Colchester Archaeological Report 1

CBA Research Report 39

Aspects of Anglo-Saxon and Norman Colchester

By Philip Crummy

1981

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Introduction and acknowledgments

The series entitled *Colchester Archaeological Reports* is planned as a sequence of loosely-structured publications based on the various rescue excavations which took place in Colchester during the 1970s. Most of the volumes will probably deal with only one subject regardless of site. *Aspects of Anglo-Saxon and Norman Colchester* is the first of these; others will include volumes devoted exclusively to topics such as the Roman pottery, the Roman small finds, and the excavation of the Roman remains themselves.

The discovery at Lion Walk in 1972 of two Anglo-Saxon huts, at least one of which was clearly of post-Roman date, proved that Colchester was inhabited during the early Saxon period and thereby opened up a series of fundamental questions about Colchester in Saxon times. For example, what was the extent and character of this early occupation and was it continuous throughout the Saxon period? What was the nature of the later Danish presence in the town and how and when was Colchester replanned? Likewise the discovery at Lion Walk of a Norman stone house demanded a review of what proved to be an extensive body of information about similar stone buildings elsewhere in the town, much of which was unpublished. These then were the principal stimuli behind the conception of *Aspects of Anglo-Saxon and Norman Colchester.*

The purpose of this study is thus twofold. It is intended firstly to present short reports of the more significant results of excavations between 1971 and 1977 which concern Anglo-Saxon and Norman Colchester, and secondly to publish, in most cases for the first time, material which is essential if the recent discoveries are to be seen in their proper perspective. The appendices contain notes on subjects which have only an indirect bearing on the topics under discussion but are nevertheless still relevant.

As the title implies, this book does not pretend to set out a comprehensive description of the available evidence relating to Anglo-Saxon and Norman Colchester. There are several subjects which could usefully have been dealt with, such as St Botolph's Priory, the Colchester mint or a study of church architecture in Colchester (although now see Rodwell & Rodwell 1977). Probably the most significant gap here is in historical research. Local records in Colchester only survive for the most part from the 14th century although many earlier references to Colchester are contained in central government and other documents. These not only cover the 13th century but in some cases extend or refer back into the 12th century and represent a pool of as yet untapped information about Norman Colchester. The potential of this subject is illustrated by Dr Stephenson's most interesting article in Chapter 2 which was a piece of research instigated primarily by the excavations in the grounds of St John's Abbey described in Chapter 4.

This study of Saxon and Norman Colchester would not have been possible without the help and advice of many people and to all concerned I extend my warmest thanks and appreciation. I am especially grateful to the diggers and site assistants, particularly the site supervisors, Geoff Summers, Keith Jarvis, Tony Couldwell, Nick Smith, and Don Shimmin, for their labours on the sites chosen for discussion here. The plans were prepared for publication by R H Moyes with help from Peter Partner and were based on site drawings by Howard Brooks, Stephanie Hilton, Tony Gouldwell, and Ewan Campbell. The photographs were taken by Alison Colchester and Jerry Lockett. The finds assistants throughout the excavations concerned were Nina Crummy, Patrick Ottaway, Rosemarie Johnson, and Pauline Meek. The above list ought to be considerably longer than it is and I hope that those who have been omitted will bear with me until the definitive excavation reports are published when full acknowledgments will be made. Thanks must also be extended to Mr D T-D Clarke, curator of the Colchester & Essex Museum, for making available for study and publication the relevant archaeological and archival material in his care.

I am indebted to all the contributors for generously devoting their time to writing reports for inclusion in this study. I also owe much to the following people who have given me valuable assistance and guidance on certain aspects: Miss Marion Archibald, Dr R Britnell, Mr P Coverley, Mr P J Drury, Dr D B Harden, Major and Mrs A D Mansfield, Miss Margaret Wood, and Dr J N L Myres. Sections of the report have been read by Mr A F Borrie, Mr D T-D Clarke, Professor S S Frere, Dr D E Greenway, Mr J Hurst, Professor G Martin, Dr D Stephenson, and Mr M C Wadhams; their helpful comments are gratefully acknowledged. I am especially indebted to Mrs S C Hawkes, Mr A J Fleming, and Nina Crummy for their help in this respect. Finally, thanks are due to Michael Short, who by his dogged persistence has done much to convert the text into a typescript with a semblance of order and consistency.

The excavations and research were conducted on behalf of the Colchester Archaeological Trust (formerly Colchester Excavation Committee) with the aid of grants from the Department of the Environment, the Colchester Borough Council, the Pilgrim Trust, and Essex County Council.

Finally readers are asked to note the following points. Descriptions of illustrated objects not provided in the text are listed in Appendix 6 and a plan of modern Colchester showing the streets mentioned in the text is given as Figure 1. Throughout the report all copper alloy objects are loosely described as bronze since it is not possible to analyse each piece. Apart from a few minor revisions, the manuscript of this volume was completed in 1977. Details of the excavations discussed here in broad outline will appear in subsequent volumes of this series.

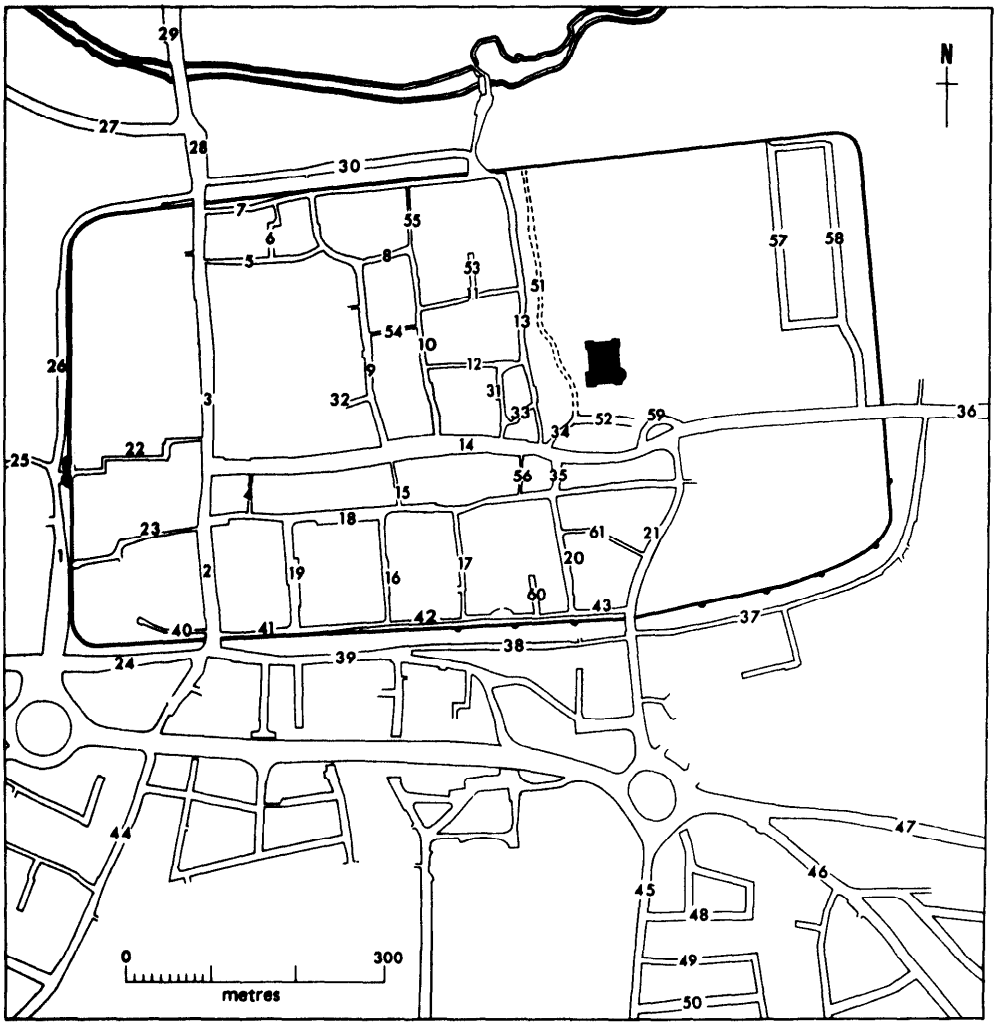


Fig 1 Street map of Colchester (1971):
1 Balkerne Lane; 2 Headstreet; 3 North Hill; 4 Bank Passage; 5 Nunn s Road; 6 Short Cut Road; 7 Northgate Street; 8 Stockwell; 9 West Stockwell Street; 10 East Stockwell Street; 11 St Helen s Lane; 12 William s Walk; 13 Maidenburgh Street; 14 High Street; 15 Pelham s Lane; 16 Trinity Street; 17 Lion Walk; 18 Culver Street; 19 Shewell Road; 20 Long Wyre Street; 21 Queen Street; 22 Balkerne Passage; 23 Church Street; 24 Crouch Street; 25 Popes Lane; 26 Balkerne Hill; 27 Sheepen Road; 28 Middleborough; 29 North Station Road; 30 St Peter s street; 31 George Street; 32 St Runwald s Street; 33 Swan Passage; 34 Museum Street; 35 St Nicholas Street; 36 East Hill; 37 Priory Street; 38 Vineyard Street; 39 St John s Street; 40 Church Walk; 41 Sir Isaac s Walk; 42 Eld Lane; 43 Short Wyre Street; 44 Butt Road; 45 Mersea Road; 46 Military Road; 47 Magdalen Street; 48 Cromwell Road; 49 Fairfax Road; 50 Lucas Road; 51 R ate Road; 52 Castle Bailey; 53 Taylor Court; 54 Quakers Alley; 55 Ball Alley; 56 St Nicholas Passage; 57 Castle Road; 58 Roman Road; 59 Cowdray Crescent; 60 Victoria Place; 61 Kingsway

Chapter 1

The archaeological evidence: 5th to 9th centuries

Summary

Evidence of occupation in Colchester from the 5th to the 9th centuries is provided by two sunken huts, up to 200 sherds of pottery, and over 60 other objects mainly from Anglo-Saxon cemeteries. It is suggested that these indicate the end of Roman Colchester c 440-50 and a possible lull in the level of occupation in the 8th and 9th centuries.

The body of the chapter consists of a catalogue setting out details of the post-Roman finds from Colchester dating from the 5th to the 9th centuries. Dealt with first are the only two known structures belonging to this period, viz the two huts at Lion Walk; second are the other finds from inside *the walled area of the town (sites A to I, Fig 2); third are the finds from the cemetery areas (sites j to O, Fig 2); finally are the miscellaneous pieces including those for which exact find spots are unknown. Included too are all the pieces of late Roman military equipment from Colchester because, until a few years ago, material of this kind was generally held to be potentially of great significance in late Roman contexts. (Since several of the Colchester pieces may have been lost or deposited in early Anglo-Saxon times, some of these finds would in any case have had to be contained in the catalogue.)*

Lion Walk site (Fig 2)

At Lion Walk, during the archaeological excavations of 1971-4, two sunken huts and over 100 sherds of early Saxon pottery were found. The distribution of the pottery over the site was such that other buildings are likely to have existed but no conclusive structural evidence of these was discovered. For present purposes, only the two huts and their associated finds will be described.

Hut 1 is remarkable in three respects: first, it provides useful evidence about the superstructure of a sunken hut; second, it would seem to represent a fine example of a weaving shed; and third, it provides a particularly clear picture of the physical relationship between an Anglo-Saxon hut and a derelict Roman house. Hut 2 is significant as an example of a 5th century Anglo-Saxon hut situated within the walls of a Roman town. It seems to have been a different type of building from Hut 1.

Lion Walk: Hut 1, TL 99692507 (Figs & 4)

The hut had been built up against the outside wall of a Roman house and its floor dug through the stokehole of a hypocaust full of fragments of roof tiles and lumps of mortar which in many cases still retained the shapes of *imbrices*. The tiles and mortar lumps had clearly come

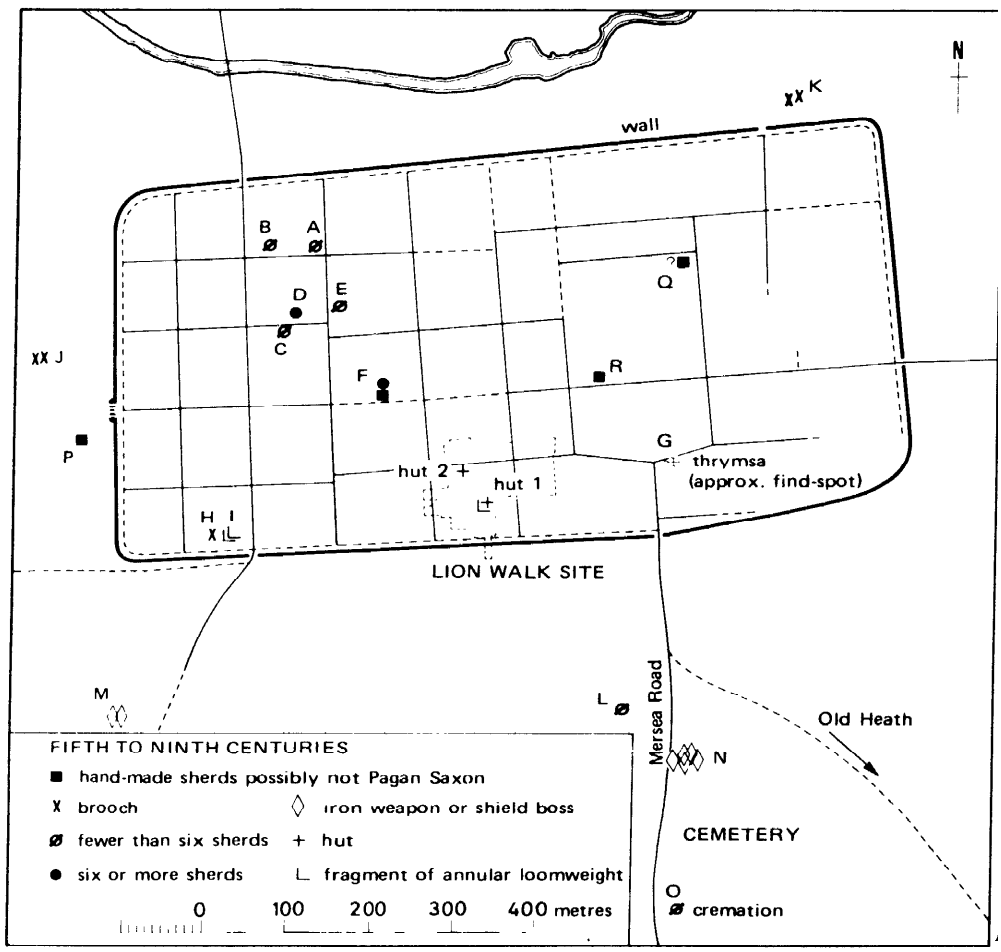


Fig 2 Colchester: 5th to 9th centuries

from the roof of the Roman building and indicate that, although some of the walls of the building were still standing, the house was in a derelict condition when the Anglo-Saxon hut was built.

Only one of the hut's two principal postholes survived, The floor of the hut was flat, peppered with stakeholes, and retained a distinctive trampled surface of fine grit. In addition to the stakeholes there were two irregular shallow grooves at right angles to one another (Fig 3, RT & UV), a deep, roughly rectangular, short slot (F89), and several depressions or holes (F88, 85, 68, 67, 130, 129, & 69) whose depths ranged from 100 to 400mm. Posthole F79 was the only feature to have a post-pit.

Many of the stakeholes around the outer edge of the hut occurred in pairs, whereas those within the hut either fell into distinct groups or were distributed in an apparently random fashion. The easternmost line of stakes appears to have run along the western side of the ridge post, thus providing a neat, rectangular interior to the hut. The large number and widespread distribution of all stakes suggest that they could not have been contemporary and that their replacement must have been frequent.

The hardest part of the trampled floor stopped abruptly along the line of the shallow north-south groove RT (Fig 3) and indicates the area of the hut which had been in most use. Either the entrance to the hut had been due north of this area or the trampled surface was linked with the use of the vertical structure or structures associated with the north-south groove RT. No gap existed in the rows of stakeholes lining the sunken floor unless there had been one which was destroyed by the later pit along the western wall. The stakes presumably were intended to retain the steep sides of the hollowed floor as well as to form the walls of the hut, so that where necessary they could have been cut off at threshold level to provide an entrance.

Finds associated with the hut include a fragment of a

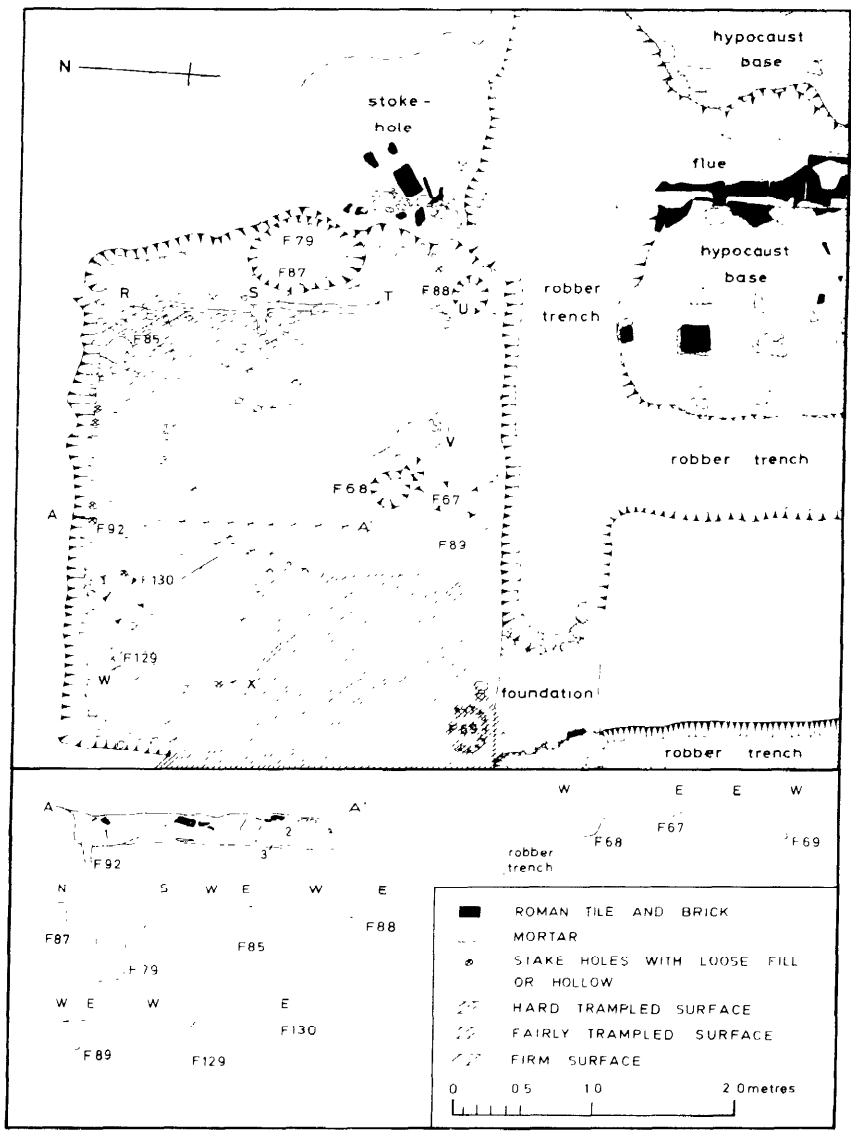


Fig 3 Hut I, Lion Walk

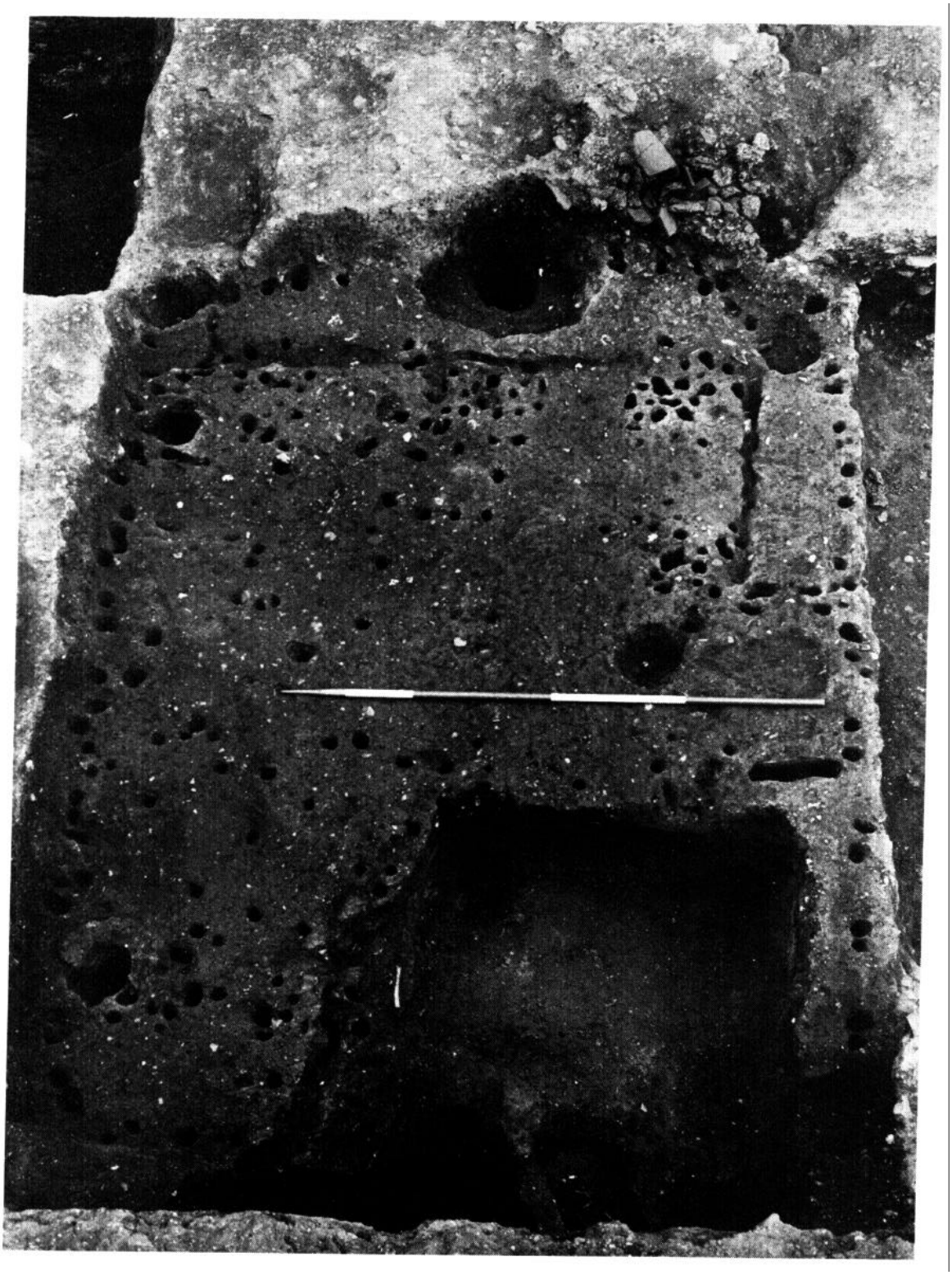


Fig 4 Hut 1, Lion Walk

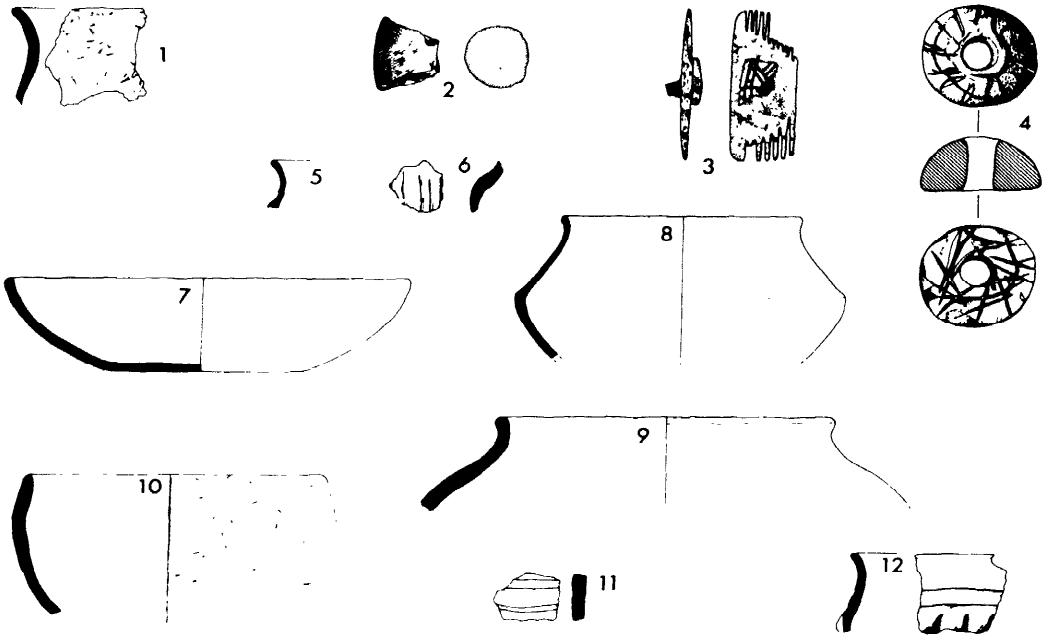


Fig 5 Lion Walk: 1 pottery (1:4); 2 loomweight (1:4); 3 bone comb (1:2); 4 spindlewhorl (1:2); 5-12 pottery (1.4)

double-sided bone comb (Fig 5, 3), a fragment of an annular loomweight (Fig 5, 2), and a spindlewhorl (Fig 5, 4). These indicate that the building probably served as a weaving shed and that consequently the internal features may have been related to one or more looms. A parallel is provided by the hut at the site of the Roman villa at Lower Warbank, Keston, Kent, which had stakeholes in its floor and was associated with finds of weaving equipment (Philp 1973, 156-63).

