slip (FIG. 37, no. 13).

4. (FIG. 37, no. 9). Mouth of large jug or vat, with well-modelled face and external glaze (L). May be a 'cistern'. A spigot-hole exists, in the same ware.

⁶¹ See G. C. Dunning, *Archaeol. Cantiana*, LXIX (1955), 144-5, for distribution.

⁶² There are two major varieties of the type, those with a sharp, thin ridge round the neck (cf. W. B. Honey, *European Ceramic Art* (1949), pl. 5, B, wrongly dated *c.* 1500, since among several examples in the National Museum, Copenhagen, is one from Vordingborg, Museum no. D7885, assigned on archaeological grounds to *c.* 1370-1400; there is another from Bailgate, Lincoln, Lincoln Museum no. 9619-06); and those without the ridge. All the Elmham examples appear to be of the latter type, as is another from Mint Lane, Lincoln, Lincoln Museum no. 9618-06. Both varieties may be contemporary.

⁶³ For this technique, hitherto largely known from Cambridgeshire, though a wider East Anglian distribution was expected, see G. H. S. Bushnell and J. G. Hurst, *Proc. Cambridge Antiq. Soc.*, XLVI (1953), 21 ff., also *id.*, XLIV (1950), 49. For another piece with an armorial design see *id.*, XLVI, fig. 11 and B. Rackham, *Medieval English Pottery* (1948), pl. 59.

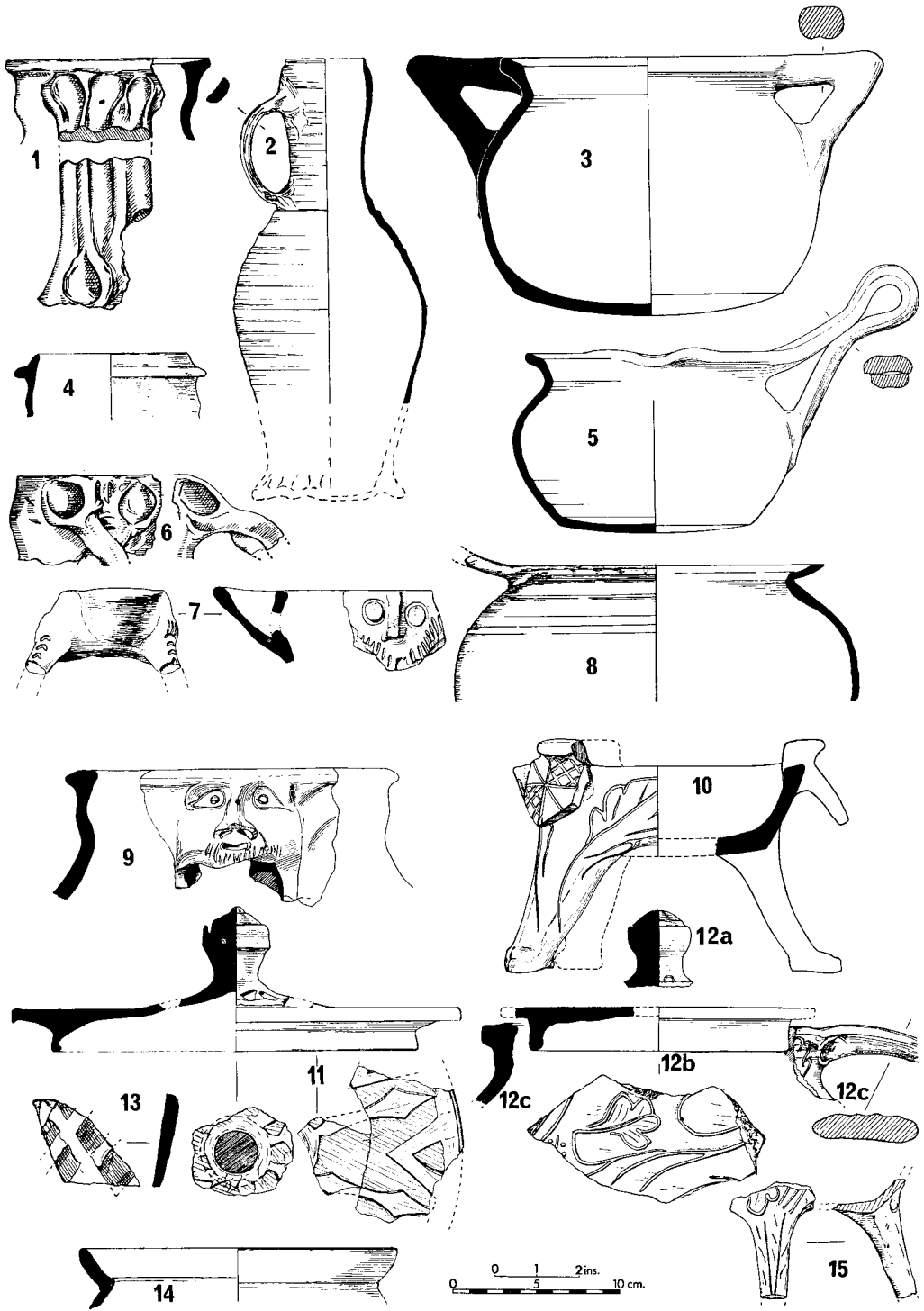


FIG. 37
 NORTH ELMHAM, NORFOLK
 Later medieval fine wares (pp. 101, 103)

d. Green-glazed wares. Hard dark-grey fabric; glaze varies from thin to rich and deep, and in colour from near yellow (linking it to group *b*, type 1) to near brown, but is usually light olive. Some purple strips and 'oil-marks'. Apparently all are jugs, but none can be completely reconstructed. The following characteristics are found in examples of reasonably certain Despenser-period origin (BF, DD, DS, DT, L):

1. (FIG. 37, no. 6). Most handles have a deep thumb-press on both sides, top and bottom, already seen in thirteenth-century wares from Norwich, before it becomes common in the midlands (?mid 14th century);⁶⁴ here it is exaggerated.
2. A number of handles are twisted, or entwined, but look like a development from the rope handles seen in the Norwich and Happisburgh vessels (above).
3. Strap-handles are deeply pricked, not slashed, or unpierced but ribbed.
4. (FIG. 37, nos. 1, 4). Rims are usually simple or flanged.
5. Some bases are thumb-pressed.
6. The whole technique looks coarse and slovenly, as though the thirteenth-century tradition were at last tiring.

III. WARES LATER THAN DESPENSER

A mere handful of sixteenth- or seventeenth-century sherds, including one or two early sixteenth-century glazed stoneware jugs, with wavy bases (Raeren or similar); mostly from over the rubble spread in N. inner ditch.

INTERPRETATION

THE WOODEN CHAPEL (*Sacellum ligneum*)

The nearly contemporary description of the cathedral of Elmham as a wooden chapel,⁶⁵ although intended at the time to be derogatory, is of the utmost significance. While the material evidence demonstrates that, during the last part of its life (provided always that the building here considered really was the cathedral) this was not quite true, the writer must surely have known that, for the greater part of its existence, it was in fact of timber, and we, in turn, are bound to look for the latest, not the earliest possible date for the stonework. This consideration remains valid even if another (and possibly pre-Danish) cathedral is implied; important East Anglian churches were still often of timber in the eleventh century.

Comparison with the (*ipso facto* more ambitious) royal or semi-royal monastic foundations in eastern England shows that, while Ramsey,⁶⁶ and probably Peterborough⁶⁷ and Ely,⁶⁸ enjoyed stone churches from soon after their refoundation under Dunstan and Aethelwold, a timber church sufficed at Bury until after the Norman conquest,⁶⁹ and Hulme, the nearest, refounded with Bury in the early

⁶⁴ e.g. Brill ware (*Oxoniensia*, VII (1942), 74 ff.; *Berks. Archaeol. J.*, L (1947), 64, fig. 8, no 1); for early examples from Norwich and Happisburgh cf. *Norfolk Archaeol.*, xxx (1952), 228, fig. 3 and 309, fig. 11, nos. 1 and 9 (if it is so early).

⁶⁵ See note 17.

⁶⁶ *Chronicon Abbatiae Ramesiensis* (R.S. no. 83), pp. 41 (969) and 85-88 (980-90).

⁶⁷ *V.C.H. Northants.*, II (1906), 85. Refounded c. 966 according to the *Chronicle* tradition; buildings complete c. 972 (the annal for 963 in *A.S.C.* (ed. G. N. Garmonsway), p. 117, is a later embroidery, of no use for the earlier condition of the buildings); restored after Sweyn's sack c. 1020 to 1059, when the tower was hallowed. The plan in *J. Brit. Archaeol. Assoc.*, L (1894), 45-49 belongs to one of these buildings; A. W. Clapham suggests that of c. 970 (*English Romanesque Architecture before the Conquest*, p. 91), but see note 8.