The shallow groove UV was 1·05m long and may correspond to the length of a loom although this is somewhat shorter than the 1.2 to 1.5m postulated for the loom at Sutton Courtney (Leeds 1927, 75). The north-south feature RT divides into two equal lengths RS and ST, 0.85m long, suggesting that the grooves RS, ST, and UV may represent evidence for a total of three separate looms. It should be noted that the distance between points R and U is twice the length of the groove UV; this may simply be fortuitous but does underline the possibility that the groove RT may have been part of a larger structure RU rather than two separate ones RS and ST. The distance between F89 and the west end of UV may also be important since this is 0.85m and is equal to the lengths of the grooves RS and ST. The stakeholes were clustered around the ends of the postulated looms ie at R, S, T, U, and V, and this distribution is presumably linked with the function of the stakes and their relationship to both the weaver and the structure of the loom. To judge by the distribution of the stakeholes over the western half of the hut, this area may not have been used in the same manner as the eastern part; the line of stakeholes WX seems to mirror RS, but the evidence is not conclusive. In general, the hut appears to have been a weaving shed used in a well ordered and intensive fashion.

Several points emerge concerning the superstructure of the hut. First, the trampled surface and the presence of a large number of stakes scattered throughout the interior of the hut leave no doubt that the building did not have a timber floor. Second, the characteristic bow in the two short sides of the floor appears to have been in order to offset the posts supporting the ridge and thus enable the interior to be rectangular. Significantly, there is no evidence to suggest that any superstructure existed along the upper, outside edge of the sunken floor, especially on the south side where the floor was dug against the Roman wall leaving no room for any additional superstructure. Had the hut been provided with walls more substantial than those indicated by the stakeholes, then the evidence suggests that nothing more than stacks of turves or some other similar material were used. Had the hut consisted of a sunken floor within a timber-frame built on ground-plates as suggested for the huts at West Stow (WSEAG 1974), then joining the structure to the Roman wall, which of necessity would have taken the place of the southern section of the frame, would have been difficult and unsatisfactory. Although possible, this would also have been unnecessary since the hut could have been sited slightly further out from the Roman wall to allow a timber-frame to enclose all four of the hut's sides.

Over 20 sherds, most of which were grass-tempered, were found either in the fill of the hut floor or nearby. The rim sherd (Fig 5, 1) is probably from a pot which had a tallish neck and a low bulbous body, the type considered by Dr Myres to be of 7th century date (Myres 1969, 27-8). The pottery is such that firm dating is not possible, but a broad 6th or 7th century context for the hut seems most likely. Certainly the preponderance of grass-tempered sherds from Hut 1 contrasts sharply with the pottery associated with Hut 2 and would seem to be a significant dating factor in itself.

The bone comb (Fig 5, 3)

by Dr P Galloway

This straight-ended comb is almost certainly Saxon; though only one end tooth segment and a fragment of connecting plate survive, the length of the teeth and the breadth of the uncut zone suggest that this example should be of the relatively long Saxon types found at the early Saxon settlement site of West Stow (West 1969) in exactly the same 'Grübenhaus' context. A rather crude version of the type comes from the excavations at Burwell (Lethbridge 193l), and Lethbridge maintains (1936) that 'the normal comb of the pagan period is double-sided,' but there are no clear Continental parallels to indicate a source for the development of the type. ■

Lion Walk: Hut 2, TL 99662511 (Fig 6)

The 'sunken floor' or 'hollow' of the hut did not possess the flat, trampled surface or the steep sides of Hut 1, but instead was more irregular in plan and had sloping sides. The hollow had been dug through a tessellated pavement which had as a base a layer of greensand stones, some of them up to 200mm across. Several of the stones had not been dislodged when the hollow was dug, so that they projected into it and made the bottom of the hollow unsuitable for walking on. The shape, profile, and the projecting stones of the hollow all suggest that Hut 2 was provided with a timber floor.

Several stakeholes were found nearby and although these could not be stratigraphically linked directly with the hollow, their proximity to the hut implies that they were likely to have been associated with it. In contrast to Hut 1, no evidence was found of any walls, and therefore the hut may have been framed with ground-plates or alternatively may have had walls composed of turves or similar material,

The fill of the hollow was distinctive in that it contained greensand stones from the base of the tessellated pavement below. Several other features on the site which

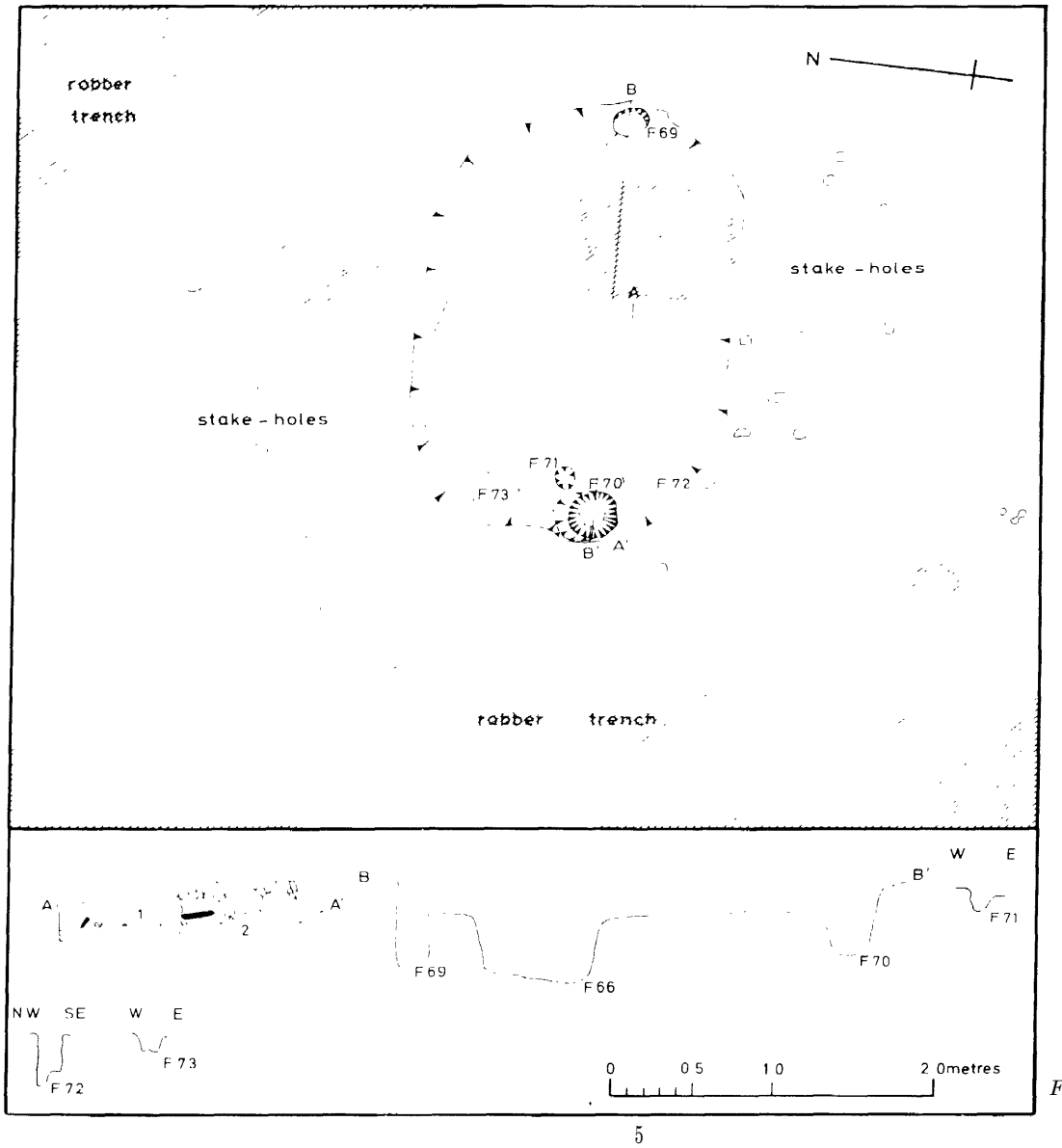


Fig 6 Hut 2, Lion Walk

were also situated near the Roman street frontage may from stratigraphical considerations have been early Anglo-Saxon. Three of these were shallow pits which even though they were not all dug directly through the tessellated pavement contained stones similar to those of Hut 2, None of the features was recognizable as a normal hut and consequently full descriptions will be left to a later date.

The pottery from Hut 2 contained a low proportion of grass-tempered sherds and consisted in the main of black, well burnished, often rather fine wares. Dr Myres has distinguished two types of carinated bowl, one having a constricted lower part which sometimes has a pedestal foot, and the other having a rounded bottom (Myres 1968, 224-6). Parts of two carinated bowls (Fig 5, 5 & 8), of which one (8) was of the rounded-bottom type, were found in the fill of the hut. Pieces of two carinated pots with facetted carinations (Fig 5, 11 [1] & 12) were discovered 11 and 14m east of the hut. These represent a variety of the carinated bowl with rounded bottom (Myres 1969, 88) which with the collection as a whole can be paralleled with pottery from the latest levels at Feddersen Wierde in Lower Saxony dated to 40-50 (Schmid 1969). Of interest is part of a bowl (Fig 5, 7) the shape of which demonstrates a familiarity with Romano-British forms, a feature noticed in early material elsewhere, such as from Mucking (Jones 1969, 153).

Other sites and finds shown on Figure 2; sites A to P[2]

Site A: Lorgarth, Nunn's Road, TL 99482541 (Fig 2)

Archaeological excavations were carried out at Lorgarth, Nunn's Road, by Mr B Blake in 1963-4 on behalf of the Colchester & Essex Museum and the Colchester Excavation Committee. The discoveries are as yet unpublished[3], but some Anglo-Saxon pottery, a bone spindle, and a whorl were found.

Site B: 18 North Hill, TL 99422541 (Fig 2)

Three sherds of Anglo-Saxon pottery were discovered unstratified above a mosaic pavement at the rear of 18 North Hill in 1925. Found in the same context were a bone comb and part of a glass bowl, both of late Roman date (Fig 7). The finds have been illustrated previously (Hull 1958,79, fig 35) and the bone comb is discussed further below. The sherds are not grass-tempered but are similar in fabric and finish to the bulk of the Saxon pottery from Hut 2 at Lion Walk and are likely therefore to be of 5th century date. There is no reason to suppose that these finds form a sealed group; the comb and glass bowl may well have been discarded in Roman or 'sub-Roman' times.

The bone comb

by Dr P Galloway

This comb (Fig 7, 2) is one of a very well-known family connected with the assemblage of metalwork studied by Hawkes and Dunning (1962). As such, its distribution is fairly uniform from the Rhineland (Behrens 1950, Abb 34, Grab 1; Drexel 1930, Taf XVII, 4; for further inventory see Thomas 1960, type II, variant 1, motif A) to Frisia (Boeles 1951, pl XXVII, 6), to northern Gaul (Nenquin 1953, pls IX & X; Pilloy 1891) and into Roman Britain, where examples arc known from Winchester (Biddle 1970, pl XLVIIIb; Galloway 1979), Richborough (Bushe-Fox 1932, pl XII, fig 1; 1949, pl LVI, 265), Girton (Hollingsworth & O'Reilly 1925, urn near Grave 8), Eccles, Kent (info A I' Detsicas), and Castle Acre (Norwich Castle Museum, Castle Acre 131.11). These combs are characterized by a relatively high back, with the apex of the connecting plate approaching a 90° angle, extended end tooth segments which follow the lines of the connecting plate, and a decorative border carved from the upper edges of the tooth segments extending above the connecting plate. They are not to be confused with the Saxon sub-type whose distribution concentrates in Frisia and East Anglia; such combs have a rather flattened back, no crest or a plain one, and end tooth segments which are often cut straight down from the ends of' the connecting plate. The Roman sub-type can be dated to the 4th century and into the 5th, and seems to disappear throughout the area of its distribution with the onset of the Germanic migrations.

Parallels for the specific features of the Colchester comb are not far to seek: exactly the same pattern of carving on the crest is found on the Cathedral Green comb from Winchester, the Eccles and Castle Acre combs, comb E7 from Furfooz, the Mainz Greiffenklaustrasse comb, and

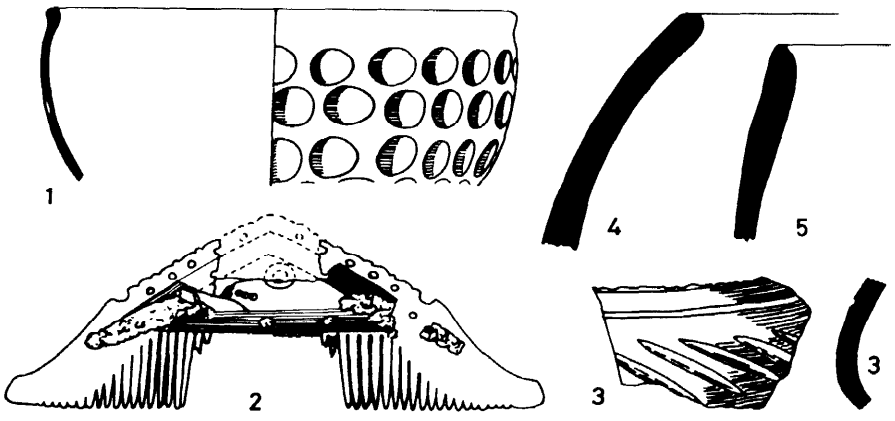


Fig 7 Finds from North Hill (1:2) (source: Hull 1958, 79, fig 35)

combs 6570, 3376, and 11.913 from the Trier Kaiserthermen. It is, in short, a rather conventional pattern for the crest of combs of this type. The size of the Colchester comb is quite compatible with all but the Winchester example, which is exceptionally large. It is impossible to parallel the decoration of the connecting plate because of its fragmentary state, but the so-called 'repair' noted by Hull (1958, 79) may in fact be instead a sort of handle to facilitate removal from a case, as with Furfooz comb E5. ■

Site C: 4 and 5 North Hill, TL 99442530 (Fig 2)

A rim of a 'hand-made bowl of thick black ware, with leathery, polished exterior' *(CMR* 1937-44, 48) was found unstratified in 1940 when workmen were digging an air-raid shelter behind nos 4 and 5 North Hill. Mr M R Hull attributed the sherd to the Anglo-Saxon period (Hull 1958, 68).

Site D: North Hill multi-storey car park, TL 99462533 (Fig 2)

In 1965, at least eight sherds of Anglo-Saxon pottery were discovered in a small pit dug into the corridor of a Roman house in *insula* 10 (Dunnett 1967, 38, fig 12).

Site E: Telephone Exchange, TL 99512534 (Fig 2)

During archaeological excavations on the site of the new telephone exchange, a sherd of Anglo-Saxon pottery was discovered in a robber trench (Dunnett 1971, 24-5, fig 15).

Site F: site of the Cups Hotel, TL 99562522 (Fig 2)

A late Roman bone comb and belt-mount (Fig 8) were discovered during the archaeological excavations of 1973-4 on the site of the Cups Hotel in the High Street. The comb was stratified with over 100 coins (probably part of's dispersed hoard) which enables the object to be dated to after *c* 350-60. The associated pottery indicates a secure Roman rather than Saxon date for the object. The belt-mount was found in a Norman robber trench (F112 on Fig 30), but is likely to have been discarded or lost in a Roman context sometime after c 350 because with it in the robber trench were large quantities of other finds clearly derived from the same late Roman deposit as the comb.

The bone comb

by Dr P Galloway

The comb (Fig 8, 2) is of' the double-sided composite variety; it is a Roman type with 'zoomorphic' end segments and a broad connecting plate. This comb belongs to a period and an artefact context similar to that of the triangular Roman combs. The characteristic elaborately carved ends and the broad decorated connecting plate are paralleled in provincial Roman contexts on the Continent (Keller 1971; Unverzagt 1929; Nierhaus 1940; Drexel 1930, Taf XVIII, 5; Dasnoy 1968, 322 & fig 16, 3; Haupt 1970; Boeles 1951, pl XXVII, 4; Rheinisches Landesmuseum Trier, Kaiserthermen 11.914 and 11.969) mostly dated to the late 4th, 5th, and very early 6th centuries. The carving on the Colchester comb is not paralleled exactly in any of the Continental examples, or in those from the Lankhills cemetery (Galloway 1979) with which it might be expected to share affinities, but it should be noted that no two of the combs cited are exactly alike in this respect, and variation seems to be a feature of the type. The incised ornament of the connecting plate is unique, but its stepwise profile can be paralleled from Poundbury Roman cemetery (Galloway forthcoming) ■

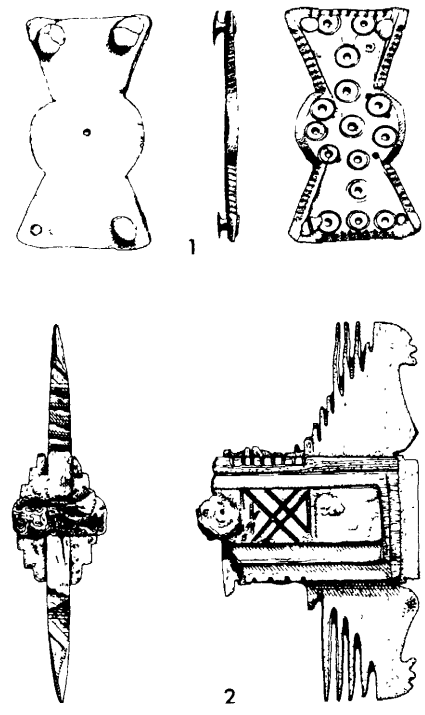


Fig 8 Late Roman propeller-shaped mount (2:3) and bone comb (1:1) from the site of the Cups Hotel

The belt-mount

by Sonia Chadwick Hawkes

The mount (Fig 8, 1) is cast bronze and 50mm long. It has rivets at its four corners, edge notching, and ring-and-dot punched surface ornament. Mounts such as these were worn, in sets of up to ten, as stiffeners on the 40-50mm broad version of the military belt which was in vogue during the middle and third quarter of the 4th century (Bullinger 1969, 67, Abb 13-8, Taf xxvii-xxxii). The buckles which accompany them vary, but include an example with oval plate like those from Colchester (Fig 14, 4 and Fig 18, 4), and dolphin buckles, sometimes with openwork plates. These appear to have inspired my insular Type 11A series, of which the fine piece from Colchester (Fig 18, 1) appears to be an archetypal form. I have suggested that Type 11A buckles may have been worn with sets of propeller-shaped mounts (Hawkes 1974, 390) but, though there are a few isolated finds of these mounts from Richborough and now Colchester, we await the grave finds which alone could give us closed assemblages comparable to those from the Continent. ■

Site G: Queen Street, TL 99912522 (Fig 2)

A 'thrymsa' was found in a garden in Queen Street in 1952 and donated to the British Museum.[4] Mr S E Rigold has described the series to which this coin belongs (Rigoid 1962; 1967).

The thrymsa

by Mr S E Rigold

The Colchester coin is one of the 'Vanimund' series, in very -pale gold, probably the two final stages _ of debasement, but as far as can be seen all with some gold content, say two and then one siliquae out of eight (the rest silver). The two stages of debasement in the design seem to correspond with the two stages of metal, but they form one series, which is probably English, indeed Kentish, though the archetype, or one of the archetypes that made up a composite design, is Frankish. This is an already pale coin, Prou no 917, of WARIMUNDUS at MALLUM MATERIACUM, an obscure mint somewhere near Metz, dating from the 650s or 660s, but the bust does not derive from this coin. The better English copies read VANIMUNDUS, whom I first described as an English moneyer but is obviously a ghost-name: on the worse ones it becomes TMVSDVS, for example, or in the Colchester case TMVSNVMC. These date from the 670s or 680s, the earlier ones possibly from the 660s, and may be compared with the longer 'Pada' series. Actually, I know no other provenance except Rouen, but the technique looks English and applies to both phases. The weight is 1.18g. ■

Site H: Luckin-Smith's, Head Street, TL 99372502 (Fig 2)

In 1962 a fragment of a saucer brooch (Fig 9) was obtained by Mr H Calver from workmen engaged in building works behind Luckin-Smith's in Head Street and was subsequently donated to the Colchester and Essex Museum (CM 838.1973).

The saucer brooch

by Tania M Dickinson[5]

The brooch, of which a bout half survives in a very abraded condition, is cast from a copper alloy. Two worn stumps on the back represent twin lugs for holding the pin fitting, which has left traces of iron corrosion between the lugs. The front surface preserves traces of gilding on part of the low rim and in the channels of the very low relief decoration. This decoration consists of a central flat disc surrounded by a single border ring and two fields of ornament, each with tyiple border rings on its outer edge. The inner field consists of flat irregular wedges, two of which have a fine radial dividing line (wedge 1 and 3 from the right). The outer field consists of plain rectangles alternating with triple radial bars. It is probable that there were originally twelve central wedges forming what may be called a 'rosette' and twelve outer rectangles and triple bars forming a version of what E T Leeds called 'light and shade' (Leeds 1933, 245-6). Maximum rim diameter (estimated): 39mm; outside rim height: 3.5mm; thickness of base: l.5mm.

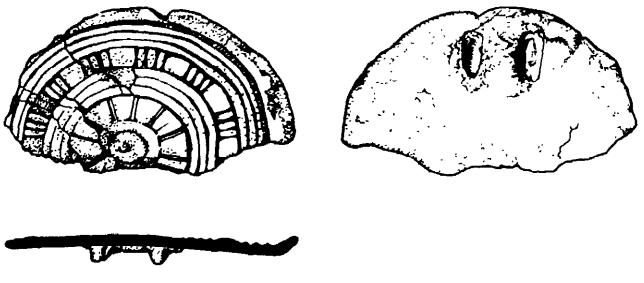


Fig 9 Luckin-Smith's, Head Street: saucer-brooch (1:1)

The Colchester brooch finds its closest parallels in a set of brooches which I have previously discussed as Group 15.1 of the cast saucer brooches from the Upper Thames Region (Dickinson 1976, 93). These are the pairs from Alveston Manor grave 85, Warwicks (in the Shakespeare Centre, Stratford-upon-Avon), Beckford A unassociated numbers 99 and 100, Glos (number 100 only is now extant in the Birmingham City Museum and Art Gallery loan collection), Brighthampton grave 23, Oxon (Leeds 1933, pl XXXV, c), and Mitcham grave 222, Surrey (Bidder & Morris 1959, 74, 91, pl VII), and the now lost singleton from Fairford, Glos (Wylie 1852, pl V, 4). While the strong resemblance between these brooches in size and design justifies their treatment as a single group, minor differences rule out any idea of their being the products either of a single mould or of a series of moulds formed from a single model."

The Alveston, Beckford, Brighthampton, and Fairford brooches are all decorated with a central disc and ring, a rosette of six wedges separated by multiple radial bars, an outer field of 'light and shade', and triple border rings. Their diameters are respectively 43, 42, 46, and 43mm. But whereas the 'light and shade' of the Brighthampton pair is made up of ten rectangles and ten double radial bars, on the others it is of twelve rectangles and twelve triple bars (compare the Colchester brooch); and whereas there are double radial bars in the rosette of the Beckford, Brighthampton, and Fairford brooches, this feature in the Alveston pair contains triple bars and also fine 'incised' contour or Y-shaped lines on the wedges, of which the lines on the Colchester brooch's wedges may be a poor version (and judging from the engraving the Fairford brooch might have had these too). Furthermore, one of the Alveston pair has the innermost ring of the inner triple-ring border rendered in fine 'light and shade'. The Mitcham pair differs from all these on several counts: its central element is a hollow not a disc, the border rings are double not triple, and the outer field consists of seven ridged rectangles and seven ridged double radial bars; but the diameters of the brooches (37 and 38mm) and the rosette of nine plain wedges brings it closer to the Colchester brooch. As far as I know, the twin lugs for holding the pin fitting on the Colchester brooch are matched only on that from Beckford, but this is the sole major feature to distinguish them from the rest of the group to which they are so clearly related.