⁶⁸ Mentioned in the same annal as Peterborough (note 67); see Clapham, *op. cit.* in note 67, pp. 89-90, for the slight evidence about the plan, namely that it had a transept and was originally aisleless.

⁶⁹ See A. B. Whittingham in *Archaeol. J.*, CVIII (1951), 168 ff. with complete bibliography.

1020s, did not acquire a stone church for over twenty years.⁷⁰ In addition, we have ample material evidence of a revival of stone building in Norfolk before, but not long before, the conquest.⁷¹ We would expect a stone church at Elmham in the second quarter of the eleventh century, but not necessarily earlier.

There are five recognizable floors (F6-F2*b*), all of which (accepting F5-F6) must be equated with structures earlier than the standing walls. Where flints are packed into a lime bed (F4) or in a distinct clay bed above the floor (F3), we can probably identify sleeper-footings; there is no other adequate explanation. This would imply structures with sole-plates; post-holes would be exceptional and the removal of the sleeper-bed, would, as in a frame-building, leave nothing for the excavator. The structure above the sole-plate may well have been of filleted stave-work, i.e. primitive stud-and-panel construction, distinct from the tongued and grooved walls of the Scandinavian examples, as exemplified in the nave at Greensted. Independent internal posts (masts) have also a long history in structures with relatively short cells,⁷² but were not certainly traceable at Elmham.

Of the building to which the two earliest floors (F5, F6) belonged little can be said, except that their clean condition suggests a very short life, inconsistent with a pre-Danish church lasting for two centuries; nor is there any sign of violent destruction or prolonged neglect. Considering the complete absence of middle Saxon pottery throughout the site and the finding of Thetford ware below the level of what appears to be a floor of the immediately succeeding period, it is unlikely that the building antedates the late ninth century, and if so, on historical grounds, it can hardly be before the reconquest of *c.* 918. It may have extended as far west as the final building but no farther east than the W. wall of the E. towers. No transverse divisions can be discovered. In any case, it is possible that these floors are no more than preliminary stages of the succeeding structure.

The next, and first certain, period of building (F4) carried the work eastwards at least as far as the line of the later 'triumphal' arch, and there was a subordinate chapel, or other building, covering the N. end of the transept and extending some way northward, but no trace of a corresponding building to the south. There may have been a pair of *porticus* in the position of the later eastern towers, and there was certainly a transverse division on the line of their W. wall, and another on the

⁷⁰ *Chronicon J. de Oxenedes* (R.S. no. 13), p. 292: under Abbot Elsi (*ob.* 1046) was begun 'ecclesia. . . lapidea, antea lutea'; this raises the possibility of cob, as well as timber, as alternative to stone.

⁷¹ The wealth of primary Romanesque remains in Norfolk has been strangely neglected; suffice it to say that there is a close kinship between those buildings (two-celled churches, usually with round western towers, three-celled churches with square axial towers, etc.) which bear long-and-short and other 'Saxon' details and those which, though in some cases, perhaps, pre-conquest, do not.

⁷² There is some ambiguity, even in Norway, on the use of the word 'stave': it is used both for the independent posts and the wall-planks. I refer here to the wall-construction seen even in the simplest stave churches (Bugge, *op. cit.* in note 43, p. 26, plan-forms I, II), not to the elaborate internal frame on tall posts, from which, rather than from the corner-posts, J. Strzygowski (*Early Church Art in Northern Europe* (1928), p. 116 ff.) named them 'mast-churches'. The wall-construction at Greensted is rough in comparison with the thick, but accurate, tongued and grooved planks of Norwegian examples. The mast-construction, not yet attested in England, was used even in the first building at Urnes, early eleventh century, from which the style takes its name (see H. Christie, 'Urnes Stavkirks Forløper', *Norske Fortidsminnes. Bevaring, Aarbok*, cxiii (1958), 49) and indeed earlier still (Jellinge church, Denmark): for a general discussion cf. E. Dygve in *Germania*, xxxvii (1959), 193 ff.

line of the W. tower arch; a heavy post, not a door-post, stood on this line, in this or the following phase. A western *porticus* existed, or was added soon after, and was perhaps already in use for burial. The axis lay north of the present one and the lost N. wall was entirely outside the present nave, possibly as far north as N₄, which would give a relatively broad nave. But the overall length was perhaps not far different from that of the final church. A tentative siting of this church and its immediate successor is given in FIG. 38.

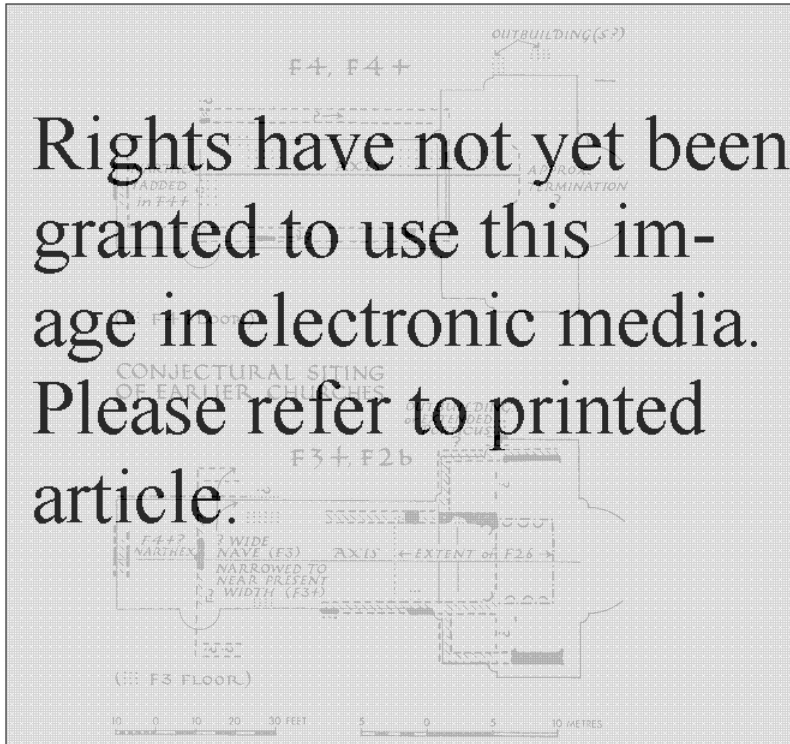


FIG. 38
 NORTH ELMHAM, NORFOLK
 Conjectural plans of earlier churches (pp. 104 ff.)

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In F₃+, which may represent the cathedral, or alternatively the chapel, of the re-established bishop in the 950s, the axis lay very slightly south of the present one, and the nave of this building probably subsisted until the building of the present nave in phase B. The necessary adjustment is reflected in the slightly greater projection of the SE. tower. But if the F₃ floor can be identified in M₁, the nave was near its original width in F₃ proper. The plan remained little altered at the W. end; there were transverse divisions following the W. wall of the E. towers, and a heavier one just west of the 'triumphal' arch, and the chancel probably nearly reached the E. wall of the transept. There were oblong *porticus*, or even aisles, covering the site of the E. towers and half the width of the transept,

and between these the chancel was probably a little narrower than the nave. It is a plan in some ways analogous to the modified layout at Deerhurst hitherto generally assigned to the tenth century,⁷³ but is primarily to be considered as a timber form rather than as an imitation of a stone one.

F2b seems to have been an improvement and widening of this chancel. It would therefore have involved the demolition of the *porticus*. It may not have lasted long, since its floor was reused in phase A of the stone building, but it almost certainly preceded it. Possibly some sort of ambulatory was intended, but was abandoned in favour of the long transept. The apparent outline of the wooden posts in floor F2b suggests a clustered formation, perhaps paralleled by the remarkably advanced stone columns at Bosham (Sussex), Great Paxton (Hunts.), or Wittering (Northants).⁷⁴ The reason for both might be compound columns of softwood, rather than oak.

THE STONE CHURCH

The three phases, and the possibility that phase A, though begun in stone may have been completed in timber, have already been discussed. The points to be considered here are the affinities of the transeptal plan, and the constructional technique of all three phases.