This group belongs to a much larger series within the entire corpus of cast saucer brooches. Its members are characterized by diameters above the average and by a wide range of motifs, especially wedges and other imitations of Kentish garnet-inlaid jewellery, 'light and shade' and 'basketwork', and Style I animal elements; but, though interrelated by these features, most defy classification into neat and logical groups. They are found particularly in the upper Thames region and in the Midlands, but also in other Saxon districts like Sussex, Surrey, Essex, and West Kent. I have argued that they were manufactured between the middle decades of the 6th and the early part of the 7th centuries and that many were made in workshops within the upper Thames region (Dickinson 1976, 77-100).

Since the latest brooches in this series tend to be especially large, the brooches of the Colchester group, which are among the smallest in the series, may belong to the earlier part of the production period (Dickinson 1976, 98-9). Unfortunately, none of their associated grave-goods is sufficiently distinctive to confirm this, though they do suggest a broad 6th century dating.[7] If these brooches were the products of a single workshop, then their concentration in the Thames/Avon valleys might imply

that it was situated there and that the Surrey and Essex examples were exports.

The Colchester brooch itself is exceptionally worn and broken. It has probably come not from a grave but from a habitation site where it may have been lying as debris for some time. It can provide only a very general guide to the date of Saxon occupation in this particular part of Colchester. ■

Site I: Shippey's, Head Street, TL 99352502 Fig 2)

Sometime before 1961, fragments of two annular loom-weights (Fig 10: CM 223.61) were found behind Shippey's[8] in Head Street; the circumstances of the discovery are not known. Annular loom-weights are associated with the early Anglo-Saxon period (Dunning *et al* 1960, 24).

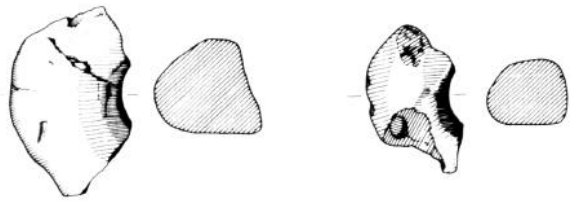


Fig IO Shippey's, Head Street: loomweights (1:4)

Site J: Union House, TL 99142527 (Fig 2)

Two brooches (Fig 11) were found by workmen on the site of the Union House in the mid 19th century. Drawings of the brooches were made at the time by local archaeologist William Wire and included in his album which is now preserved in the Colchester and Essex Museum. In the collections of the British Museum there is a brooch (Fig 12) which matches very closely one of those drawn by Wire. Its original registration number (if any) was lost and the brooch was re-registered in the 1950s as OA 270. Staff of the British Museum were unable to find in their records information about when and how the brooch first came into their collections, but correspondence now in the Ashmolean Museum makes it clear that the object came from Colchester.[9]

Cruciform brooches from the Union House

by Sonia Chadwick Hawkes

The bronze cruciform brooch (Fig 11, left) has a broad headplate with half-round knobs, short bow, foot flanked by semicircular, possibly zoomorphic, lappets, terminating in a horse-head with flamboyantly scrolled nostrils above a long pear-shaped extension. Its length is unknown.

This brooch belongs to Group IV in Åberg's classification (Åberg 1926, 42ff) and Group IV (a) in Leeds's refinement of the system (Leeds 1945, esp 69-72). The members of this group are very numerous and varied, indicating a large scale insular production with a wide distribution extending over all the Anglian areas. Doubtless there are many distinguishable sub-types emanating from different regional workshops, however, and until the promised modern reappraisal (Pocock & Leeds 1971, fn 68) is published, there is little to be said about the Colchester brooch except that it is an outlier from the main distribution and probably of mid 6th century date.

The florid cruciform brooch (Fig 11, right) is bronze and, assuming that the brooch from the British Museum (Fig 12) is the same object, is 111mm long excluding its foot which is missing. The headplate is cast in one with its flat wide knobs, each of which is decorated with a schematized rendering of a pair of 'helmeted' Style I eagle-heads. Below the short bow, the footplate bears similar eagle-head lappets. This brooch belongs to Group V in Åberg's classification, and to Leeds's sub-group V (b) (Leeds 1945, 17). This is a small group of brooches, with a very fine archetype from Sleaford, Lincs and derivatives from Ruskington, Lincs, and North Luffenham, Rutland. Once again the Colchester find is an outlier. Typologically this is a later brooch than the first, and is probably datable to the late 6th or early 7th century. ■

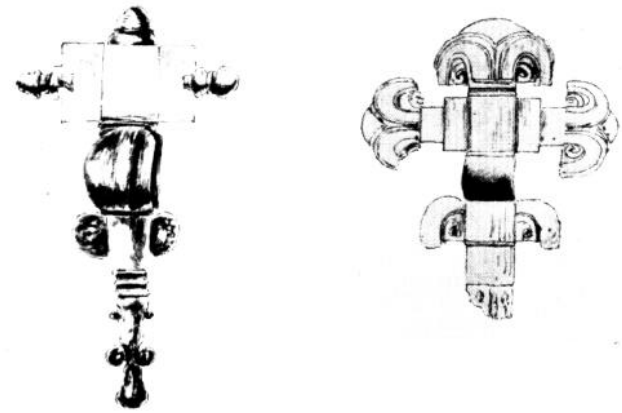


Fig 11 Two brooches from the site of the Union House (reproduced from Wire's Album in the Colchester & Essex Museum)

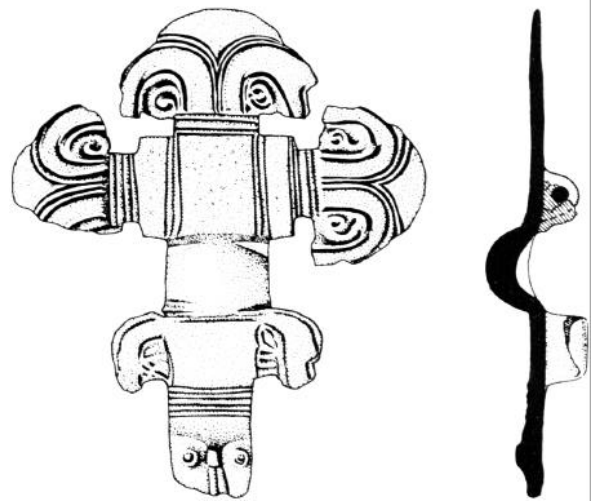


Fig 12 Brooch from the Union *House (2:3)*

Site K: Guildford Road Estate, TM 00032560 (Fig 2)

Two groups of objects datable to the first half of the 5th century were discovered with the aid of a metal detector by Mr Michael Cuddeford in the vicinity of the rampart immediately outside the north-east corner of the walled area of the town, The first group, found in late 1971 or early 1972, consisted of a well preserved early cruciform brooch (Fig 13, 4), two rings (Fig 13, 2 & 3), and a fragment of a second brooch-spring (Fig 13, 1). The other group, found in mid 1972, comprised another early cruciform brooch (Fig 13, 5), seven beads (Fig 13, 6-11; a small fragment of a second amber bead is not illustrated), a silver finger ring (Fig 13, 12), and a siliqua of Valens dated 367-78 (RIC IX (Trier) 27e) pierced twice for suspension. With the second group were found fragments of the skull and left arm of a woman of SO to 70 years of age.[10] The skeletal remains consisted of a small fragment of maxilla with a worn second incisor and a grown-over socket of a premolar (the intervening canine being lost since burial), a nearly complete mandible with all the teeth missing and alveolar part absorbed, three other fragments of skull, two fragments of left ulna, a first left metacarpal, and a first left phalanx of hand.

Mr Cuddeford is sure that the groups were from different burials no more than 12m apart and that the remains had been disturbed since burial, possibly very recently, In 1935, about 75m west of the find spots of Mr Cuddeford's groups, excavation for a new bowling green revealed a very large number of human bones in either partly articulated or wholly disturbed states *(CMR* 1944, 16; Hull 1958, 257-8). Although Mr Hull, who observed these operations, felt unable to explain or date these discoveries satisfactorily, their disturbed condition provides a parallel for Mr Cuddeford's groups. The objects are in the Colchester & Essex Museum.

The bronze objects

by Sonia Chadwick Hawkes

The first bronze ring (Fig 13, 2) is lozenge-shaped in section, and is 21 mm in diameter. The second (Fig 13, 3) is oval in section and is 22mm in diameter. It is also very worn. The first and probably both rings may once have belonged to rosette attachments from late Roman military belts. Such attachments were in use during the later 4th and earlier 5th centuries and like other belt mounts were sometimes kept by Germanic womenfolk, wives and descendants of barbarian regulars and *foederati,* either as metal for remelting or as prophylactic charms. Graves

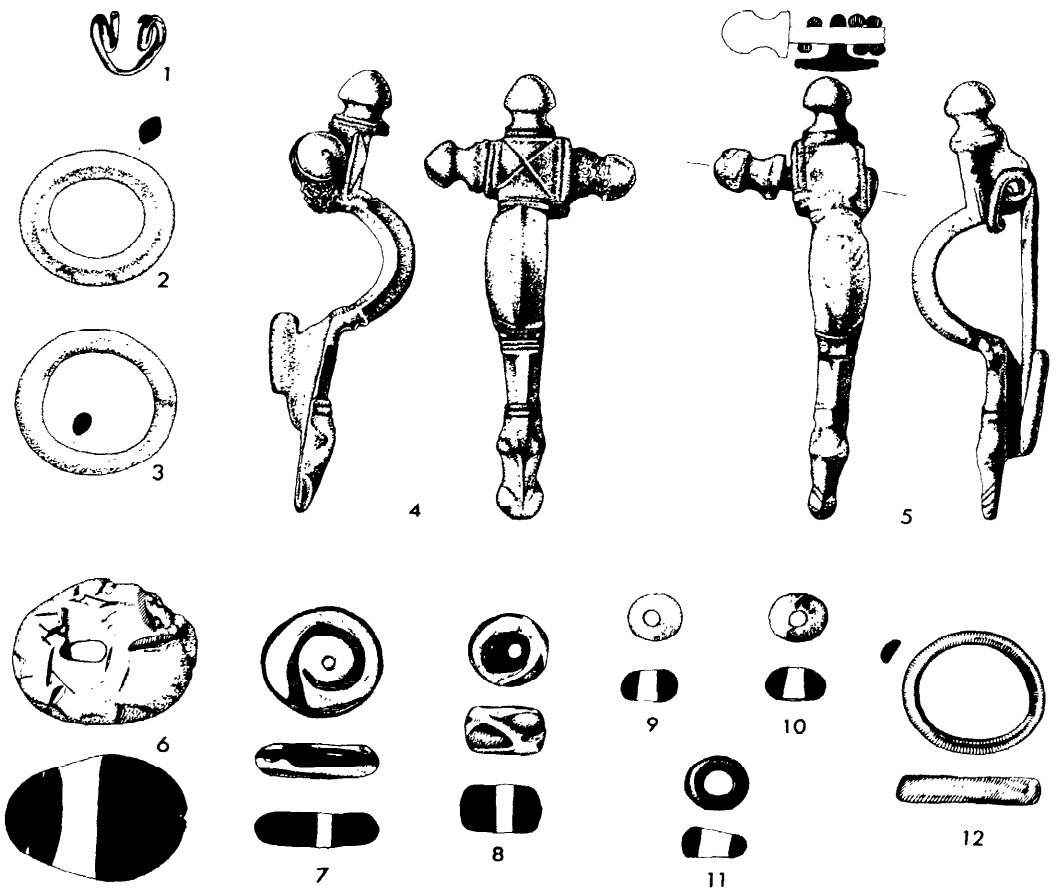


Fig 13 Guildford Road estate: 1 bronze brooch spring; 2-3 bronze rings;; 4-5 bronze brooches; 6-11 beads; 12 silver finger-ring (all 1:1)

containing such equipment can usually be dated to within the 5th century

The first cast bronze cruciform brooch (fig 13,4) is 67mm long and has a square headplate, only slightly broader than the bow, with grooved side and incised diagonal cross. At the top is a full-round knob cast in one with the headplate; at the sides ate matching knobs which were fixed on the ends of the iron axis of the spring-coil, which passes thorough a bronze attachment-lug at the back of the headplate. The facetted bow is long and steeply curved, and the foot, with facetted sides and transverse grooves and mouldings, terminates in stylized horse-head with prominently modelled eyes and ovoid nostrils. Behind is a short catchplate. The pin is missing. The second cast bronzed cruciform brooch (Fig 13,5) is 67mm long and is closely similar to the last, except that there is no cross on the headplate and the rendering of the horse-head terminal is less emphatic, One of the side knobs is missing but the bronze pin and spring-coil are in position. Very slight reaces of silvering survive. Figure 13, 1 illustrates the spring-coil from a third brooch, It could not have belonged to the first brooch (Fig 13, 4).

A definitive modern study of the development of the cruciform brooch in northern Europe and England has yet to be published, but thanks to various works by previous generations of Scandinavian and German scholars[11], the main outlines of its evolutions seem reasonably clear. Here we are concerned only with the early stage in the manufacture of the cast cruciform brooch. The prototype, Genrich's 'Dorchester Type', is a very plain brooch with long undecorated foot and catchplate, long steeply curving bow, and narrow head, pierced to take the axis of the spring-coil and surmounted by a cast knob. On the few complete examples that survive, similar knobs prevented the spring-coil of the pin from slipping off its axis. This seems too have been a short lived form and craftsmen were soon producing Genrich's 'Witmarsum Type' on which the spring-coil is protected by a small headplate. On what appear to be the typologically latest brooches of this type, the headplate id slightly wider than the bow and may have bock-sloping sides, the foot may have horse-head terminals with plastically modelled eyes and nostrils, and the catchplate may be short. Genrich's 'Borgstedt Type', the most developed form found in north Germany, takes the evolution only a little further, towards a heavier brooch with broader headplate, sometimes with decided wings, short catchplate, and more elaborate horse-head, All three forms are represented in England, Where the Witmarsum and Borgstedt types equate with the earlier and later cruciforms of Aberg's Group I. Typologically, our brooches from Colchester belong to the end of the Witmarsum phase and are certainly imports from northern Europe, possibly from south Scandinavia, Frisia, or Saxony, but more probably from Schleswig-Holstein, where both the form and the cross on the headplate are most common.

The 'Dorchester Type' is safely datable to c AD 400[12], but there ate few chronological pegs for the 'Witmarsum Type'. The evidence, such as it is, suggests a limited period of production and use in the earlier decades of the 5th century. The upper date of c 450, favoured by Genrich and Tischler, seems to have been arrived at merely because of the type's occurrence in England; they were writing at a time when the Anglo-Saxon settlement of England was not being dated before the middle of the 5th century In fact, the few 'Witmarsum Type' cruciform brooches found in England occur only in the Upper Thames, East Anglia, and now Essex, the very regions where, on ceramic and other evidence, we now believe that Germanic settlers arrived very early in the 5th century. It may be significant that in Kent, traditionally a secondary area for Anglo-Saxon federate establishments c 430, the typologically earliest cruciform brooches, with their embryonic headplate wings, belong to the developmental phase immediately succeeding the 'Witmarsum Type'. All in all then, it seems that the early cruciform brooches from Colchester may have arrived c 420 with their wearers, wives of federates perhaps, a full generation before the old traditional date of the Anglo-Saxon settlement. The associated finds, a silver coin of Valens worn and twice pierced for use as a pendant and the rings apparently detached from late Roman belt attachments, would not rule out a date in the first half of the 5th century for either burial. ■

The beads

by Margaret Guido

Five beads of glass and one large globular amber bead[13] (Fig 13, 6-11) were submitted to me. The importance of Mrs Hawkes's dating for the associated brooches makes it unnecessary to seek for close dating for the beads on their own, and this is one instance where we have a rare and useful group belonging to an ill documented period after 400 and before c AD 450.

Bead no 6 (Fig 13) Amber globular bead with roughly made oval perforation and decorated with an incised pattern of zig-zags.

Bead no 7 Opaque light greenish white with a surface spiral in ultramarine blue. This is not a very rare type but it is interesting to learn that its production had already begun by the mid 5th century. Other examples, among many, can be cited from the following sites:

(a) Unknown site (Cheltenham Museum)
(b) Winkelbury, Wiltshire. Found with a Saxon burial (Pitt-Rivers 1888, 266)
(c) Winterbourne Stoke, Wiltshire. Saxon secondary burial in Barrow 10 *(Devizes Museum Catalogue* no 79 and Hoare 18 12, 119)
(d) Chesters Museum, Northumberland, no 1361, marked 'chiefly from Cilurnum'. No colour left in spiral
(e) Dunham, Suffolk (Norwich Museum)
(f) Kilham, Yorkshire. 'Anglian' grave (grave 1). Colour missing from the spiral (Brown 1915, 806-8)
(g) Gilton and Kingston, Kent (Faussett 1856, pl VI)
(h) Leighton Buzzard, Beds, grave 32 in Cemetery II. This is a mixed-up necklace, now in the Ashmolean Museum (Hyslop 1964, 179)
(i) Corbridge, Northumberland. Anglo-Saxon necklace. Discovered near two cruciform brooches of c late 5th century date (Knowles & Forster 1909,406-8; Brown 1915, 811, pl CIV, 2; information from R Miket)
(j) West Stow Heath, Suffolk. From cemetery dated c 450-650 (Ashmolean Museum, no 1909.434)

We cannot yet have an idea when these beads ceased to be in use, but it must clearly have been a century or so later. They also appear in variant colours. Examples come from:

(a) Shudy Camps, Cambridge. ?7th century, from grave 121. Colours not given (Lethbridge 1936)
(b) Ronaldsway, Isle of Man. White spiral on dark blue-green ground (Megaw 1937)
(c) Alfriston, Sussex. Translucent cobalt with white-filled groove. Most of the filling is missing (Lewes Museum. Griffith & Salzmann 1914, p11, 3)

Beads of this type do not occur in the large 6th-7th century repertoire from Schretzheim near Dillingen on the

Danube, and their origin may have been both earlier and more northerly. One apparently similar to the Alfriston bead did, however, come from a late Roman horizon at the Schretzheim cemetery (Koch 1977),

Bead no 8 Smokey bright yellow-green translucent bead, decorated with opaque creamy-white rings round the upper and lower surfaces and a running wave in the same colour. Between the waves are blobs of terracotta opaque glass on paste. It is difficult to cite an exact parallel. The type however is characteristically Germanic.

Bead no 9 Opaque blue grey globular bead with some yellow specks.

Bead no 10 Opaque powder blue, globular bead with yellow blotches.

Bead no 11 Annular bead with large perforation. Dark blue translucent glass. ■

Site L: site of St John's Church, TL 99892479 (Fig 2)

Four grass-tempered, undecorated sherds were found during the archaeological excavations on the site of St John's Church in 1972. These cannot be closely dated.

Site M: sand pits in Butt Road, TM 99292483 (Fig 2)

During sand quarrying along the western side of Butt Road in the mid 19th century, part of an extensive late Roman inhumation cemetery was found. The site was frequently visited by William Wire who made notes and drawings to record the discoveries.[14] He wrote that included in the large number of objects discovered were some spearheads, knives, and arrowheads. He also referred to part of the area as being a 'Saxon burial ground' although unfortunately he did not state specifically his evidence for this conclusion. Wire sketched two of the spearheads from the sand pits (Fig 14, 1 & 3). The drawings are very rough and it is not possible to classify the objects with any certainty or to be sure that they are indeed late Roman or Saxon rather than relatively modern. However, one of these objects (Fig 14, 1) is described as having a 'rib running up the centre' (Wire's *Album)* and is shown in his sketch as such. This feature is found on Germanic spear types both prior to and early on in the settlement of England and indicates a 4th or 5th century date (Swanton 1973, 16-45). The spearhead is 8 inches (205mm) long including the socket which is 2.5 inches (65mm) in length. The other spearhead (Fig 14, 3) is 12 inches (305mm) long. Although shown as being somewhat angular in profile, it is presumably a leaf-shaped form. This object also has a central ridge and therefore could have been midribbed like the other spearhead. However, it may also have been a corrugated type (Swanton 1973, 115-38) or simply have been lenticular in section but with well-defined central ridges.

Mrs Hawkes has examined the drawings and feels able to be more specific about the dates of the objects. She suggests that spearhead no 1 is most likely of Swanton type B, datable to the late 4th or early 5th century (Swanton 1973, 36-9) whereas spearhead no 3 is of Swanton's type K1 datable from the mid 5th to the early 6th century (Swanton 1973, 128-31). In addition to these spearheads, Wire illustrated two iron knives, the more distinctive of which is shown here (Fig 14, 2). The blade with its straight back and sloping point is probably of the 7th century type discussed elsewhere by Mrs Hawkes (Hawkes 1973a,

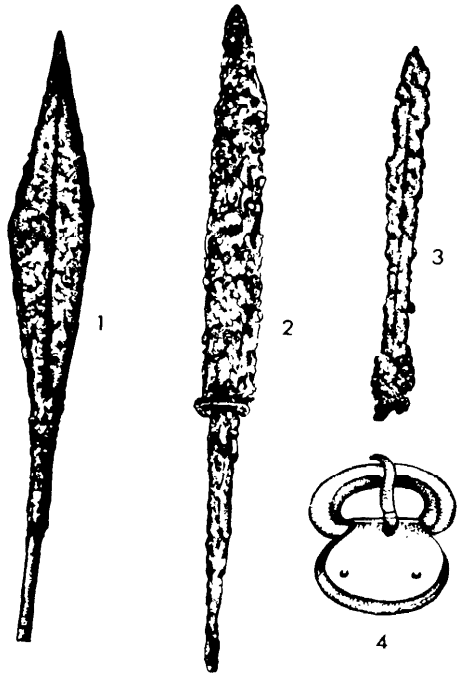


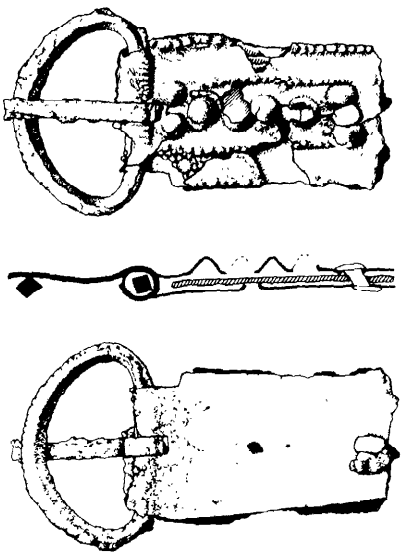
Fig 14 Objects from the Butt Road sand-pits (after William Wire) (not to the same scale)

199). Wire did not illustrate any of the arrowheads he mentioned.

In March 1844, a bronze buckle (Fig 14, 4) was found in the quarry. It was very similar both in size and shape to the buckle apparently discovered in the Mersea Road cemetery, illustrated elsewhere here (Fig 18, 4) and discussed below by Mrs Hawkes (p 16), except that in this case the tongue was still in place. The buckle from Butt Road measures 33 by 41mm, has the same type of 'double leaf' plate as the Mersea Road example, and was similarly attached to its leather strap by two rivers.

During 1976 and 1977, archaeological excavations took place at Butt Road on the strip of land formerly occupied by the row of houses known as Mill Place. The area is immediately adjacent to the sand pits visited by Wire. By mid 1979, 691 Roman inhumations had been excavated of which 620 were aligned east-west and belonged to a cemetery that, to judge by the coin evidence, probably dates from *c* 320-40 to the 5th century. In general, grave goods were confined to children's graves. In grave no 101 (TL 99302479), two belts had been placed in a corner of the coffin, the usual position for grave goods in the cemetery. The skeletal remains were examined by the late Dr C Wells who considered them to be of a child in the nine- to eleven-year old range but whose sex cannot be assessed.