The widespread revival in the eleventh century of the eastern transept, the ancestry of which goes back to the major basilicas of the fourth century, is now well attested. It is a deliberate antique revival, of which the eighth-century one at St. Denis⁷⁵ is a precursor, not a survival. The published plan of Wilfrid's Hexham is too full of conjecture to be admitted as evidence;⁷⁶ anyway it is very early. Certain Carolingian examples point the way by accentuating the eastern cells;⁷⁷ a few already have a comparable transept. The contrast is with those basilicas

⁷³ Eastward and westward extensions were made at different dates to the original *porticus*; any analogy at Elmham is with these first extensions, rather than with the final arrangement where the entire nave was clasped with added cells. See W. H. Knowles, 'Deerhurst priory church,' *Archaeologia*, LXXVII (1927), 141 ff., esp. p. 160 and plan on p. 143; Clapham, *op. cit.* in note 67, p. 93, fig. 23; E. D. C. Jackson and E. G. M. Fletcher, 'The Anglo-Saxon priory church at Deerhurst' in *Studies in Building History* (ed. E. M. Jope, 1961), p. 64. This latest and most thorough analysis argues that the earlier extensions were made before 804, in contrast with the hitherto general view that they all belonged to the tenth century; however, the resulting, peculiarly English, plan with long *porticus* or short, cellular aisles could still have been used in another context in the tenth century.

⁷⁴ Clapham, *op. cit.* in note 67, pls. 42 A, 47 A (Bosham), fig. 23 and pls. 44 B, 46 B (Paxton), pl. 45 B (Wittering); but it is far from proven that these follow timber prototypes.

⁷⁵ For the correct plan see S. McK. Crosby, *The Abbey of St. Denis*, I (1942) 104 ff. and fig. 89.

⁷⁶ Baldwin Brown, *op. cit.* in note 28, fig. 71; Clapham, *op. cit.* in note 67, p. 44, fig. 15. The evidence has been reconsidered by Dr. H. M. Taylor.

⁷⁷ The apparent transept is structurally tripartite, including *prothesis* and *diakonikon*, on all the Carolingian plans in G. Dehio, *Geschichte der deutschen Kunst* (1884), abbildung 1, p. 25, except St. Salvator, Frankfurt. Though the revived long transept did not become common until the eleventh century, there are certainly some precocious examples of Carolingian date. For Hersfeld, often assigned to the early eleventh century (A. W. Clapham, *Romanesque Architecture in Western Europe*, fig. 12), D. Grossmann in *Die Abteikirche zu Hersfeld: der grösste Karolingerbau* (1955) argues cogently that it dates substantially from 831-850 (p. 36) and summarizes the parallels (p. 65, fig. 17): Fulda (before 819; H. Baumann and D. Grossmann, *Die Bonifatius-grab und die Klosterkirchen zu Fulda* and H. Hahn, *Ausgrabungen am Fuldaer Domplatz*) and Paderborn (836?), both with western transepts only: Cologne I and II (before 814 and 870; O. Doppelfeld, 'Ueber die baugeschichtliche Stellung der karoling. Domgrundrisse von Köln,' *Kunstchronik*, VI (1953), 256 ff.) with eastern transept; for St. Denis see note 75. It is inherently improbable that anything pre-Danish at Elmham, which could hardly be after 850, should thus be in the vanguard of the Carolingian renaissance.

whose aisles run uninterruptedly into their own apses. The revived form is found from Italy⁷⁸ and the Spanish March⁷⁹ to the Teutonic fringe.⁸⁰ It is significant that the only known English examples are in or near East Anglia, where the local Romanesque has many Germanic affinities. Elmham is not unique: remains of a comparable transept at Peterborough,⁸¹ probably from the rebuilding of the 1020s, have long been known, and the foundations of Hulme suggest that a long transept to an aisleless nave was retained from the original plan.⁸² Elmham may thus be a smaller copy of a type already known in the district, even in the same odd combination of transept and aisleless nave, though the W. walls of the E. towers could easily have been breached, had the subsequent nave been conceived with aisles. The peculiar position of the towers, which elsewhere are east of the transept, may be explained by their occupying part of the position of an earlier *porticus*. The unitary transept represents a complete breach with any form of *porticus* plan.

It might be adduced against the proposed late dating that several details of Carolingian ancestry, including triangular-headed 'arches', are found in phase A, which in Wessex and Mercia were giving way to a plainer and more robust style in the eleventh century. Whether or not this too is a Germanism, there are other examples in the vicinity, where circumstances and associated details suggest a similarly late date, namely the remarkable, axial-towered church at Great Dunham,⁸³ only a few miles away, and the similar but ruinous example, with a western tower, at Weybourne.⁸⁴ The rather archaic technique is well adapted to an economical use of ashlar, and foreshadows the finesse typical of later East Anglian work. Phase B shows the plainer, final pre-conquest style, seen in certain of the round towers; this may have reached East Anglia only by the middle of the eleventh century. In phase C the bases are similar to, but slightly less mature than, those in Losinga's work at Norwich cathedral.