Each belt consisted of a leather strap with a bronze buckle and hinged strap-end (Fig 15, l-4), the fittings having been attached to their straps by 'double leaf plates held in place by a single bronze rivet. To prevent the buckles and strap-ends from pivoting about the ends of their straps, a small hole had been punched into the centre of each lower plate so that the ragged edges of the hole penetrated the underlying leather. Traces of the straps survived as faint brown stains in the ground and as products of bronze



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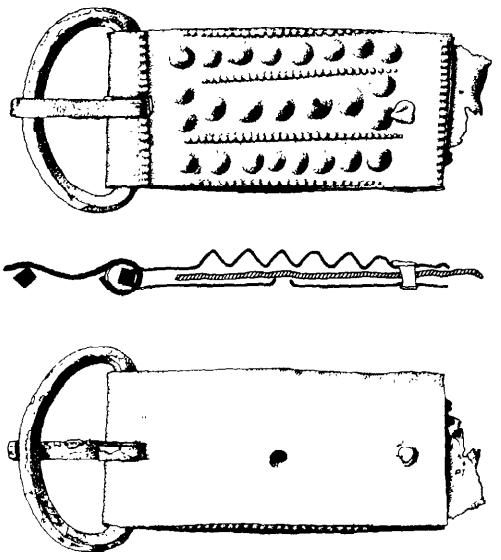

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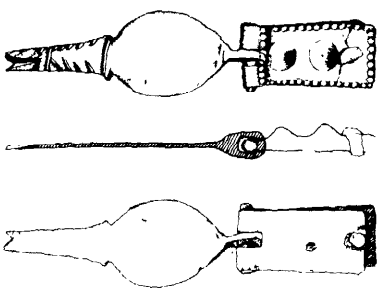

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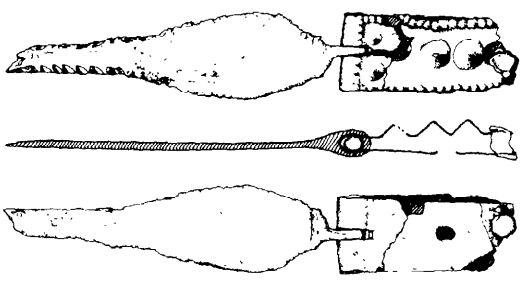

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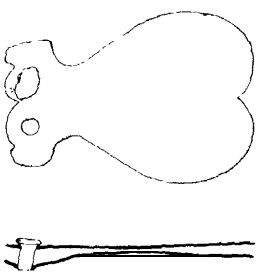

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Fig 15 Belt-fittings found at Butt Road in 1976 (1:1)

corrosion between the attachment plates (see Fig 15, 1 & 2).

Buckle no 2 is much better preserved than buckle no 1 and has slightly larger attachment plates. Both buckles are unusual in that they are decorated with repoussé work, but they nevertheless fall within Simpson's group II classification (Simpson 1976, 195–6). A close parallel to the buckles is provided by one of the buckles from the Lankhills School cemetery at Winchester attributed with a similar date to those from Butt Road (Clarke 1970, 294–7 and fig 6, 126). Other British buckles with repoussé work include an unstratified one from Richborough (Cunliffe 1968, pl XXXV, 107), a Hawkes and Dunning type Ia buckle from Silchester (Hawkes & Dunning 1962, fig 13, i), and another from Colchester (Hull 1958, fig 47, 8) found in the fill of the drain leading to Duncan's Gate north of the castle. The fill was dated to after 330 (Hull 1958, 131). The two strap-ends are decorated with 'chip-carving' whereas their attachment plates are embellished with repoussé work in the same manner as the buckles. The strap-ends are hinged and are in the form of nail cleaners.

It was not possible during the excavation to determine which buckle belonged to which strap-end but they can presumably be matched on the basis of their size. Thus buckle no 2 probably belongs to strap-end no 4 and buckle no 1 probably belongs to strap-end no 3. Again a close parallel for these strap-ends is provided by the Lankhills cemetery at Winchester (Clarke 1970, fig 6, 127).

Mrs Hawkes suggests" that the Butt Road buckles and nail cleaner type strap-tags represent yet further insular variants. She views the discovery of these pieces in a child's grave as significant because they reinforce her suggestion (Hawkes 1974, 393) that the Hawkes type I buckles, with narrow plates, were perhaps a civilian fashion.

A heart-shaped strap-end (Fig 15, 5) was also found during the archaeological excavations. It was discovered on the site of a stone building already partially excavated in 1935 (Hull 1958, 245-8) and in 1965 (Dunnett 1971, 78-84). The building is a long rectangular structure aligned east-west with an apse at its eastern end and was probably a cemetery church dating from c 320-40 to the 5th century (Crummy 1980, 264-6). The strap-end was found in a late Roman deposit datable to after 388 by the associated coins (although the object may have been residual and discarded some time earlier). The strap-end has 'double leaf plates which have separated because of corrosion and is an example of the group recently discussed by Simpson (1976, 201-4). The only British example in his catalogue is from Lankhills School cemetery (Clarke 1970, fig 5, 75).

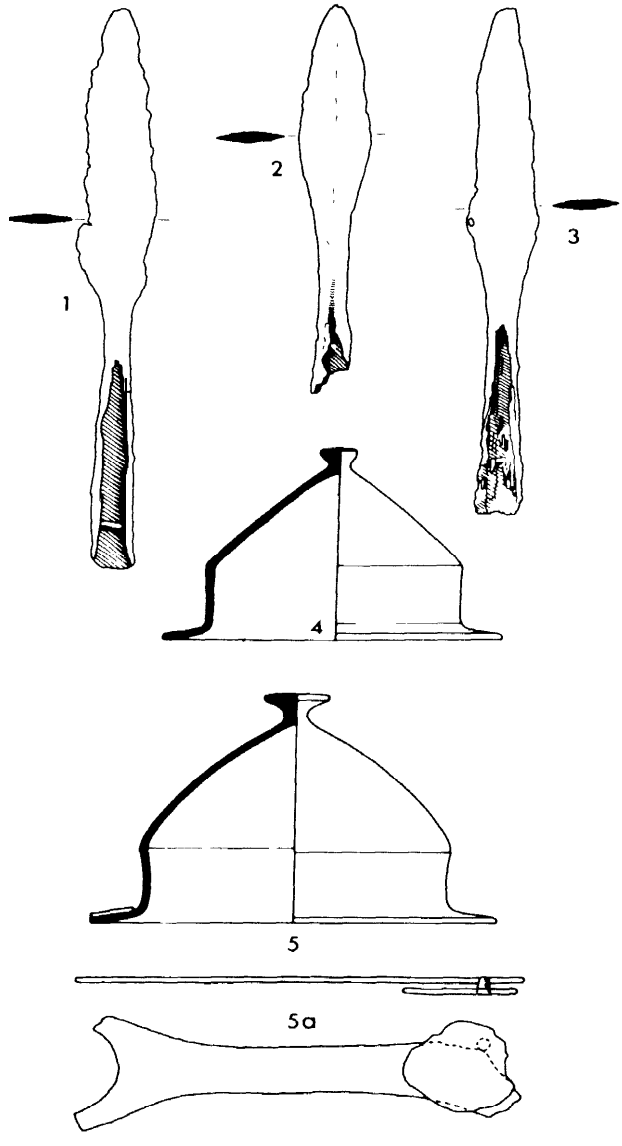


Fig 16 Mersea Road: spearheads and shield bosses (1:3)

Site N: 10 Mersea Road, TL 99932473 (Fig 2)

Three iron spearheads and an iron shield boss (Fig 16, l-4) were found during the construction of 10 Mersea Road in 1873. A second shield boss (Fig 16, 5) was discovered before 1897. The weapons were undoubtedly from inhumations although no bones are recorded as having been found.

Spearhead no 1 (CM 1511 PC) belongs to the Swanton series Dl dated 5th to 7th centuries; spearhead no 2 (CM 1512 PC) to series Cl dated 5th to mid 6th centuries; and spearhead no 3 (CM 1513 PC) to series H2 dated 5th to 6th centuries. Both bosses are of the low-cone type which is attributed to typically 5th and 6th century contexts (Evison 1963, 39–42). Boss no 4 (CM 1507 PC) has a straight-sided cone whilst that of boss no 5 (CM 58. 1897) is convex. The latter has a strap-handle (Fig 16, 5a) which is a feature that Dr V I Evison regards as being indicative of the 6th century or later (Evison 1963, 39–40). A fragment of iron plate is attached by a rivet to one end of the strap-handle. The plate and handle are corroded to the boss, making it impossible to determine by visual inspection whether or not the rivet extended into the flange of the boss. The plate may have been a repair or possibly a means of attaching the handle to the body of the shield.

Site O: Meanee Barracks, TL 99932453 (Fig 2)

A complete pot (Fig 17; CM 55. 1951) containing at least fourteen fragments of cremated human bone was discovered in the north-west corner of the Mcanee Barracks on 24 March 1938. The pot is unburnished and grass-tempered and is most likely to be of 6th or 7th century date (Myres 1969, 27–8).

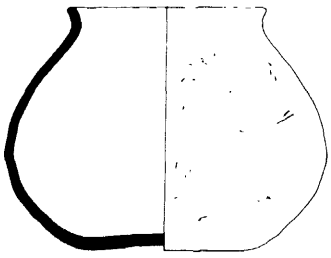


Fig 17 Meanee Barracks: pot (1:4)

Other finds believed to be from the Mersea Road Saxon cemetery, ie the area around sites N and O, Fig 2 (TL 99952458 approx)

A A collection of objects (CM 5318.26) said to have been found in the Mersea Road cemetery was accessed by the Colchester and Essex Museum in 1926. The principal finds are 21 beads, 3 bronze buckles, the head of a radiate brooch, and a bone comb (Figs 18 & 19). Also included in the collection is a coin of Claudius II Gothicus (Rev: Consecratio) struck by Quintillus in 270.[16] For an unrecorded reason the finely decorated late Roman buckle (Fig 18, 1) and one of the other two buckles (which one is not known) were given the same accession number as the group at a later date. Unfortunately there are grounds for questioning the validity and hence the provenance of the group as a whole since the collection reached the

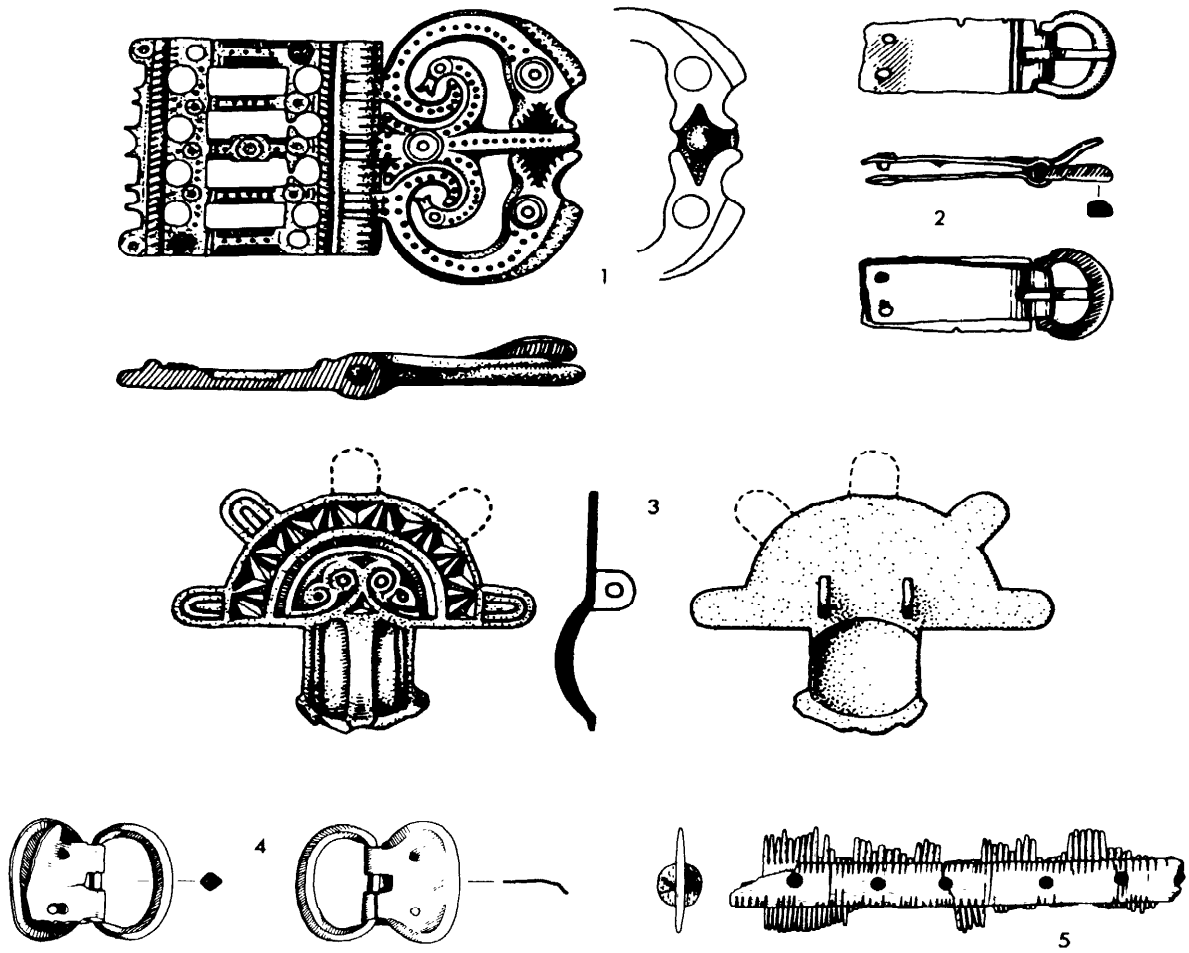


Fig 18 Mersea Road Cemetery: 1-2 bronze buckles (1:1); 3 brooch (1:1); 4 bronze buckle (1:2); 5 bone comb (1:2)

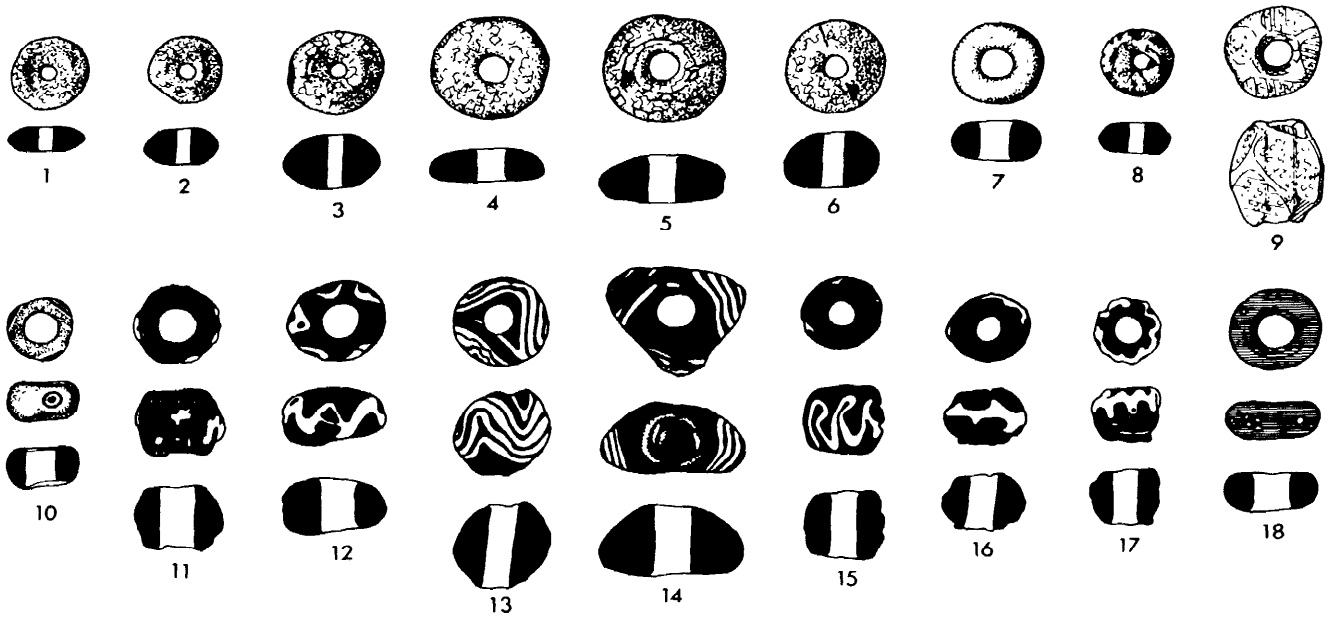


Fig 19 Mersea Road: beads (2:3)

Colchester Museum via an antique dealer from south Essex who may not have been able to confirm the authenticity of the material satisfactorily. The decorated buckle (Fig 18, 1) has been published previously where it was postulated as being the product of an official workshop in Britain (Hawkes & Dunning 1962, 21-6) and of a type (Hawkes & Dunning type IIa) datable from *c* 350 (Hawkes 1974, 389-90).

Two buckles and a radiate brooch said to be from the Mersea Road cemetery

by Sonia Chadwick Hawkes

The buckle (Fig 18, 4) was cast in bronze and has a D-shaped loop and a doubled oval plate originally secured to the belt by two rivets. The tongue is missing. The object is 43mm long and the plate is 37mm wide. Though buckles of this general form continued to be used by Franks and Anglo-Saxons well into the 5th century, there can be little doubt that this piece is late Roman. Comparable buckles have been listed and discussed recently by C J Simpson (1976)[17] who considers them to have been made in the official workshops in Pannonia for wearers of 'the uniform of regular soldiers serving in the defence of the Roman frontiers during the second half of the 4th century'. Like the hitherto better known, because more decorative, chip-carved and zoomorphic buckles and belt-fittings, plain buckles of this type will have formed part of the official *cingulum militare*. I have elsewhere suggested that the *cingulum* might have been worn by civil as well as military officials, but that, with the growing evidence for the presence of soldiers in towns either in static garrisons or in units of the field army, the majority of belt-fittings such as this one from Colchester are likely to have been worn by the military (Hawkes 1974).

The buckle (Fig 18, 2) is of bronze and has a D-shaped loop and a long rectangular plate. This is almost certainly a late Roman buckle, a simpler and smaller relative of my Type I buckles of the late 4th century (Hawkes & Dunning 1962; *BRGK* 43-4 (1962-3) 155ff; Hawkes 1973b; 1974). These were for a narrow belt; and if the Colchester buckle was not for some such thing as a shoe or garter strap (Brown 1975), it was made for a very narrow belt indeed, perhaps as little as 10mm wide. I have suggested elsewhere that the light and fragile Type I buckles are more appropriate to civilian than military dress (Hawkes 1974, 393).

The brooch (Fig 18, 3) is made of gilded bronze with some signs of wear. It appears to be the headplate of a Frankish or Alamannic five-knobbed bow-brooch, but it is difficult to parallel in the published corpora (Kühn 1940; 1974). The chief decorative elements are common enough: the zig-zag border of chip-carving occurs on Kühn's Type 9 radiate brooches with parallel-sided foot, but not with the spiral ornament which is otherwise such a regular panel filler on the headplates of early radiate brooches. In fact, there seems to be only one comparable combination, on a Type 12 Hahnheim brooch, with rhomboidal foot, and that has the usual garnet-set knobs. The grooved knobs of this brooch from Colchester are in fact decidedly unusual. Tentatively, then, one may suggest that this is part of a Continental brooch from northern France or the Rhineland which is datable, on stylistic grounds, to the second quarter or middle of the 6th century. ■

The bone comb

by Dr P Galloway

The crudely-fashioned, double-sided, composite comb (Fig 18, 5) may well belong to a Saxon context, but it might equally well come from many medieval contexts down to about the 13th century. Basically it is a very ordinary 'production model' comb, if in fact it is not home-made. Though it has few useful typological features, its convex connecting plate and the length of the surviving portion suggest that an earlier rather than later context is indicated, and that it may, if other dating evidence confirms this, be usefully compared with the long double-sided Saxon type, examples of which come from West Stow (West 1969) and Burwell (Lethbridge 1931). ■

The beads from the Mersea Road cemetery

by Margaret Guido

Fig 19 nos 1-8 Amber beads

No 9	A faceted amethyst bead
No 10	Very weathered opaque yellow glass annular bead with three eyes in white and pale blue, both colours perhaps originally translucent. Another similar, not illustrated
No 11	Irregular barrel-shaped bead in dark, seemingly black glass. Streaked and blobbed with unmarvered white, and with an incomplete opaque crimson band above and below. Another similar, not illustrated
No 12	Apparently similar glass but glossier. Unmarvered roughly applied yellowish opaque glass wave
No 13	Globular, similar dark glass. Decoration of parallel chevrons in opaque yellow glass
No 14	Triangular bead, blackish (? purple or crimson) glass with three eyes perhaps made by winding on opaque white or yellow trails as concentric rings or spirals (it is not clear which, as the bead is very weathered). Another, more battered, not illustrated. These two beads might be found in a number of places at widely different dates, but are quite unlike the late Iron Age ones from Scotland, discussed in Guido 1978.
No 15	Dark barrel-shaped bead with irregular scrawl containing signs of lemon yellow filling in patches
No 16	Dark (? purplish) glass with opaque, unmarvered, and irregular design
No 17	Dark glass with signs of fine pinkish striations, probably due to poor mixing of the glass. Unmarvered opaque white trail at top
No 18	Annular bead in rich translucent cobalt colour, mottled with blobs of opaque cream or yellow glass. These beads are impossible to date accurately at present. Gallo-Roman examples are known and they continued to be popular right through the Saxon and post-Saxon periods.

All these beads, with the exception, as far as my present knowledge goes, of no 10 and the other similar bead, could come from Teutonic graves, and the hypothesis that they represent finds from one or more graves at Colchester cannot be lightly dismissed. The blob-decorated bead is a common type for a very long period, but both the chevron and wave designs on the dark crimson or blackish beads represented in this group can be compared with some from the Sarre cemetery in Kent (Warwick Museum 1429). This cemetery was in use over a long period, and the bibliography concerning it can be found in Meaney 1964,, 135-6. Neither the amber beads nor the amethyst faceted bead (no 9) would be out of context from such a horizon. Although this group of objects and beads is regarded as suspect because of their doubtful origin, it is perfectly possible that in the future they may prove to be convincingly associated and to belong to some date around the 5th-6th centuries AD. ■

B The Joslin Collection, assembled in the 19th century and subsequently bought by the Colchester Corporation, consists of objects which almost without exception are recorded as having been found in Colchester (Price 1888) but for which few find spots are known. The Saxon objects from the collection are illustrated here in Figure 20. A local archaeologist, Dr Henry Laver, was quoted in 1903 as stating that most of the shield bosses in the Joslin Collection were found in the Mersea Road cemetery (VCH 1903, 323). If this was the case, then the same is probably true of most of the spearheads, ferrules, and complete pots since they are all types of finds associated with cemeteries.

Spearheads nos 1 and 2 (CM Jos 1102/4 & 6 resp) belong to Swanton's series C2 dated to the 5th century onwards: spearhead no 3 (CM Jos 1102/11) to series B2 dated to the late 4th and 5th centuries; spearhead no 4 (CM Jos 1102/12) to series C1 dated to the 5th and 6th centuries; spearheads nos 5 and 6 (CM Jos 1102/8 & 7 resp) to series H3 and H1 respectively both dated to the 5th and 6th centuries; spearhead no 7 (CM Jos 1102/10) to series C3 dated from the 6th century onwards; and spearhead no 8 (CM Jos 1102/9) probably to series E4 dated to the 6th and 7th centuries.

Boss no 12 (CM Jos 1102a) is of the low-cone type with a straight-sided dome datable to the 5th or 6th centuries (Evison 1963, 39-42). The sugar-loaf boss no 11 (CM 115.1898) has been published previously and dated to the second half of the 7th century or possibly the early 8th (Evison 1963, 65).

The fabric and finish of the three pots (nos 13-15; CM Jos 403 & 404, CM 115.98) are similar to those of the pottery from Hut 1 in Lion Walk and contrast sharply with the ceramic material associated with Hut 2. Their profiles are basic and cannot be closely dated. The two smallest pots, however, would best fit a 6th century context whereas the other vessel with its low, bulbous profile may perhaps be of 7th century date (Myres 1969, 27-8).

The sugar-loaf boss and the tallest of the pots were purchased by the Museum at the same time in 1898 and therefore may have been found together after 1893 when the bulk of the Joslin Collection was acquired.

Sites P, F, and Q: sherds of grass-tempered pottery which may be later than the 7th century (TL 99202516, TL 99562522, and TL 99912539 resp)

In southern England, the tradition of making grass-tempered pottery continued beyond the end of the early Saxon period. The terminal date is very debatable but is thought to belong in the later part of the 8th century (Brown 1976). Most of the grass-tempered pottery from Colchester forms a cohesive body of material which can be ascribed to this date range, ie 5th to 8th century, but there are a few sherds which because of their characteristics must be placed late in the series. Their dates remain problematic and may even be after the late 8th century.

A grass-tempered rim sherd (Fig 21, 2) was found in the top of the fill of the latest Roman town ditch during the archaeological excavations of 1973-6 at Balkerne Lane (Fig 2, site P). The ditch had filled up with an accumulation of topsoil and was almost level before the sherd was deposited. The fabric of the sherd is relatively hard and has a distinctive greyish tinge. The surfaces are uneven and poorly finished and the sherd has been roughly burnished on the exterior and rim. The pot from which this piece derived was globular in shape and had a short, slightly everted rim. One or two more sherds of grass-tempered pottery may come to light when the

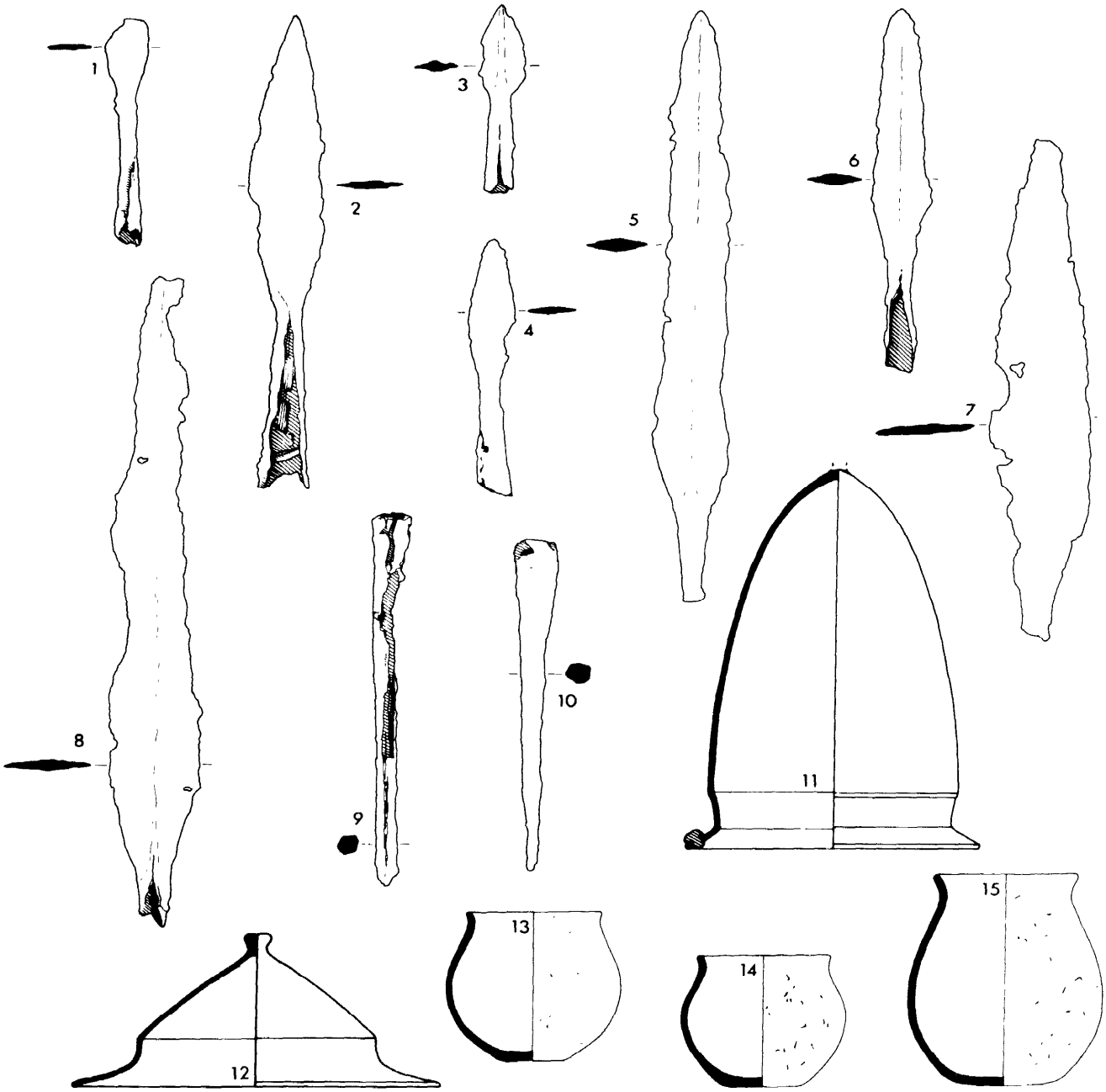


Fig 20 Anglo-Saxon objects in the Joslin Collection: 1-8 spearheads (1:3); 9-10 ferrules (1:3); 11-12 shield bosses (1:3); 13-15 pots (1:4)

excavated material from Balkerne Lane is exhaustively examined.

Another sherd is a fragment of rim (Fig 34, 78) found during the excavation of the castle bank in 1950 (Fig 2, site Q; Cotton 1962; Dunning 1962). The fabric is very similar to that of the Balkerne Lane sherd but neither of its surfaces has been burnished. The profile, with its slightly everted rim and unpronounced shoulder, is reminiscent of some of the earliest sandy wares from Colchester before the widespread use of the beaded lip.[18] The sherd was found with Thetford-type ware under the castle rampart (p 33). The base of a flat-bottomed, grass-tempered pot (Fig 34, 91) was also found during the 1950 excavation but in the rampart itself. Both grass-tempered sherds derive from nearby occupation which predated the construction of the castle bank.

During the archaeological excavation of 1973-4 on the site of the Cups Hotel on the High Street (Fig 2, site F), over a

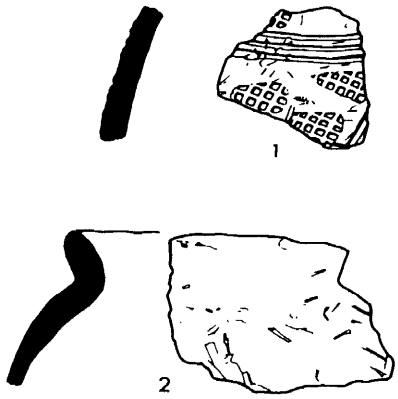


Fig 21 Grass-tempered shards from the Cups Hotel site and Balkerne Lane (1:2)

dozen sherds of grass-tempered pottery were found. Most of the pieces were discovered in residual contexts and no clear traces of Anglo-Saxon structures were detected. Two of the sherds were from the same pit and were decorated with pear-shaped stamps and horizontal and diagonal lines (Fig 21, 1); they are both probably from the same pot. Although a 6th century date is most likely for these sherds, the shape of the stamps is rather unusual for this period. Similar stamps occur at London on a pot which has been attributed with a middle Anglo-Saxon date (Dunning *et al* 1960, 23). The other sherds from the Cups Hotel excavation were all plain body sherds and consequently dating them is difficult. One piece is certainly different from the mainstream of grass-tempered pottery so far found in the town. It is thin, being only 5mm thick, well burnished inside and out, and cannot be scratched with the finger nail. The fabric is dark grey *(Munsell Color Chart:* 7.5YR 4/0) with a brown (7.5YR 5/2) patch on the exterior. The sherd is presumably either middle or late Anglo-Saxon.

Weapons from the river Colne

In 1916 dredging operations in the river Colne yielded a number of iron weapons. These include a double-edged sword and two seaxes (Fig 22). The two-edged sword (Fig 22, 2; CM 3388.19 16) is 735mm long with a blade which tapers from 51 to 46mm. The object is heavily corroded but traces of a fuller, presumably of shallow depth, are visible on both sides. The tip of the weapon is damaged and the upper part of the tang is missing. The sword has been X-rayed[19] and shown to be pattern-welded. The vertical X-ray photograph indicates two composite rods pattern-welded probably in the standard (ie not alternate) manner (see Anstee & Biek 1962, 88-9). Dr D M Wilson and Mrs L Webster of the British Museum have both kindly examined our drawing of the sword and they consider that the object, though not closely datable, is likely to be 8th century or later.[20]

One of the seaxes (Fig 22, 1; CM 3390.1916) is 547mm long and 58mm across at the widest part of the blade; its tang is approximately 1/6th the length of the sword. The other seax (Fig 22, 3; CM 3389.1916) is 622mm long and 57mm across at the widest part of the blade; its tang is approximately 1/5th the length of the sword.

In addition, the heads of two axes (CM 3565.1917 & CM 3557.1916) of Types IV and V *(Lon Mus Cat* 1954, 59-65) were discovered. These are Viking types which were current in England over the late Saxon and Norman periods. A derivative form of Type IV (CM 3566.1917) was also found in the river.

The two seaxes

by Sonia Chadwick Hawkes

The single-edged seax originated on the Continent, where it is conventionally classified into three main types: the narrow seax of the 5th and 6th centuries, the broad seax of the 7th, and the long seax of the 8th (Böhner 1958, 130-45). The weapon found little favour in England before the 7th century but then was quickly subjected to insular adaptation, which produced a lighter version of the broad seax (Evison 1962; 1969; Hawkes 1969; Hawkes 1973a, 188-90) and, at latest by the 10th century, a highly distinctive form of the long seax (Type III in Wheeler 1935, 179; Evison 1964). Study of the development of the English long seax is hampered by sparseness of dated finds; the type evolved too late to be represented at all commonly in furnished graves and most, like these from the Colne, are river finds.

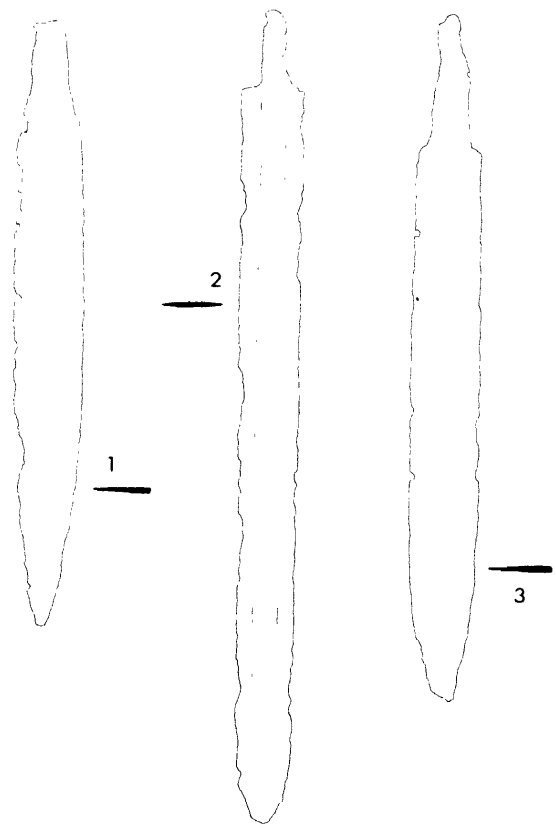


Fig 22 River Colne: sword blades (1:6)

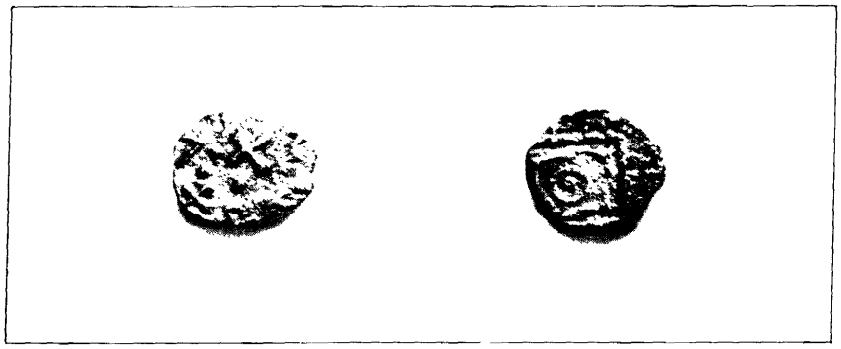


Fig 23 'Sceatta' found in Colchester bcfore 1903 (1: 1)

From their size, the Colchester finds should be classified as long seaxes, but they have not the straight cutting edge and markedly angled back (the so-called 'broken back') so characteristic of the developed insular form. In outline they are very like Continental Frankish and Alamannic long seaxes, though they do not attain the maximum length and their blades are broader and heavier. They appear, in fact, to represent a cross between the Continental broad and long seax. The best parallel at present is the massive long seax from a grave at Kidlington (Brown 1915, pl XXVIII, 20) which was probably buried early in the 8th century. This unique grave find and the two from the river Colne would appear, therefore, to illustrate an early phase in the development of the long seax in England. ■

Strap-end from 26 Lexden Road

A chip-carved strap-end was found at 26 Lexden Road about a kilometre west of the town centre. It was discovered on top of a Roman road during an archaeological excavation in 1966. Unfortunately, the object has not been traced and the reference cited to a similar example from Richborough is erroneous (Holbert 1967, 22).

Other objects for which the exact find spots are unknown

(a) A 'sceatta' (CM 563.03) said to have been found in Colchester was donated to the Colchester and Essex Museum by Mr G Joslin in 1903.

The sceatta (Fig 23)

by S E Rigold

The coin is *BMC* Type 8, which seems to be a combination of two reverses; the cross-and-garbled-legend reverse of the 'Frisian Runic' sceattas and a version of the 'standard' reverse, as found on other Runic sceattas and the 'Porcupine' series, especially in this symmetrical form. The combination is so frequent that it is probably right to treat it as a substantive type allied to the Porcupines, and Dr D M Metcalf does so as his Porcupine Type I (Metcalf 1966, fig 1). They are usually quite heavy, not too bad in metal, and generally earlier than 'secondary Runics' but not necessarily later than Frisian Runics. They occur in the Aston Rowart hoard and probably date from around 710-20, no later. The coin might be English or Frisian. The weight is 0-9256. ■

(b) Two spearheads and a low-cone shield boss (Fig 24, 1-3) were found in Colchester and recorded as being from 'graves adjoining the kilns' (Price Cat). The kilns to which this reference is made are not identified, but they may have been the group situated approximately lkm west of Balkerne Hill and excavated by Joslin in 1877 (Hull 1963, 3-9). Finds from the excavation of the kilns were

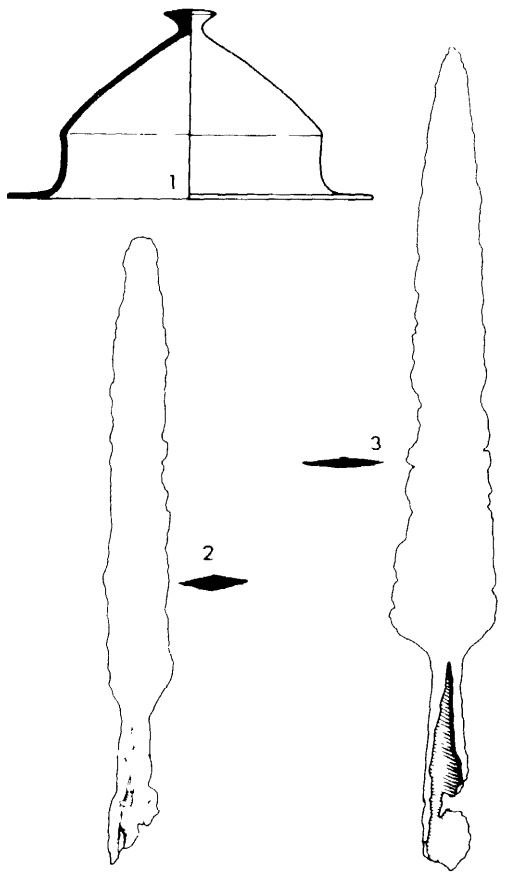


Fig 24 Two iron spearheads and a shield boss *from Colchester (1:3)*

subsequently catalogued by Price (1888, 74-5) and clearly Joslin's discoveries must have been prominent at that time. Alternatively, though it is less likely, the weapons may have come from the Mersea Road Anglo-Saxon cemetery in which other objects were found at this period, although no kilns are recorded as being discovered in the area.

Spearhead no 2 (CM 1509 PC) belongs to Swanton's series E3 or G2 and spearhead no 3 (CM 1508 PC) to Swanton's series E3. Both objects therefore probably date from the 6th century onwards. The shield boss no 1 (CM 1507 PC) is likely to be 5th or 6th century (Evison 1963, 39-42).

(c) The spearhead (CM 3609.17) illustrated in Figure 25 was found in Colchester *(CMR* 1918, 11) and belongs to Swanton's series C1 dated from the 5th to the mid 6th centuries.

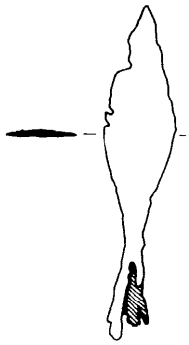


Fig 25 A spearhead from Colchester (1:3)

(d) A bronze strap-end (Fig 26; CM 3187.15) said to have been found in Colchester was purchased by the Colchester & Essex Museum in 1915. The object is 34mm long and decorated over most of its upper surface with lines of punched holes. The thin plate underneath has snapped off under the neck of the zoomorphic head. A number of specialists have examined photographs and drawings of the object and consider it to date to the 9th or 10th century.[21] They cite three parallels, the closest of which was probably found at Coswicks Links (Wilson 1964, no 12), the others being from Ixworth (Hinton 1974, no 16) and Portchester (Cunliffe 1976, 216, no 52).

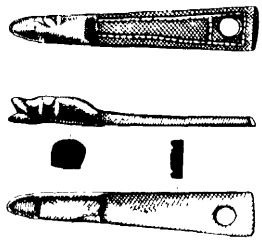


Fig 26 A strap-end from Colchester (1:1)

(e) A wheel-thrown carinated pot (Fig 27; CM 2290.11) was found at Old Heath (Fig 40) near Colchester. The date and circumstances of the discovery are unknown.

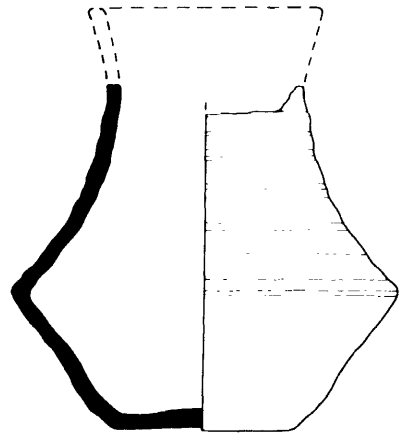


Fig 27 A wheel-turned pot from Old Heath, Colchester (1:2)

A Merovingian pot from Old Heath, Colchester (Fig 27)

by Professor Vera I Evison

The pot from Old Heath, Colchester (Evison 1979, 40, 3e5, fig 16, d), has a number of similarities to the general type of wheel-thrown pottery in production on the Continent, in France, Belgium, Holland, and Germany, from the 5th to the 7th centuries. The basic shape is that of a biconical vase, the most common form of the period. The degree of competence of the potter in shaping the vessel attains the norm, ie a fast wheel was used but without undue attention to perfect symmetry and finish. The type of fabric, reddish-buff with a blackened and burnished surface, sandy, with grog, mica, and a few large grits, matches well with some of the continental types. All these characteristics are common to many of the Frankish pots produced during the 5th, 6th, and 7th centuries. The rim, an important diagnostic feature, is missing, but there are other characteristics present which allow of closer dating and location of source. The biconical form has a slightly concave base; the wall above the carination is longer than the wall below the carination, and both curve slightly inwards. The upper part of the wall is decorated by grooves formed by pressing in a double-toothed tool while the pot was rotating on the wheel, resulting in a corrugated appearance. The break at the top occurs at a weak point where the wall was everted at a slight angle to form the rim, and a conjectural restoration of a straight rim about 20mm long is added to the drawing, based on analogies.

A number of pots of this type have been noted in Belgium (Roosens & Van Doorselaer 1966; Van Bostraeren 1967), and the characteristics distinguished there are as follows: the fabric is usually grey with a grey-black surface; the height of the upper wall is at least 20% more than that of the lower part; the height is greater than the maximum width, which is greater than the width of the mouth, and this is greater than the diameter of the base; the rim is straight and slightly everted; the top part is always ornamented by horizontal grooving, and below this there

is sometimes rouletting or stamping. The sum of these attributes is a tall and slender biconical vase. The area where these are found extends from west Belgium into north-western France, particularly the Pas de Calais, and other examples may be added to the original distribution map in neighbouring areas (van Bostraeten 1967, fig 1). Associated finds in graves date the series to the 7th century.

The only way in which the Old Heath pot diverges from the continental pots is in the wall below the carination. Usually this is convex or straight, and the slight concavity is presumably just an aberration in the manufacture. Comparable forms abroad have been found at Hantes Wihèries, Belgium, grave 30, Beerlegem, and Emelgem (Brulet, 1970, fig 11, t30; van Bostraeten 1967, fig 2, 7 & fig 3, 1).

In spite of the lively trade which was going on between Kent and the other side of the Channel in the 7th century, very few of these 'Beerlegem' pots have so far been found in England. The most typical is a graceful version from grave 10, Valetta House, Broadstairs[22] (Evison 1979, 3e6, fig 16, e) in a reddish fabric with black burnished surface, and the other examples known were also found in Kent. Essex, however, has produced two more pots which are related to the Beerlegem type, the two found in a grave at Prittlewell *(Antiq J,* **10,** 1930, 386-8, figs 2 & 3; Evison 1979, 3e1, 3e2, figs 16, a, b). These are biconical pots with a long corrugated upper part, but they are more squat in stature with a wider mouth. Objects associated with the Beerlegem pots in England indicate that they were in use there also during the 7th century. The route by which the Colchester and Prittlewell pots arrived was no doubt directly across the Channel from the coast of France or Belgium to Old Heath (Evison 1979, 62, map 1, 14). ■

Synthesis of the archaeological evidence relating to occupation in Colchester from the 5th to the 9th centuries

The earliest Saxon inhabitation and the problem of continuity from the Roman period

The earliest Saxon inhabitation is represented by the two grave groups from the Guildford Road Estate and Hut 2 at Lion Walk. Groups attributable to similar early dates have been found within the walled towns of Winchester (Biddle 1972, 101-2), Portchester (Myres 1976), and Dorchester-on-Thames (Myres 1969, 78). A similar situation is reflected on a local level at the Roman villas of Rivenhall (Rodwell & Rodwell 1973, 124-7) and Little Oakley (Myres 1969, 88) which lie eleven and fourteen miles respectively from Colchester. A sunken hut was found in association with the pottery at Portchester.

The conclusion generally drawn from these early discoveries (especially Portchester) is that Germanic troops existed within the confines of their respective late or 'sub-Roman' communities because the associated Saxon finds appear to predate the start of the main Saxon migrations to Britain. The nature and date of the *Adventus Saxonum in Britanniam* are of course not fully understood, but from historical evidence it is postulated that the main migrations which marked the start of the domination of much of Britain by the Saxons may have begun *c* 450 (Jones 1964, 190-l), if not *c* 440 (Alcock 1973, 100-9). Since nearly all the early Germanic pottery from the places cited above, as well as that from Colchester, is datable to as late as 450, usually by analogy with the material from the latest levels of Feddersen Wierde (Schmid 1969), there seems to be no compelling case for associating these pieces with Saxon mercenaries. (The single sherd from Dorchester-on-Thames dated to the 4th or early 5th century by Dr Myres is a possible exception (Myres 1969, 78).)

Whilst the typology of late Roman pottery from Colchester is yet to be established, the impression so far is that the Roman pottery from Hut 2 is all residual and that the structure represents a dislocation in ceramics and house types which indicates a cultural change. Consequently, rather than being associated with late Roman German soldiery, Hut 2 is perhaps better seen as postdating the collapse of Roman Colchester. Indeed the notion of *grübenhäuser* inside and contemporary with late or sub-Roman towns seems so incongruous that any pottery or metalwork which seems to suggest such a situation has to be critically appraised. The pottery from Hut 2 in Colchester therefore indicates that, by the mid 5th century, the Roman town no longer existed as such and therefore, in conjunction with the historical evidence, suggests that the town must have succumbed to Saxon pressure in approximately 440-50.

Eleven pieces of late Roman military equipment are known from Colchester so far. These consist of the Hawkes and Dunning type IIa buckle from Mersea Road (p 16), the Simpson group II buckles from Butt Road and Mersea Road (pp 14 & 16), the three strap-end from Butt Road (p 14), the belt-mount from the Cups Hotel site (p 7), the fragment of buckle-plate from the drain in Hollytrees Meadow (p 14), and the strap-end from Lexden Road (p 20).

A case (which is not maintained here) could be made that the chip-carved metalwork, the early sunken hut, the early cruciform brooches probably from Schleswig-Holstein, and the bone comb from 18 North Hill, a type commonly associated with chip-carved metalwork in the Rhineland and North Gaul (p 6), indicate Germanic troops garrisoned in the town and thus provide the scenario for the revolt of the Saxon settlers as described by Gildas and others. The presence of post-Roman burials at the Mersea Road cemetery and presumably at Butt Road too, in the same area as late Roman chip-carved belt-fittings, could be taken to suggest continuity of burial custom which further reinforces the argument for continuity between Germanic troops protecting the British community and free Saxon settlers in the post-Roman town. But the evidence for this is fraught with problems.

Recently Simpson has stressed that buckles of Hawkes and Dunning type IIa were not used exclusively by irregular Germanic troops (Simpson 1976, 204-6). Mrs Hawkes has argued that chip-carved belt-fittings from settlement sites are equivocal in their implications and that only discoveries in late Roman cemeteries of burials interred with weapons and other pieces of military equipment can provide reasonable evidence of pagan, and possibly Germanic, soldiers (Hawkes 1974, esp 393).

The pair of belts from Butt Road was found in a child's grave and buried in a custom no different from elsewhere in the cemetery; the burial rite implies no cultural difference here. The circumstances of the Type Ha buckle from Mersea Road are obscure and the other pieces were stray finds from non-cemetery sites. The brooches from the Guildford Road Estate would appear to represent the best evidence of a Germanic presence in late Roman Colchester. But did the women who owned the brooches belong to the families of Germanic warriors active in Colchester before or after the collapse of the Roman town? How much can be made of the brooches of pre-440-50 date when the time span involved is only two or three

decades and the dating is approximate? Even if there was a degree of continuity in the areas used for burial before and after *c* 450, need this indicate continuity of occupation over this period? If the Saxons lived in the Roman town as they certainly seem to have done-then why should they not have used the main cemetery areas too?