The curious variegated coursing, more marked in phase B than in phase A, is noticeable in the earlier round towers, as at Gaytonthorpe, Bessingham⁸⁵ and

⁷⁸ E.g. Pisa, St. Paul (Clapham, *op. cit.* in note 77, fig. 27), Bari, St. Nicholas, (Clapham, *ibid.*, fig. 23; C. Stewart, *Early Christian, Byzantine and Romanesque Architecture* (1954), p. 190), Trani (Ricci, *op. cit.* in note 38, pl. xii), Scala, and others in the SW.

⁷⁹ E.g. Ripoll (W. M. Whitehill, *Spanish Romanesque Architecture* (1941), fig. 15; J. Puig i Cadafalch, *Le Premier art roman* (1928), fig. 42; Clapham, *op. cit.* in note 77, fig. 16), but the general form of transeptal plans in this area (Whitehill, ch. ix, xii; Puig, ch. iv, 'Basiliques a cupole') is still tripartite.

⁸⁰ E.g. Strasbourg (Dehio, *op. cit.* in note 77, fig. 44), Speyer (*ibid.*, fig. 69), Augsburg (*ibid.*, fig. 42), Gurk (Carinthia); cf. also the recently re-established eastern layout of St. Michael, Hildesheim (*Nieder-sächsische Denkmälpflege*, II (1955-6), pl. 2).

⁸¹ *J. Brit. Archaeol. Assoc.*, L (1894), plan between pp. 48, 49.

⁸² This is from a surface examination; the site would repay excavation.

⁸³ *Archaeol. J.*, CVI (1949), 105, with earlier references; the parallel is there cited of Newton-by-Castle Acre, which has different detail, very close to that of Elmham phase B. Both Dunham and Newton are described at leisure, with illustrations, but no plans, in E. A. Fisher, *The Greater Anglo-Saxon Churches*, pp. 327, 329. The long-and-short quoins, the spindly details and the triangular-headed W. door of Dunham are well shown and are in some ways reminiscent of Elmham phase A, but the possibly secondary shaft base of the tower (*ibid.*, fig. 35) is of Attic type and suggestive of the bases in Elmham phase C. This variety of treatment in analogous buildings confirms the suggestions that the phases at Elmham are not far removed from one another in date.

⁸⁴ It belonged to an Augustinian priory, perhaps a reconstituted minster. There is a description and photograph in E. A. Fisher, *op. cit.* in note 83, p. 340.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, pl. 173.

Roughton,⁸⁶ the last of which has the closest parallels to the rounded pilasters of phase A. The heavier and the lighter manners may in fact have coexisted. There is no need to assume a long interval between phases A and B. A reasonable date for phase A is the 1020s or 1030s, possibly in bishop Ælfric's time, though a late tenth-century date is still admissible; phase B may be put in the 1050s or 1060s or even perhaps in Herfast's prelatecy. Phase C is probably of the time of Herfast, or his successor William de Bello Fago, the last to use the title *Episcopus Helmeanensis seu Tetfordensis ecclesie*.

CONCLUSIONS

The material evidence entirely points to a late, probably eleventh-century, date for the whole of the standing structures. For the floors that underlie it the evidence is less conclusive and depends ultimately on the dating of the floors north of the transept, which cannot certainly be equated with any within the church, but which cover an area apparently first built over during the period of Thetford pottery but protected from disturbance during changes of level that appear to correspond with those in the church. This is admittedly slender evidence; apart from the total lack of middle Saxon pottery, there is no other reason why the lower floor-levels could not, in whole or in part, antedate the lapse of the see between the mid-ninth and tenth centuries. But there is no trace of the neglect or violent destruction that on *a priori* grounds has been assumed to have occurred then. The simplest hypothesis is to assign the lower floors to the century between the reconquest, *c.* 920, and the most acceptable date for the beginning of the stone church, *c.* 1020.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, pl. 181.

NOTE

The Society is much indebted to the Ministry of Public Building and Works for a grant towards the cost of publishing this paper.