In conclusion then, a cautious and conservative interpreration of the evidence from Colchester as discussed above is suggested, namely that the late Roman military equipment is to be associated with late Roman regular soldiers of various indeterminate ethnic origins and that, in default of more powerful evidence to the contrary, the end of Roman Colchester should be placed *c* 440-50 in keeping with the written sources concerning the start of the Saxon migrations to Britain.

The evidence for later occupation

The Colchester archaeologist, Henry Laver, stated that, In all the Roman cemeteries in and around Colchester, Saxon burials have been discovered (VCH 1903,327) and this would appear to be borne out in part by this study. The Anglo-Saxon cemetery about which most is known is that on the west side of Mersea Road. The objects attributable to the cemetery indicate that the area was in use as a burial ground from the 5th until at least the late 7th century. Groups of terraced houses were being built in Cromwell Road, Lucas Road, Fairfax Road, and Mersea Road (Fig 1) in the 1870s and the late 1860s and it is extremely likely that the bulk of the Saxon objects in the Joslin Collection were found here as a result. The Reverend E L Cutts records that Roman and Saxon burials-arms and urns were found between Fairfax Road and Lucas Road (Cutts 1888, facing p 34) and since he was writing not long after many of the houses in this area were built, his statement can be regarded as fairly authoritative.[23]

Two other areas used for Anglo-Saxon burial are the Guildford Road Estate discussed above (Fig 2, site K), which is included in Hull s so-called North-East Cemetery dating from the late 1st century (Hull 1958, 257 8), and the site of the Union House (Fig 2, site J), Hull s Union Cemetery , which produced finds of a wide range dating from pre-Roman times onwards (Hull 1958, 254 5). Wire s assertion that Anglo-Saxon burials were found on the west side of Butt Road (Fig 2, site M) must be treated with caution although the presence of spearheads and arrowheads indicates that this was a distinct possibility. Unfortunately, the find spot of the shield boss and two spearheads found sometime before 1884 (Fig 24) is not known and therefore the two possible locations suggested here (p 20-1) can only be conjectural.

Sixth century occupation in Colchester is indicated notably by the Aberg group IV brooch from the site of the Union House, the saucer brooch from Head Street, and the beads from the Mersea Road cemetery. Secure dates within the 7th century are represented by the thrymsa from Queen Street, the florid cruciform brooch from the Union House, and the sugar-loaf boss probably found near Mersea Road (although this could be early 8th century).

The pottery from Hut 1 is plain and limited in quantity but is probably of 6th or 7th century date. The group of sherds is consistent in fabric and finish with the Anglo-Saxon pots in the Joslin Collection as well as the cremation pot from the Meanee Barracks in Mersea Road.

Dates ranging from the 5th to 7th centuries have been given to the substantial number of iron weapons found in the town, particularly in the Mersea Road cemetery. Finds assignable to the 8th century consist of the sceatta dated 710-20 and the two seaxes from the river Colne, both of which are likely to belong to the first part of the century. The two-edged sword from the river is not closely datable but can be attributed to the 8th century or later. The discovery of weapons of this period in rivers is common in England and these have been ascribed with ritual or accidental reasons for their deposition, or accounted for as losses in battle (Wilson 1966, 50-1).

No finds can be attributed specifically to the 9th century. The bronze strap-end (Fig 26) is of 9th or 10th century date and a few grass-tempered sherds from the Cups Hotel site, Balkerne Lane, and the section across the Castle Bank probably belong to the 8th and 9th centuries. The rarity of finds dating to the 9th and the latter part of the 8th century can partially be accounted for by contemporary burial practice where grave goods were not deposited with the dead and by the absence in Essex of a dynamic pottery industry comparable to that producing the East Anglian wheel-turned wares.

The distribution of Ipswich-type ware as known at present (Dunmore *et al* 1975, fig 33[24]) appears to be confined to the Anglo-Saxon kingdom of East Anglia with some penetration into Mercia, the borders of Essex, and the coastal settlements of Kent[25] and Essex. Although only eighteen miles apart, the marked contrast in ceramic assemblages between Colchester and Ipswich over the middle Saxon period must be primarily related to the fact that Colchester lay in the kingdom of the East Saxons rather than in East Anglia. If this is the case then parallels with Colchester s middle Saxon pottery groups must be sought south of the town, such as in London. Nevertheless, the complete absence to date of Ipswich-type ware from Colchester is curious. This need not imply that, in the middle Saxon period, the population of the town was comparatively small but rather that its pottery has yet to be recovered in any quantity. No doubt Ipswich-type ware was used in Colchester but presumably was a minor component in the pottery assemblages of its period.

Notes

1 The edge of two facets are barely visible on this sherd and cannot be illustrated on Fig 5.

2 A minor point must be made about the spearheads from Colchester. These were studied in the early 1960s by Mr M J Swanton and subsequently listed in his catalogue (Swanton 1974, 42) Buried iron objects do not survive well in Colchester and because the spearheads are no exception, their classification is made difficult by their corroded condition. Consequently, heavy reliance has been placed on Mr Swanton's judgement and experience as expressed in his catalogue. Although the spearheads were conserved a few years after their examination by Mr Swanton, Colchester and Essex Museum's laboratory notes indicate that profiles as shown here in Figures 16, 20, 24,, and 25 have not changed significantly as a result.

3 MS notes are in CM and the finds are with the excavator.

4 There is doubt about the garden in which the coin was found. The find spot shown in Figure 2 is suggested by Mr H Calver, to whom I am grateful for the information.

5 I should like to acknowledge the help given to me in preparing this report by Mr John Clark of the Museum of London, Miss Josephine Holmes of The Shakespeare Centre, and Mrs Ruth Taylor of Birmingham City Museum. I am very grateful to Professor Vera Evison for permission to cite the

Brooches from her excavation at Beckford. Counties are referred to according to the boundaries in effect after 1 April 1974.

6 The degree to which Migration Period jewellery was related by the physical methods of manufacture (as distinct from the social context of manufacture, viz a workshop) is currently receiving much attention. For the latest discussion of terminology, problems, and possible explanations, see Vierck 1976.

7 A n&lace of 29 amber beads, 4 tripartite blown pearl beads (?silver-in-glass), and 2 other glass beads was found with the Alveston brooches, and a necklace of one rock crystal, 2 glass, and 29 amber beads was with the Brighthampton pair. Both are typically 6th century, as is the piano-convex whorl in the Mitcham grave (Dickinson 1976, 202ff, 236).

8 Now the Colchester Book Shop.

9 We are grateful to Mr D Brown, Mr D T-D Clarke, and Mrs S C Hawkes for their help in tracing the brooch, and to Mrs Leslie Webster of the British Museum for her assistance in this matter and for providing facilities to draw the object.

10 We are grateful to the late Dr C Wells for examining the skeletal remains.

11 Notably Schetelig 1906; Plettke 1921, 8-15; Åberg 1926, 28-61; Genrich 1953, 33-59; Genrich 1954, 5-7; and Tischler 1954, 21-215, esp 93-5.

12 It is a great pity that there are not more cruciform brooches amongst the Saxon material discussed by H W Behme (1974), but he has one Dorchester Type in his Phase II (380-420) and a couple of Borgstedt Type in his Phase III (400-450+).

13 The second amber bead was too fragmentary to comment on or illustrate.

14 In Wire s *Journal, Album,* and his annotated copy of Morant 1748. MSS in the CM.

15 By letter of 8.12.77.

16 The other objects in the group are not discussed here but consist of (a) seven fragments of bronze wire up to 1mm in diameter; (b) a small, flat, roughly circular lump of corroded bronze (untreated); (c) two buckles or brooch pins (one definite and the other possible); and (d) a fragment of bronze sheeting, trimmed roughly to a circular shape 15mm in diameter and with a rivet through its centre.

17 The Colchester piece is an important addition to his short list of Group II buckles from England.

18 Cf the pottery from the Lion Walk ditch in Figs 34 &

19 We are indebted to Mr Ian Robertson of the Passmore Edwards Museum who arranged for the photograph to be taken.

20 Since neither Dr Wilson nor Mrs Webster has seen the sword itself, they have stressed the provisional nature of the date.

21 I am grateful to Mrs S C Hawkes, Dr D R Wilson, Mrs L Webster, and Mr J Graham-Campbell for their help.

22 Excavated by Mrs L Webster, to whom I am grateful for this information.

23 The reference to Roman burials is not surprising but nevertheless curious since there is no other record of burials of this date in this part of the town.

24 The symbol on this plan indicating Ipswich-type ware from Colchester is erroneous; the sherd in question came from Bradwell.

25 Also Canterbury.

Chapter 2

Some written evidence

Summary

The written evidence relating to the pre-Conquest town is very limited although the personal names of the town s early moneyers and those in Domesday provide useful information about Colchester s pm-Conquest population. A detailed examination of the relevant texts indicates that under the supervision of Eudo Dapifer and on behalf of William I, work began on Colchester castle probably c 1074. Authority for this rests mainly with the Colchester Chronicle which although highly suspect contains statements reconcilable with dependent external evidence. Careful appraisal of four surviving accounts of the foundation of St John s Abbey reveals the previous existence of a set of 12th century monastic annals used as source material for three of them. This enables a more reliable chronology of the events of the Abbey s early years to be established.

The earliest records relating to Colchester have never been adequately examined. As Dr Stephenson s contribution below (p 28-30) indicates, there is clearly a surprising number of documents contained in various collections about the country which have not been studied with problems of Colchester in mind and this is especially true of the 12th and 13th centuries. This chapter deals with material which has been carefully selected and appraised with an eye to the contents of the rest of this report, particularly the excavations which have taken place in what were the grounds of St John s Abbey (Chapter 4). A major omission is St Botolph s Priory (p 74). But from Dr Stephenson s recent research, much new and important information is forthcoming about the early years of the Priory, publication of which must await completion of his work.

The Anglo-Saxon period

The earliest extant reference to the post-Roman town does not occur until the 10th century. The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* states that in 917 a great (English) host. . .from Kent, from Surrey, from Essex and from the nearest boroughs on all sides. . .went to Colchester and besieged the borough and attacked it until they took it and killed all the people and seized everything that was inside except the men who fled there over the wall. Later in the same year, the *Chronicle* relates that . . .King Edward went with the army of the West Saxons to Colchester and repaired and restored the borough where it had been broken (Whitelock 1965, 6%).

Despite the probably exaggerated account of the victory, it seems clear enough that Colchester was inhabited by a Danish or Danish-dominated settlement which was overcome and obliterated by the English and that those who managed to escape over the wall doubtless fled northwards into the safety of East Anglia. A close parallel in Essex is provided by Benfleet which according to the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle (sa* 893) was built by the Danes and stormed by the English who captured all that was within, both goods and women and also children and brought all to London (Whitelock 1965, 55). Although the place-name evidence for Scandinavian settlements in Essex is slight, it is nevertheless consistent with this view because the few examples of place-names which do indicate settlement of this nature are, almost without exception[1], distributed along the north Essex border (Reaney 1935, 564). The alternative, less likely possibility is that Colchester was used by the Danish army as a tactical strong point, as for example at Gloucester (Lobel & Tann 1969, 2) and the deserted Roman city of Chester *(A-S Chron sa* 893).

An etymological study of the personal names in Domesday for Colchester and of Colchester s known moneyers

operating in the period 979-1087 is presented below. The English element in these is predominant whereas the Scandinavian is low and no more significant than that of any other of the ethnic groups represented in the names. The names cannot be taken to throw light on the nature of the Danish presence in Colchester in the early 10th century especially since the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* states that the Danes were driven out, but they do at least underline that during late Saxon times in the area of Colchester, unlike parts of the Danelaw, the population was overwhelmingly English.

Colchester was certainly well established by *c* 931 for in that year Athelstan held a witenagemot there at which a large group of 50 members of the lay nobility was present. This meeting, it was written, took place in 'a town well known to all men'.[2]

A mint does not appear to have been set up in Colchester until the reign of Aethelred II, probably in the 990s. Colchester's exclusion from the group of 30 to 40 places known to have possessed a mint before Edgar's reform of the coinage in 973[3] is instructive as it implies how the 10th century town probably ranked in comparison with contemporary communities.

Origins of personal names of burgesses in Colchester Domesday and of moneyers operating in Colchester during the period 979-1087[4]

by Nina Crummy

Appendix 1 lists personal names of burgesses recorded in the Domesday Survey for Colchester and on coins minted in the town from 979 to 1087. The material has been divided into groups of common ethnic origin. For the Domesday personal names the form or forms used in the Survey are in the first column and in the third column is the standard Old English form of the name. In the case of the moneyers only the standard form is given, as abbreviations and spelling variants are too numerous to warrant recording here.

It should be recognized that the material from which the personal names in Appendix 1 have been collected can only present a marked imbalance as regards the name-giving traditions of Anglo-Saxon and early Norman England. Domesday Book as a whole gives little or no information on the names of what must have been the major segment of society at the time, in the rural areas the villeins, serfs, cottars, and bordars, and in the urban settlements the household servants, apprentices, and other workers. Consequently, as a bias must exist, it has been attempted here to produce as clear-cut a picture as possible of one distinct stratum of Colchester's society by omitting all names other than those of burgesses holding land and/or houses at the time of the Survey. The moneyers are a rarity *sui generis,* but a collection of their names can still serve to point out in which racial group the wealth of Colchester lay between the reigns of Ethelred II and William I; no clear idea of the number of individuals or name repetitions can be established, however.[5]

It should also be recognized that the etymological origin of a personal name is not necessarily an indication of the nationality of the bearer of that name. Emma of Normandy, wife to both Ethelred II and Cnut, took the name of Ælfgifu when she came to England.[6] Guthrum, the Danish king of East Anglia, took the name of Æðelstan at his baptism.[7] Morcar, earl of Northumbria, one of the grandsons of Leofric, earl of Mercia, bore an Old Swedish name, despite having no immediate kinship with either the native Scandinavian clement of Mercia, or with any later immigrants. The possibility of such vagaries in the collection of names used here should be borne in mind, but for the purposes of this survey it has been accepted that the origin of a name must remain the nearest reflection of its bearer's nationality.

The overwhelming majority of the Colchester burgesses and moneyers bore names of Old English origin: 87.5% of the burgesses and 97% of the moneyers. All six priests mentioned in Domesday had Old English names, as did all the women and the one local official, *Uluuin monitor,* the 'crier'. All but 20 of the 97 Old English personal names represented in Domesday and all but one of the 32 moneyers, giving 21 out of 109 names in all, are dithematic, that is, they are composed of two elements, such as Ædelbeorht and Leofflæd.[8] Of the remaining 21 most are bynames derived from Old English nouns and adjectives or are *-ing* derivatives.

The Scandinavian element in Colchester is represented by thirteen people in the Domesday Survey and one moneyer, giving percentages of 4.5 and 3 respectively. This is a surprisingly low figure when Colchester's contact with the Scandinavian incursors is considered. In 879 Guthrum retired to East Anglia with his army, and in the treaty of 886 between Alfred and Guthrum Colchester was placed firmly within the Danelaw, the southern boundary of which was the Thames as far west as its confluence with the Lea. In 917, two generations later, the Danes in the town were killed or forced to flee by an army of English (p 24) (Whitelock 1965, 65) and the borough resettled, probably at the instigation of Edward the Elder later in the same year. In 980 Viking raids on the English coast resumed, and by 1016 the monarchy was in the hands of the Danes. It is instructive to note that the name of the leader of the East Anglian army fighting against the invaders, Ulfkell Snilling, was Scandinavian; clearly elsewhere in the Danelaw area the 9th century immigrants were fully integrated with the local Anglo-Saxon population. Probable sources of Scandinavian personal names in Essex other than Danish settlement are migrations into the area by Scandinavians originally settled in other parts of the country; or Normans with Scandinavian rather than Germanic names settling in England throughout the 11th century, particularly during the reign of the Confessor; or mercenary Vikings taking employment, and thus probably retiring, in England: in the royal household, seventeen of Edward the Confessor's bodyguard of twenty housecarles had Scandinavian names (von Feilitzen 1937, 19).

Personal names of Old German origin, which category includes the majority of Norman personal names, account for 4.5% of the Domesday total and are absent from the moneyers. English intercourse with the Continental Germanic countries flourished throughout the 10th and 11th centuries and could be the source of many of the Germanic personal names. Through the marriages of his half-sisters, Athelstan, king of England 924-39, was connected to the king of the Franks, the king of Upper Burgundy, the emperor of Germany, a duke of the Franks, and an unnamed duke from a region near the Alps. The early 10th century movement for monastic reform on Benedictine lines gave rise to many opportunities for travel between English and continental monastic houses. Germans were promoted to high office under Cnut, who was the father-in-law of Henry III, emperor of Germany, and also by Harold I, who attempted by doing so to counterbalance the power of the Normans who had wielded much influence during Edward the Confessor's reign. The Conquest, seen against this background of a continuous influx of Germans and Normans, would possibly etymologically not have had much impact among social classes other than the

tenants-in-chief; among those listed as burgesses in Colchester at the time of the Domesday Survey we find that RaduLf, surnamed Pinel, was tenant-in-chief at Great Bromley in the Tendring Hundred (Farley & Ellis 1783, f97) and that Willelmus, surnamed Peccatus, was a Norman under-tenant holding lands at Gestingthorpe and Belchamp Walter in Essex *(op cit,* ff 39 & 77).

The ten names which fall into none of the three preceding categories have been put together as a group of their own; this group can be divided into three. Of the ten names one is Celtic and one Old Welsh, their presence here probably being due to the constant trickle of migrants from one area of the country to another that has occurred throughout the centuries. Two names, *Herdedun* and *Horrap,* are obscure and must remain so in this survey. The remaining six are either French or possibly Norman, though the two credited as Norman are done so on doubtful authority; they are, however, almost certainly continental. The presence of these names could be accounted for by the same intercourse with the continent that possibly gave rise to the majority of the Germanic names, or' by the Conquest. Of these six one, Dimidius Blancus, was a Norman under-tenant at White Colne and at Radwinter in Essex (Farley & Ellis 1783, ff 77 & 78).

The main question behind this survey is whether or not there was a noticeably large Scandinavian element in Colchester's population. To conclude in answer to this, it appears that the town, despite its inclusion in the Danelaw in the last quarter of the 9th century, maintained an essentially Anglo-Saxon population at the time of the Domesday Survey and among its wealthiest citizens from 979 to 1087. Even assuming that each name repetition referred to the same individual, Old English personal names in Domesday total 95 against 34 spread throughout all other national groups. ■

Eudo Dapifer and the construction of Colchester Castle

The date of Colchester Castle is of considerable importance to our understanding of the early medieval pottery series of the town since the documentation relating to this site enables excavated material, notably that from the 1950 excavation of the castle bank (see Chapter 3), to be dated. Although much has been written on the subject, there are several problems relating to the date of the construction of the castle and, although no claim for definitive conclusions can be made here, a summary and review of the most relevant written evidence seems worthwhile. The sources which have the greatest importance in this respect are the 1101 charter of Henry I to Eudo Dapifer, the 'Colchester Chronicle', and the four accounts of the foundation and early history of St John's Abbey.[9] These are dealt with in turn below.

(i) The 1101 charter of Henry 1 to Eudo Dapifer

In the charter of 1101, Henry granted to Eudo Dapifer the town of Colchester and the *'turrim'* and *'castllum* and 'all the rents of the town with everything that appertains to it as my father and brother and I have held it'. A significant distinction is made here between *'turrim'* and *'castellum',* referring no doubt to the keep and the surrounding enclosure. The relevant part reads *'Sciatis me dedisse benigne et ad amorem concessisse Eudoni dapifero meo civitatem de Colecestria et turrim et castellum et omnes ejusdem civitatis firmitates cum omnibus que ad illam pertinent sicut pater meus et frater et ego earn melius habuimus unquam' (Cart St J A,* **1,** 27; BL Harleian MS 312, f 92). The charter implies that both keep and bailey were in existence by 1101 although not necessarily in the time of William the Conqueror as has been inferred elsewhere (Renn 1968, 154).10 It is also important to note that this charter represents an original gift, not a confirmation of a previous grant by William I or William II.

There is also a supposed charter of 1091 which is in reality a copy of the 1101 document (Colvin *et al* 1963, 31n). There are two published transcriptions of this manuscript (Round 1882, 29; Jenkins 1860, 5), which differ from one another although an amalgam of both matches the 1101 charter fairly closely. The key phrase is *'pater meus et frater et ego . . . habuimus',* clearly ruling out the possibility that ego could refer to William II rather than Henry I.[11]

(ii) The 'Colchester Chronicle'

There are three versions known to us of the Colchester Chronicle, one[12] written in a 14th century hand in the *Colchester Oath* Book (27-8), another in Gough, Essex, ff 19-21v datable to 1526 (p 00), and a third somewhat debased version copied in or after 1741 (Cromwell 1825, 419-2.5).':' The Chronicle can be divided into two parts, the first consisting of 23 entries dated from AD 219 to 330 inclusive and the second of seven entries dated from AD 1071 to 1239.[14] The first part deals with Coel, Helena and Constantine I with special reference to their supposed links with Colchester (Cockerill & Woodward 1973). The second section is of greater interest since, although corrupt, it appears to contain factual elements. This part reads as follows:[15]

1145	A certain monk of St Edmund's, called John, a Roman, carried the head of St Helen from Rome to the monastery of Bury St Edmunds.
1175	The castle of Colchester, with 1115 other castles of England, was almost destroyed.
1071	Colchester, after the wives of the citizens had been carried off *(raptis),* was burnt by Danish pirates.
1072	King William the Conqueror, on account of this, granted *(tradidit)* Colchester to Eudo Dapifer.
1076	Eudo Dapifer built the castle of Colchester on the foundation of the palace of Coel, once King, and restored the chapel of St Helen which she built herself, it is said, and gave it to St John *(et Sancto Johanni contradidit).*
1239	The said chapel was dedicated on St Katherine's day in honour of St Katherine and St Helen, by Roger, Bishop of London, in the presence of William, Abbot of St John.
1089	King William the Younger gave to [Eudo][16] the town of Colchester with the castle, to possess in perpetuity *et cetera.*

St Helena was buried three miles outside Rome. Her sarcophagus was removed in 1153 but the urn in which her body lay was undisturbed until 1672 (Cary & Scullard 1975, 539; Cockerill & Woodward 1973). It appears unlikely therefore that her head was taken to Bury St Edmunds, although because of the considerable traffic in religious relics, genuine or otherwise, we cannot assume that there is no historical basis for this entry in the chronicle.

The rebellion of the barons in 1173-4 led to Henry II destroying some baronial castles and the 1175 entry clearly relates to these events although the number involved is wildly exaggerated. About 500 castles including mottes are known to have existed in England at this time (Renn 1968, 350-9). Colchester, being a royal castle, was not in any real danger of destruction and in the event the number of castles believed to have been demolished is less than ten (Renn 1968; *Gesta Henrici Secundi,* **1,** 126-7).

In 1069 a large Danish fleet was responsible for raids against Dover, Sandwich, Ipswich, and Norwich, and therefore may well have attacked Colchester and provided the basis for the entry under 1071. The raids on the other towns were beaten back (Stenton 1971, 603) so that the effect of such a Danish assault on Colchester, if it did take place, may be overstated.

The remaining four entries cannot be faulted on the grounds of dates since these are consistent with the reigns of Williams I and II and the periods of Office of Roger Niger (or Le Mer), Bishop of London from 1229 to 1241 (Hennessy 1898, 2) and William de Wanda, Abbot of St John's from 1237 to 1245 (Morant 1748, **2,** 37-8). Moreover, that Eudo did give the tithes of St Helen's to the abbey is made clear in a charter *(Cart St J A,* **3).**

The most striking information recorded in the chronicle is that St Helen's Chapel is supposedly of Roman origin and that the castle was built on the foundations of the palace of King Coel. In Chapter 5 attention will be drawn to a number of post-Roman buildings which appear to relate to Roman structures, among which are St Helen's Chapel and the castle keep. The base of the northern wall of the former is Roman and bears out the point made in the chronicle. Throughout the 19th century, a succession of views was expressed about whether the castle was in its entirety Norman, Roman or Saxon (eg Jenkins 1869; Cutts 1853; Buckler 1876) and it was not until 1919 that Wheeler and Laver (1919, 146-7) first expounded the theory, now universally accepted, that the castle was built over the podium of a Roman temple.17 Thus, after the lapse of many centuries since the chronicle was written, the reference to the castle being built on King Coel's palace, previously dismissed as fanciful folklore,[18] was shown to be extraordinarily close to the truth. The original identification of the remains of the Temple of Claudius as the palace of King Coel is an error which can hardly detract from the value of the entry as a whole. The association under the same entry of the castle and St Helen's Chapel is also significant as the close ties between them are clearly demonstrated in a series of 12th century charters (Round 1887, 7-10).

In the second part of the Chronicle, a section of narrative can be detected starting with '1071 Colchester, after . . .' and finishing with '. . . Abbot of St John'.[19] Its presence is hinted at by the occurrence of 'on account of this' in the 1072 entry and 'the said chapel' *(que capella)* in the 1239 entry, both of which suggest links with their preceding respective entries. The narrative is further indicated by the mention under 1076 of Eudo's gift of St Helen's Chapel to St John's, an event which could not have taken place before the abbey's foundation twenty or so years later. The fact that St John's Abbey is twice referred to simply as 'St John' without further qualification (under 1076 and 1239) would suggest that the narrative and presumably the rest of the chronicle were written in the abbey itself and, from other factors mentioned above, are to be dated if not to 1239 on the occasion of the rededication of St Helen's then between this time and the early 14th century when the *Oath Book* copy was made.[20]

(iii) The accounts of the foundation and early history of St John's Abbey

There are four key texts relating to the early years of St John's Abbey, of which two contain material concerning the relationship between Eudo, Colchester, and the castle; one of these is in the British Library, Cotton MS Nero D viii, ff 22-5. The former has been printed in transcript and translation (Astley 1903) and the latter in translation only (Rickword 1923). (Hereafter these will be referred to as 'Nero' and 'Gough' respectively.)

The Nero manuscript is well known, its credibility having been in the past the subject of considerable and sometimes bitter debate. Dr J H Round's opinion of the manuscript was characteristically derisive (Round 1922) but Mr W Rye claimed that 'there is no Monastic Chronicle in existence which is so well substantiated by extraneous evidence as this one' (Rye 1922, 12; see also Rye 1921).

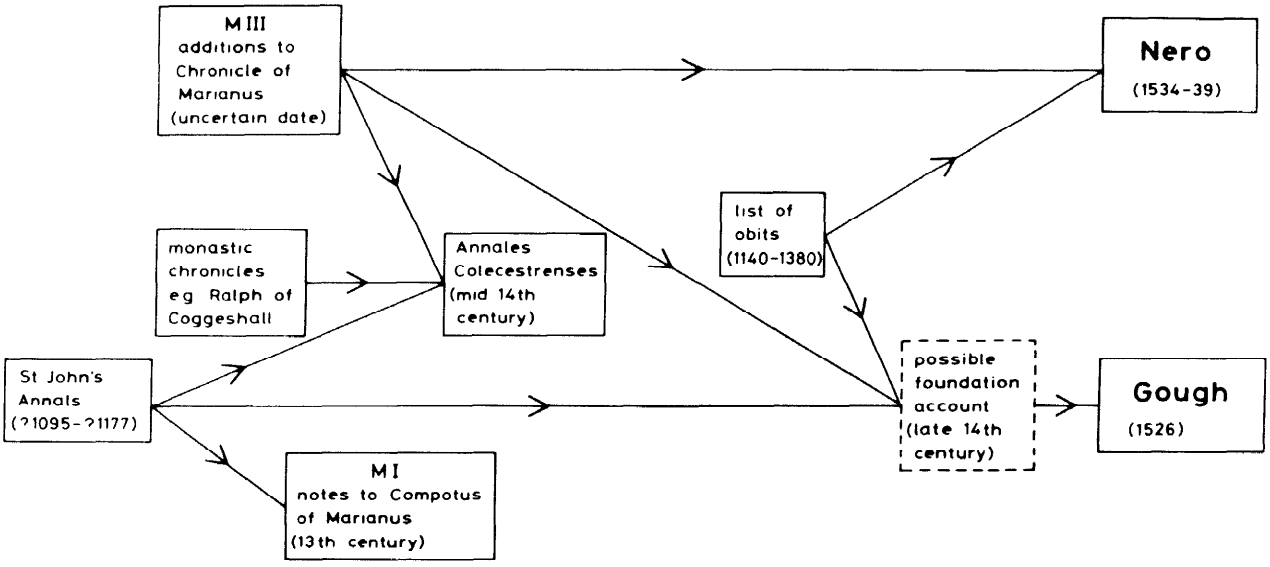


Fig 28 Derivation of the 'Gough' and Nero' accounts of the foundation of. St John's Abbey

The truth seems to lie somewhere in between for not only have recent excavations in St John's Abbey grounds corroborated certain points in the text (see Chapter 4) but also there are three other accounts with which Nero shares a limited but not complete correspondence and of which both Rye and Round were unaware. The relationships between the four texts are discussed below and illustrated in Figure 28.

The castle is not mentioned in the Nero account but the first and third sentences are of particular value to this present study. 'King William the Younger gave the town of Colchester with its appurtenances into the care of Eudo, who was the royal major-domo . . . . Moreover, Eudo had received this honour from William the Elder in recognition of his own and his father's devotion to the royal family'. The Gough text is much shorter but Eudo's association with the castle is explicit. The relevant part reads 'Now, when Eudo had obtained the custody of Colchester castle, with all that belonged to it. . . .' (Rickword 1923, 123).

An analysis of the chronicle accounts of the foundation and early history of St John's Abbey

by Dr D Stephenson

As well as the Nero and Gough texts already mentioned, there are two other important accounts of the early history of St John's, the first of which is in BL Harleian MS 1132, printed by F Liebermann as *Annales Colecestrenses* in *Ungedruckte Anglo-Normannische Geschichtsquellen,* Strasbourg 1879, pp 158-65, and the second in Trinity College Cambridge MS 0.7.41. The accounts contained in these last two texts, and in Gough, can be reconciled without much difficulty, whereas the version given by Nero is significantly different at many points. It is thus important to establish as far as possible the nature of the sources upon which the various texts are based. To this end, it is helpful first to compare Nero with Gough: the former is by far the longest account of the circumstances attending the foundation of the abbey, whilst Gough contains the most detailed chronological references.

Both Nero and Gough are written in hands of the 16th century, and there is internal evidence that Gough was compiled in 1526 and Nero about a decade later.[21] Nero is much the longer text, containing much detail of the political activities of Eudo de Rie, the abbey's founder, and his family,[22] a topic completely ignored by Gough. Nero also contains far more rhetorical material than does Gough, suggesting the accretion of superfluous matter.

The two texts do, however, have several common characteristics. Each is associated with a list of the abbots of St John's, giving the number of years during which each occupied the abbacy. In the case of Gough, the account of the foundation is constructed so as to introduce the list of obits of abbots which contains the details of length of tenure. The Gough list only runs up to William Gritton *(ob* 1380), after whose entry the scribe deliberately closes his list. This suggests that his source was a document produced shortly after 1380. It is possible that the list of obits was already, at that date, appended to the account of the foundation preserved by Gough, so that the whole of Gough's text may derive from a document of the late 14th century. If, on the other hand, the fusion of the two was the work of Gough's compiler, the date of his source for the foundation account cannot be fixed. That the source for the story of the foundation was of late 14th century date is suggested by a note, possibly in a hand of the early 15th century, in the St John's leger book (in the custody of Colchester & Essex Museum), f 304v, that *perfecta est fabrica ecclesie monasterii sancti Johannis anno domini m° cxv°a fundacione xxj° regni regis henrici senioris xvj° iiii^to idus Februarii.* This is clearly copied from the text which Gough's compiler transcribed as: *perfecta est autem tocius ecclesie predicte felici consummacione fabrica et dedicata anno domini m° cxv, a fundacione xxi regni regis henrici senioris xvi iiii^to idus Februarii.*

The late 14th century obits list seems to have been used by the scribe of Nero, for though his list of abbots, in the form of a series of marginal entries placed next to the story of the foundation, continues down to the last abbot, Thomas Marshall *(ob* 1539), the period of tenure of each incumbent is only regularly attempted as far as William Gritton; most subsequent entries give only the name of each abbot.

Further evidence of common source material behind both Gough and Nero is provided by the fact that for some six or seven sentences, forming much of Gough's account of the first five years of the abbey, and parts of the central sections of Nero (ff 345v-346), the two texts are virtually identical in their phraseology. In the case of Gough, the compiler seems here to have been summarizing Nero's source, selecting what seemed reasonable or what he could verify. Nero, on this reading, probably preserves a much fuller and less critical transcript of the source.

It is clear, however, that Gough is not merely a selective copy of Nero or Nero's source, for, though shorter, it does contain significant detail not to be found in Nero. There are, moreover, important divergences of fact and emphasis between the two accounts. On the whole, the Nero text seems to contain more obvious errors:"' the scribe of Gough was careful."' But the most startling divergence takes the form of two quite different accounts of the reason for the transfer of workshops from the north side of the abbey to the south. This is so substantial as to defy explanation in terms of mistranscription. After recording the consecration of Hugh, the first abbot, *c* 1104 (cf Gough's date of 1102), Nero continues (f 346):

> *Cum igitur essent officine et habitacula fratrum sitae a parte aquilonali ecclesie pertesus idem abbas clamoris et tumultus urbici decrevit in partem australem transfere totam habitationem.*

Gough's version is not included in that text's account of the foundation, but appears as an entry in the list of obits of abbots. The first two entries in this list in fact record the deaths of Eudo de Rie and his wife. The third is as follows (f 24):

Anno domini m° cxxxiii	*Combustum est monasterium hoc et fere tota Colecestr' et omnes officine que a parte aquilonali sub muro ville prim0 fuerunt in partem australem huius ecclesie translate sunt.*

It is possible that both texts again share a common source here: the use by both of *officine* and the phrases *a parte aquilonali* and *in partem australem* is interesting. But the common ground only extends to the fact of removal from north to south: the reasons for the move, and its dating, are utterly different.

A clue as to which version is to be preferred is provided by the chronological framework of the two accounts. Nero is remarkably vague and in places careless in the matter of dates: 25 the carelessness may be the fault of the scribe of Nero, but the vagueness is surely to be attributed to the main text from which he was copying, which is said in a rubric to be 'Marianus, in the third book'. This is certainly to be regarded as some local addition to the chronicle of Marianus Scotus *(ob* 1082). In contrast to Nero and his source, Gough is both accurate and detailed in the matter of dates.[26] The most obvious deduction to be made from Gough's regular insertions of dates into his narrative is that he or his source used a set of monastic annals not available to, or not used by, Nero. The Gough story of the

moving of the workshops, which, significantly, is dated and given in the form of an annalistic entry, may thus have stemmed largely from such annals, whilst the Nero story, which is chronologically vague, may represent a literary explanation of the bare fact of transfer.

These conclusions are buttressed by consideration of the *Annales Colecestrenses* and of the marginal entries in the *compotus* of Marianus which forms part of Trinity College Cambridge MS 0.7.41. The *Annales Colecestrenses* (henceforth *AC)* are a curious compilation: there seem to be at least three main categories of source material from which they are formed. Their earlier sections (pre 1095) and some of the subsequent entries are derived from well-known chroniclers such as Ralph Diceto, Ralph of Coggeshall, and William of Malmesbury. The entries from 1095 to the 1170s contain much material relating to St John s Abbey; the entry relating to the death of Eudo in 1120 and his burial in St John s incorporates a long description of the resiting of his tomb within the abbey in 1320.[27] From the 1170s until the annals break off in 1193 the bulk of the entries relate to religious houses in Suffolk, Snape (a cell of St John s), Butley, and Leiston all being represented.

The conclusion to which these facts lead is that *AC* were drawn up in their final form in the 14th century, by someone with a particular interest in Suffolk or with access to sources relating to late 12th century and possibly subsequent religious developments in that county. For the earlier sections, however, the compiler drew on established chroniclers, on the source of Nero,[28] and on a set of annals, or a derivative thereof, relating to St John s. These St John s annals would seem to have terminated in the late 12th century.

Now, *AC* were probably not one of the sources of Gough: for the most part they do not employ the same phraseology, and at one point the two texts differ on a matter of fact, for *AC* have Gilbert, the second abbot, succeeding in 1117, where Gough has 1116. Again, Gough includes more dates, while *AC* have a longer and more literary version of Eudo s early problems with the monks of Rochester and his successful appeal for help to abbot Stephen of York. Yet *AC* and Gough are clearly related. At a few points the phraseology of the two is virtually identical, while being different from that of Nero. Thus, both accounts describe 1095 as about the eighth year of King William the Younger, while both have a *very* similar version of the ceremony of laying the first stones of the abbey in 1096. This makes it probable that there was at least one common source, apart from Nero, for *AC* and Gough. The probability is strengthened by the fact that *AC* and Gough are repeatedly in close agreement on dates. For example, both give 1095 as the year when the ground for the abbey was measured out, and both have 1115 as the date of dedication of the abbey. Most important, *AC* contain a version of the transfer of the abbey workshops from north to south, which is very close to that in Gough. It runs as follows:

1133 *Ecclesia Sancti Johannis Baptiste Colecestrensis cum omnibus officinis suis simul et cum magna parte eiusdem ville incensa est; quam abbas Gilbertus primus reedificavit et officinas a parte australi ipsius ecclesie posuit que tamen primo a parte aquilonali fuerunt.*

It is worth noting that *AC* have no reference to the workshops being *sub muro ville,* so that this phrase in Gough may represent an embellishment not warranted by the source.

The case for the existence of 12th century annals, compiled in St John s, which acted as a major source for both *AC* and Gough, becomes stronger in the light of the evidence of the Trinity College Cambridge manuscript of the *compotus* of Marianus. This is not the Marianus text referred to in the rubricated heading to Nero, which runs as follows: *Marianus Libro Tercio De Monasterio Colecestretsi et eius fundatore.*

Instead, the Trinity College manuscript appears to consist of the first and second books,[29] that is firstly the *compotus,* consisting of a kalendar, Easter tables, and tables of moveable feasts, and secondly the tract *De concordia Evangelistarum.* We are here concerned with the first book, which will be designated MI, a text in an 11th century hand, compiled, from internal evidence, in 1086.[30] Marginal entries next to the Easter tables are of the 13th century, and take the form of brief chronicle entries relating mainly to St John s. They are too brief to be the basis of Gough or *AC,* but again they are related to those texts, as the following examples show. In each case, the year has been computed from the position of the entry next to the Easter table:

1096	*Ceptum opus Colec'*
1115	*Dedicatio*
1120	*Obit Eudo*
1121	*Obit Roahis*
1132	*Ecclesia nostra incensa*
1155	*Ecclesia de Snapis fundata*

The first four references correspond to entries in both Gough and *AC,* the fifth corresponds within a year to Gough and *AC,* and the sixth corresponds to an entry in *AC,* being beyond the scope of Gough.[31] Only the obits correspond to Nero. It is particularly significant that the marginal entries end with a reference to the dedication of St Botolph s Priory in 1177, which ties in very closely with the date at which Colchester entries in *AC* fade out to be replaced by material relating to Suffolk. This allows us to assign a tentative chronological span of 1095-*c* 1177 to the St John s annals which lie behind Gough, *AC,* and MI.

We are now in a position to consider the central problem of the disparity between the Nero account on the one hand and the family of texts, MI, *AC,* and Gough, derived from the 12th century St John s annals. The source of Nero was clearly an addition to the chronicle of Marianus (the third book of the rubric, and so designated MIII) which was undoubtedly part of the abbey s library. The addition must have been made before the mid 14th century, as it was known to the compiler of *AC.* Given that the addition to MIII was probably made in St John s, the question arises of how it was possible for MIII to contain an account of the early history of the abbey in which crucial details were far removed from those in all of the other texts associated with the house. It may be that the answer lies in a reassessment of the purpose of the archetype of Nero, whose principal aim seems to have been to glorify Eudo de Rie, his family, and his wife rather than to tell the story of St John s. The foundation and early history is an important part, but only a part, of what is essentially a family history covering the period from just before the Norman Conquest to the death of Rohaisa in 1121.

It may be, indeed, that the archetype of Nero was not written in the abbey at all, the abbey s text in MIII being a copy. This is suggested by the description in Nero of Colchester as a town *in orientali parte Britanniae posita:* this sounds as though it had been written by someone familiar with Colchester, but for an audience beyond the town. If the compiler of the archetype did not have the St John s documentation at his disposal, we can account for the vagueness and apparent inaccuracy of his work and for the divergences between Nero and the texts derived from the St John s annals.

The detailed testimony of Nero/MIII regarding the abbey s history is thus discredited, and even where an otherwise reliable source such as *AC* or Gough repeats material derived from MIII it is to be regarded as suspect. In the present context the most important case in point is the description in *AC,* following that in MIII, of the wooden construction of the early church which stood on the site of St John s.[32]

In conclusion, the following salient points of the early building history of the abbey would seem to be well established by reference to the chronicle materials derived from 12th century St John s annals:

(1) the measuring and planning of the ground in 1095;

(2) the start of building in 1096;

(3) the completion and dedication in 1115;

(4) a fire affecting both town and abbey in 1133, necessitating the removal of the abbey workshops from the north to the south side of the abbey. ■

Discussion

A key problem is to reconcile the 1101 charter of Henry I, which was an *initial* grant to Eudo of the castle and town, with the statements in the Colchester Chronicle and Nero and Gough to the effect that both William I and William II entrusted Colchester to Eudo before this date. That Eudo had connections with Colchester before 1101 is without doubt. The Domesday Survey records that in 1086 Eudo held five houses and forty acres of land here and Gough and *AC* both state that he founded St John s Abbey in 1095. In addition, there is a charter relating to Eudo and St John s Abbey which was issued by William Rufus and consequently makes it clear that the monastery was founded by Eudo before 1100 *(Cart St j A,* 1, 18). The statement in the Colchester Chronicle that Colchester Castle was built on the foundations of King Coel s palace is so extraordinarily close to the truth that the early medieval section of the Chronicle must contain factual elements, albeit very distorted. We can assume that Eudo in his capacity as steward to both William the Conqueror and William Rufus was charged by them to safeguard their royal interests in Colchester and to direct the construction of the castle on the king s behalf.

It has been asked How can it (the castle) have been founded by Eudo, a private baron? and how . . . could a private baron of Eudo s status afford to build so great a fortress? (Colvin *et al* 1963, 3 In). We have seen that until 1101 the town was a royal borough and that therefore Eudo s role in the construction of the castle would have been as king s steward. That the castle is not mentioned in Domesday underlines that at this time it was owned by the king and not Eudo. After 1101, however, under the terms of Henry s charter, the castle would have been baronial rather than royal until Eudo s death in 1120 (p 29) when both castle and town reverted to the crown (Round 1887, 35). In other words, Eudo had the custody of the castle and town until 1101, after which this relationship extended to possession.

In conclusion we can suggest that the written evidence relating to Eudo and the castle is broadly consistent and that the section of the Colchester Chronicle concerned with the medieval period is not as untrustworthy as hitherto supposed. The statement in the latter to the effect that Eudo built the castle in 1076 should be regarded as probably having a sound basis and refers to when building work began. The date recorded in the Colchester Chronicle of the Danish attack on the town would appear to be accurate to within two years and since this event occurred not long before 1076, the latter date may be fairly realistic too. Indeed there is a suspicion that the dates may all be about two years too late, ie for 1071 read 1069, for 1089 read 1087,[33] and for 1175 read 1173, so that the castle may have been founded *c* 1074.

The keep was raised in two stages, the work being interrupted at first floor level for temporary crenellations (RCHM 1922, 51). This break has been linked with the threat of invasion by Cnut of Denmark in 1086-7 and taken to imply that work started on the keep in the early 1080s (Renn 1968, 34-5). However, such a date would now seem to imply a perhaps excessive period of ten years or so before the keep had been built to first floor level. An alternative explanation for the temporary crenellations is the Danish fleet of some 200 warships which late in 1075 sailed belatedly to support the English rebellion headed by Ralph, Earl of Norfolk, and Roger, Earl of 1 Hereford. William took the Danish threat seriously with the result that Durham and probably all other English castles were garrisoned against it (Stenton 1971,611). A date as early as c 1074 for the start of the building works would still be in keeping with the White Tower dated *c* 1078 (Renn 1968, 32 1) with which Colchester keep has strong architectural affinities (Appendix 4).[34] The relationship of the keep to the surrounding buildings and defences is discussed below (P 32).

Notes

1 Place-names in Essex with Scandinavian elements are: Arkesden (?) TL 483345; Audley TL 525380 and TL 813376; Clacton (?) TM 177145; Frowick (?) TM 122183; Goulands, Eastwood Parish, now part of suburbs of Southend-on-Sea; Kirby TM 220221; *Oskethey,* now lost, in Halstead rural area; Skighaugh, Great Oakley parish; Thorpe-le-Soken (?) TM 180223; Thorrington TM 097200. Information taken from Reancy 1935, 564. See also Loyn 1977, 119.

2 *in villa omnibus notissima quae Colnceaster nuncupatur'* (Kemble 1839).

3 Dolley & Metcalf 1961. I am grateful to Mr S E Rigold for his guidance in this matter.

4 I am grateful to Professor Kenneth Cameron for reading both this text and the tables in Appendix 1 and for his kind and helpful comments.

5 Moneyers names extracted from Turner 1945, 14-9.

6 namely Ælfgifu in English, Emma in French (Whitelock 1965, 97, n 11).

7 And the northern king, Guthrum, whose baptismal name was Athelstan, died (Whitclock 1965, 53).

8 For observations on late Old English name-giving see von Feilitzen 1937, 31-2 and Redin 1919, 187 ff..

9 In Dugdale s *Monasticon,* in a medieval genealogy of the founder of Tintern Abbey, Eudo was said to nave been the builder of Colchester Castle *(Monasticon* 1, 724). However, since this information is given incidentally, it cannot be assumed to carry much authority.

10 This is because *eam* and *illam* depend on *civitatem de Colecestria.* I am grateful to Dr D E Greenway for her help in this matter.

11 Round s transcript omits an entire sixteen-word section of the charter beginning after the words *fruter et* ego, so that he may not have considered this crucial point fully. Round later conceded that the manuscript was a copy of the 1101 charter (Colvin *et al* 1963, 31n).

12 Originally this was at the beginning of the *Oath Book* (cf Morant 1748, 1, 28n) but, because the latter has

been rebound (information from Dr R Britnell), it is now folio 20.

13 This consists of extracts from the Chronicle with extracts from 17th century histories of Britain.

14 Excluding the curious entry of 1244 in the 1741 version.

15 As in the *Oath* Book version. The Gough version is the same but the entries have been rearranged into chronological order. I am grateful to Dr D Stephenson for this information.

16 Obscure and damaged in the *Oath Book* but *Eudoni* in Gough.

17 A year later Wheeler put forward the idea that these remains belonged to the Temple of Claudius (Wheeler 1920).

18 Morant (1748, 1, 8) accepted the chronicle at its face value.

19 Perhaps subdivided into two sections under 1071 and 1076.

20 That this was a copy is clear from the curious order in which the entries are placed. The Gough version runs 1071, 1072, 1076 (with 1239 included), 1089, 1145, and 1175 and is therefore presumably a faithful copy of the original. Perhaps the writer of the *Oath Book* version copied out the 1145 entry after the 330 one since this appeared to him to be more relevant than the others to the legend of Coel, etc. Presumably he then continued by mistake with the 1175 entry since this was the next item and completed the work by copying out the remaining entries in order.

21 Nero s list of abbots includes the name of the last incumbent, Thomas Marshall, but does not give the length of his tenure of the abbey, whereas the lengths of tenure of the previous two abbots are given: this suggests that the text of Nero, in its final form, was compiled during Marshall s abbacy, 1534-9, though much of it was copied from earlier sources. In the case of Gough, the tractate on chronology which immediately precedes the account of the foundation, and which is in the same hand as that account, contains the information that *ab anno Nativitatis Domini ad annum quo nunc sumus fluxerunt anni* m^0 *ccccc xxvi.*

22 It is noteworthy that these details, which are almost certainly worthless, grossly exaggerate the political importance of Eudo and his father, Hubert.

23 As well as the whole unlikely story of the political exploits of Hubert and Eudo de Rie, see Nero s date of 1906 *(sic)* for the foundation of the abbey (f 345v). Again, Nero has Caen, rather than Rouen, as the place of William the Conqueror s death. Finally, the periods of tenure of the abbots are frequently given wrongly in Nero, in such a way as to suggest careless transcription or computation. Thus, the period of tenure of Gilbert de Wicham, the fifth abbot, is given as eighteen years, whereas Gough has ten; the source of the discrepancy is possibly a statement in the parent text, reflected in Gough s transcript, that Gilbert died in 1168 (MCLXVIII) from which Nero may have carelessly taken the last element XVIII. Again, Nero ascribes to Osbert, the seventh abbot, a tenure of seventeen rather than ten years; but here Nero s scribe has allowed his eye to wander and has repeated the figure of seventeen years given for Osbert s predecessor. The whole question of the tenure of the early abbots is complex and requires more detailed treatment than can be given here, but it is worth pointing out that Nero s list is not even internally consistent. Even without counting anything for the first abbot, the accumulated periods of tenure given in Nero total 297 years up to the death of William Gritton in 1380: this would place the start of the abbacy of the second abbot in 1083, which is ludicrously early.

24 Gough makes two errors. In the first, abbot Osbert s death is given as *anno m° cxiiii,* which should presumably read *m° cxciii.* The more serious error is in the introduction to the account of the foundation, where it is stated (f 22) that Eudo *decrevit in aquilonali parte Civitatis extruere monasterium.* It looks as if Gough, or the compiler whose work is reflected by Gough, intent on summarizing a complex parent text, has completely misunderstood it: the source of the error may be the sentence copied by Nero, describing the site of Siricus s church: *Juxta hanc civitatem erat a parte monticulus australi in cuius aquilonali declivo habebat Siricus presbiter habitationem et ecclesiam . . .* (f 345v).

25 Of the three dates given by Nero, one (1906 for the foundation) is wrong, and one *(c* 1104 for the consecration of Hugh) seems wrong and is notably vague.

26 Gough s compiler seems to have been interested in chronology: immediately before his account of the foundation he inserted a short tractate on that subject.

27 The *AC* entry for 1120 reads as follows:
Obiit Eudo dapifer, fundator abbacie sancti Johannis Colecestrensis, mense Februario in Normannia qui in cupitulo Sancti Johnnis Colecestrie tumulatur.

Et ibidem per 200 annos, videlicet usque ad annum Domini 1320 requievit. Sed mox per abbatem Walter-urn II et conventum predicti loci de licencia magistri Stephani de Graveshende tune episcopi Londoniensis a dicto capitulo in novum presbiteriarum 14 kal Marcii ob eius reverenciam et plurimorum devocionem transferebatur.

The use in the initial entry of the present tense, *tumulatur,* is notable: the original of this was written before 1320. Cf the entry for 1120 in Gough:
Obiit Eudo huius Ecclesie fundator in Normandia XIIII kal Marcii sed inde translatus hit tumulatur anno adventus eius eius (sic) *cum conquestore in Anglia LV.*

The similarity of the wording is so striking that Gough must be derived from the text on which the initial entry in *AC* was based.

28 Like the compiler of Gough s original, the compiler of *AC* seems to have known of Nero s parent text and used it selectively, as in the case of the description of the wooden construction of the church of St John which preceded the abbey on the latter s site. Gough has no reference to this, and presumably rejected it.

29 On folio one, in a 17th century hand, is the note: *Compotus Mariani et ejusdem de concordia Evangelistarum Liber uterque seruatur in Bibl: Lambethana anno D: 1693: in chronico Mariani; folio.*

30 *See* f *23, quot vero anni usque in presentem annum millesimum videlicet lxxxvi incarn. iuxta dionisium.* This is of interest as it makes it probable that this manuscript was one of the texts brought down from York by the thirteen monks sent to Eudo by abbot Stephen. *AC* in the long entry headed 1095 say that the thirteen came *cum nonnullis codicibus aliisque divino cultui necessariis.*

31 The wording of all of these entries is strikingly similar to phraseology employed by *AC.* See, for example, the use of *ecclesia . . . incensa* in both texts for the fire

of 1133, where Gough, taking a more independent line, has *combustum . . . monasterium*. It would seem that in these entries in MI and the corresponding ones in *AC,* we are close to the actual wording of the 12th century annals.

32 *Annales Colecestrenses* have the description of *quedam sub beati Johannis Evangeliste memoria capellula consecrata . . . tabulata ligneo ab antiquis compacta temporibus,* following the text copied by Nero as *ecclesiam ligneo tabulatu compactam sancto Johanni Evangeliste devotam* (f *345v).*

33 On the assumption that William II was not slow to confirm his father s grant of Colchester to Eudo.

34 It is possible that the inserted southern doorway of Colchester keep could be contemporary with the 2nd phase of the keep (ie from the first-floor crenellations upwards) since its portcullis appears to be an integral part of the second floor wall. In this case, the inserted door would provide a *terminus ante quem* of c 1100 for the building of the crenellations (see Appendix 4), a date which would tend to favour Renn s hypothesis and mitigate against the earlier 1075 date (because the latter implies a longer period before rebuilding started). However, in either case, a starting date of *c* 1074 is not ruled out since, after all, the keep was the largest of its kind and could conceivably have taken ten years or so to reach first floor level. The buildings in the bailey (p 67-9), including the chapel, presumably belong to the period before the keep was completed, a process which could have taken until after 1100.

Chapter 3

The ceramic evidence: 10th to 12th centuries

Summary

Substantial quantites of stratified Saxo-Norman pottery were found during the excavations at the Cups Hotel and Lion Walk sites in 1973-4 and 1972 respectively. These in conjunction with the pottery from the Castle bank excavation of 1950 have enabled a simple typology of 11th and 12th century pottery to be outlined.

The principal aim of this chapter is to establish a provisional typology of late Anglo-Saxon and Norman pottery from Colchester. Few structures of this date have been excavated and a description of the principal one of these, the stone house at Lion Walk, is given in Chapter 6. The discoveries made in 1971-6 in the grounds of St John s Abbey are described in Chapter 4. The material discussed below is not exhaustive since this is unnecessary for present purposes. In particular, a description of the finds from the extensive sequence of Norman pits and robber trenches found during the Lion Walk excavations has been postponed until the main excavation report.

The pottery has been classified under the following headings: Thetford-type ware, early sandy wares, and shelly wares. Descriptions of the illustrated sherds are given in Appendix 6. The group of sandy types is equivalent to Dunning s Early Medieval ware (Dunning *et al* 1960,48) datable from c 1000 (Hurst 1976, 342) and overlaps with Hurst s Developed Early Medieval class of pottery (Hurst 1962, 261-3). The shelly wares are similar in fabric to the early sandy wares except that crushed shell is present either throughout the whole cross-section or on the outer surface and occasionally the inner lip of the rim. Thetford-type ware body sherds can be difficult to distinguish from some Roman fabrics unless they have the characteristic external furrowing. Thetford-type ware tends to be harder and less abraded than similar Roman pottery and exhibits slight undulations and imperfections absent in the more regularly made Roman vessels. The rims of some Thetford-type ware cooking pots are very close in profile to variants of CAM 277A (Hull 1958, 284-5) and some late Roman shelly sherds look and feel like late Anglo-Saxon and Norman types. In Colchester, residual Roman pottery often outnumbers later sherds in Anglo-Saxon and Norman features, thus compounding further the problems of differentiating between those of Roman and those of later date. A disproportionate amount of the Thetford-type ware tabulated below consists of rim sherds and reflects the difficulty in distinguishing between body sherds of Roman and Thetford-type wares.

Castle bank excavation of 1950, TL 99912539 (Fig 29, site F)

The 1950 excavation of the northern defences of Colchester Castle was conducted by Mrs M A Cotton (Cotton 1962; Dunning 1962) and is a key archaeological work relating to late Anglo-Saxon and Norman Colchester because the sequence of pottery that was recovered can be linked to documentary evidence. In the light of more recent work two conclusions from the excavation, however, can be reviewed. These concern the relationship of the construction of the keep to that of the upper bailey and the date and composition of the various excavated pottery groups.

Mrs Cotton suggested that the earthwork forming the bailey was later than the keep and was perhaps not constructed until after 1120 (Cotton 1962, 57). We have seen, however, that the 1101 charter of Henry I to Eudo Dapifer distinguishes between *turris* and *castellum* implying that both keep and earthwork predate the 12th century. In addition, had the latter been constructed after the keep, then it is curious that the standing Roman walls which were sealed by the earthwork should not have been robbed to at least ground level during the erection of the castle and it is odd that no attempt was made to clear the surrounding area of Roman ruins immediately after the keep was built. Conversely, had the earthwork predated the keep, then there is no apparent reason why the temple podium which stood two to three metres above the contemporary ground level (Hull 1958, 165) should have been left standing within the earthwork unless it was the intention of the builders to incorporate the podium in the castle keep.

The coin of Henry I found in the rampart cannot necessarily imply, as the excavator suggested, a 12th century date for the digging of the bailey defences because, as Mrs Cotton reported, the coin was found at the base of the turf line over the bank, not in the bank itself. Furthermore, Mrs Cotton s contention that the difference in alignment between bailey and keep implies a difference in period is dubious particularly since the principal factor in determining orientation must have been the position and nature of the nearby Roman walls and foundations. These presumably explain why the Norman ditch is mainly confined to the areas taken up by the surrounding Roman roads, where ditch digging would have been easier, and why the Norman bank was piled over the foundations and walls, some up to 4.5m wide, belonging to the Roman structures which had encompassed the temple court. On balance, therefore, it is proposed that the keep and its earthwork forming the bailey were from the outset part of the same scheme and consequently are datable from c 1075 as discussed previously in Chapter 2.

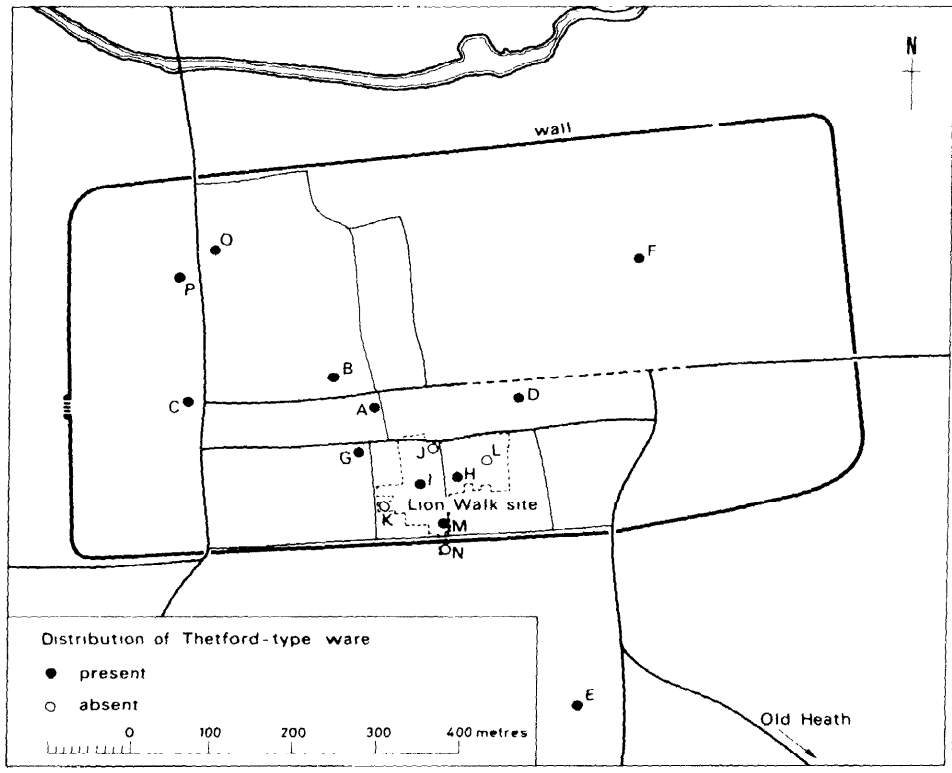


Fig 29 Colchester: finds of Thetford-type ware

Recent excavations have produced large quantities of Roman pottery thus enabling more positive dating of sherds than before. Consequently, of the 13 sherds published in the post-Roman pottery report of the 1950 excavation (Dunning 1962), it is possible to say that one is undoubtedly Roman although not of a common form (Dunning 1962, fig 3, 6). Two of the others are also probably Roman, one being an example of a late Roman shelly ware (Dunning 1962, fig 2, 2) and the other a body sherd which possesses both girth grooves and fabric of Roman character (Dunning 1962, fig 3, 13). The remaining illustrated pieces consist of nine examples of early sandy wares and one hand-made grass-tempered sherd (for the latter see p 18). Not included in the original publication is a small collection of Thetford-type ware, the rims of which, in addition to a selection of the previously published pieces, are illustrated in Figure 34 (75-97). The revised pottery groups and the sequence of features as described in the original excavation report can be summarized as shown in Table 1.

Pottery from the Cups Hotel site, TL 99562522 (Fig 2, site B)

Several late Anglo-Saxon and Norman pits were excavated on the site of the Cups Hotel during the archaeological work of 1973-4 (Figs 3, 32-4). The pottery from these features, as well as from the Norman robber trench also discovered on the site, is tabulated in Table 2

Lion Walk site, TL 99682509 (excluding the stone house discussed in Chapter 6)

The early medieval finds from the Lion Walk excavations conducted between 1971 and 1974 have still to be fully assessed although few if any of the extensive series of pits postdating the two Anglo-Saxon huts are likely to be of pre-Conquest date. No clear evidence of late Anglo-Saxon structures was recovered although a small quantity of Thetford-type ware was found, the distribution of which over the site is indicated somewhat crudely in Figure 29, sites H to N. The total number of sherds of Thetford-type ware from Lion Walk is still to be established but this is likely to be considerably lower than the number found on the Cups Hotel site in the High Street.

At the southern end of Lion Walk, a section was excavated across the town defences and a Saxo-Norman ditch consequently discovered (Fig 31 and 44, site A). The lowest 1.4m of the ditch fill consisted of sand, gravel, occupation debris, Roman tile, greensand, and fragments of septaria and was the result of the sides of the ditch crumbling and sliding to the bortom with rubbish deposited mainly from the south. The bulk of the fill came from the northern side which had been cut through soft deposits of natural sand and gravel. The southern side was relatively stable because it had been dug through the fill of a Roman ditch. Since the section of the Saxo-Norman ditch cut no post-Roman features, there is no reason to suppose that the lowest 1.4m of the ditch fill should include much residual post-Roman material. All the pottery ought to have derived from dumping and consequently should represent a fairly reliable sample of contemporary ceramics. The remaining part of the ditch fill is markedly different in character and is the result of a slower accumulation of soil after the slopes of the ditch sides had stabilized.

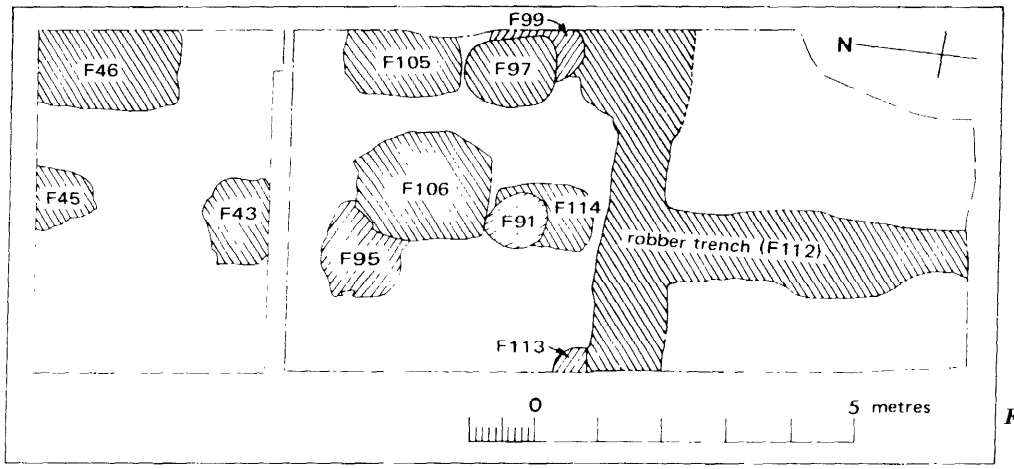


Fig 30 Cups Hotel site 1973-4: late Saxon and Norman pits (Largest features only)

Table 1 Pottery from the 1950 castle bank excavation

Context	*No of Thetford-type ware rim sherds*	*No of rim sherds of early sandy ware excluding shelly sherds*	*No of shelly rim sherds*	*Other sherds*
(a) 'Wall tumble and robbing of wall	4			One hand-made grass-tempered sherd
(b) 'Old turf-line' over (a)	1	3	-	-
(c) Norman rampart over (b)	6	6	1	One base tempered with a small amount of flint and chopped vegetable matter
(d) Pit cutting (c)	-	2	1	-

Table 2 Saxo-Norman pottery from the Cups Hotel site and Lion Walk (numbers of Roman sherds shown in brackets)

Feature no	*Total no of sherds of Thetford-type sandy, & shelly wares*	*%, of Thetford type ware*	*% of sandy wares*	*%, of shelly wares*	*No of rims (excluding Thetford)*	*No Of rims with finger-pressed decoratton*	*Others*
F106 (531)	32	78	13	9	1	-	One Stamford-type ware
F114 (160)	59	19	79	2	4	-	
F105 (174)	21	19	76	5	1	-	
F99 (130)	13	50	33	17	3	-	
F46 (409)	156	12	71	17	23	6	One hand-made sherd
Robber trench (96l)	149	21	68	11	16	5	-
F97 (329)	80	4	81	15	14	7	One jug handle, three sherds Stamford-type
F43 (99)	52	13	71	16	1	1	Two sherds glazed
F95 (?)	2	100	-		-	-	Two sherds grass-tempered
F45 (123)	10	30	50	20	1	1	-
F9l (18)	4	-	75	25	1	-	-
F113 (11)	5	20	60	20	1	-	-
Bottom of Lion Walk ditch (33)	205	-	100	-	22	-	-

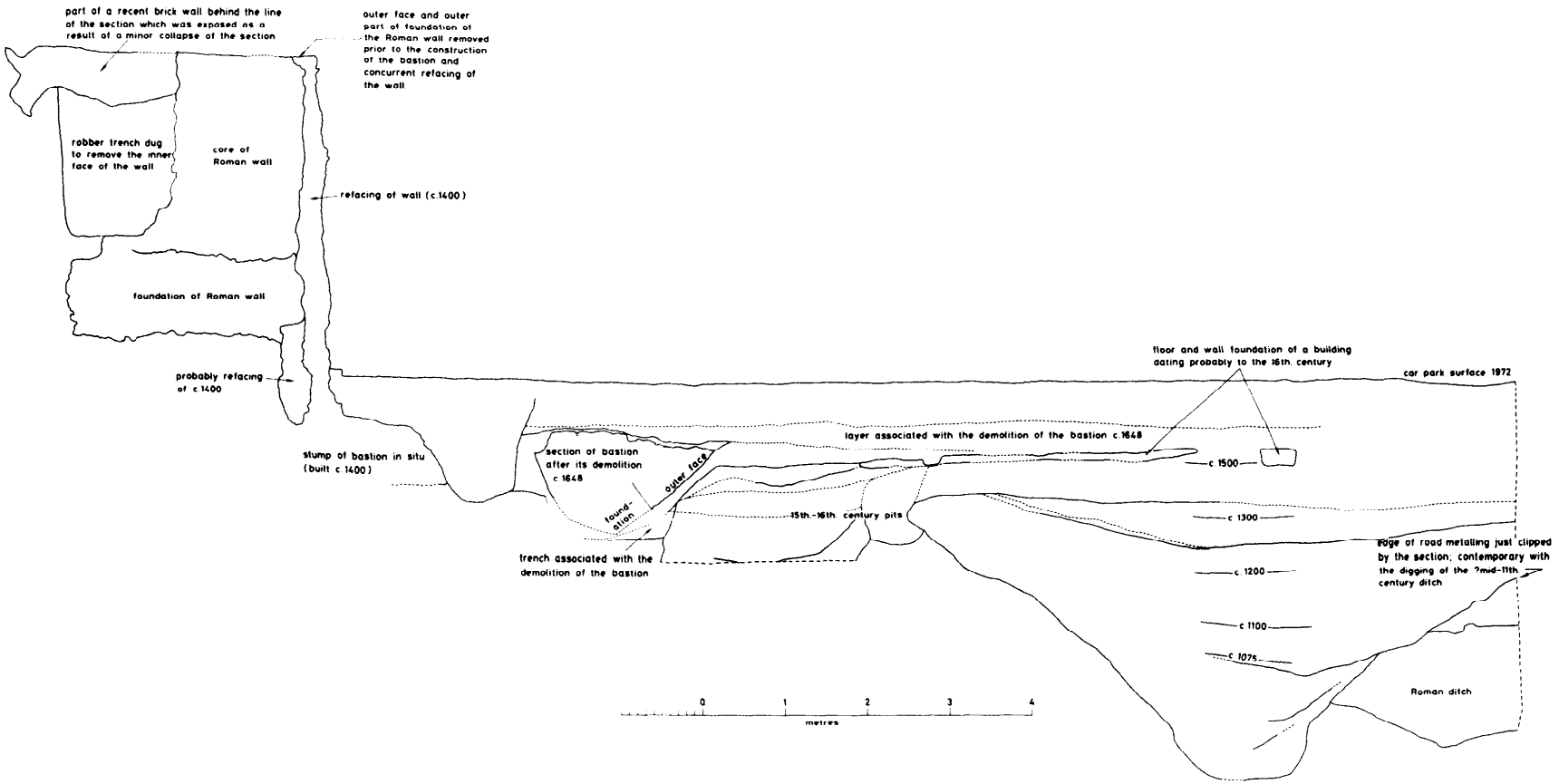


Fig 31 Lion Walk defences: provisional interpretation

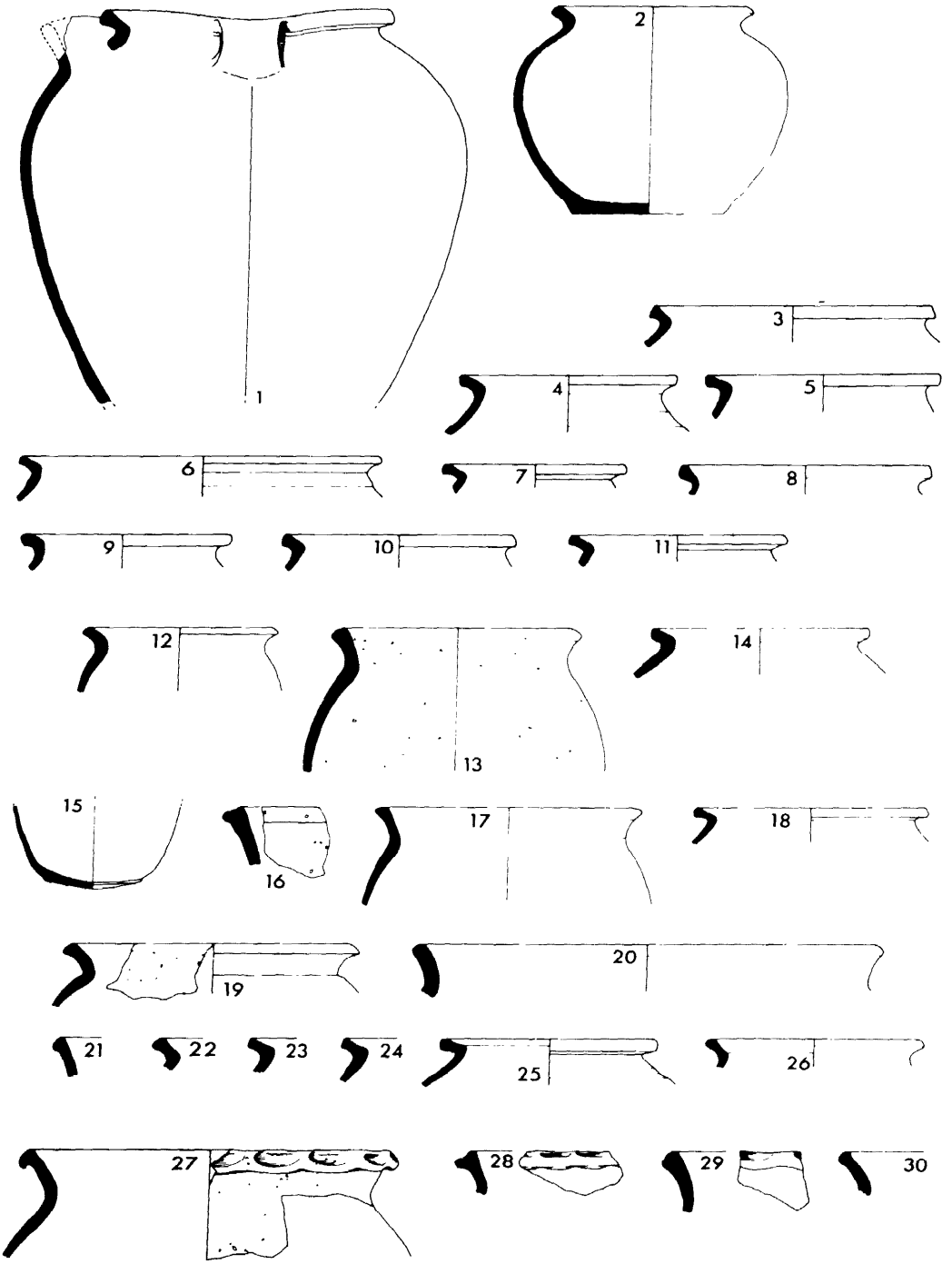


Fig 32 Saxo-Norman pottery. Nos 30-31 *High Street; 1-2; Cups Hotel 1973-4: 3-11 (F106); 12-14 (F105); 15-18 (F99); 19-26 (F114); 27-30 (F46) (all 1:4). For descriptions see Appendix 6*

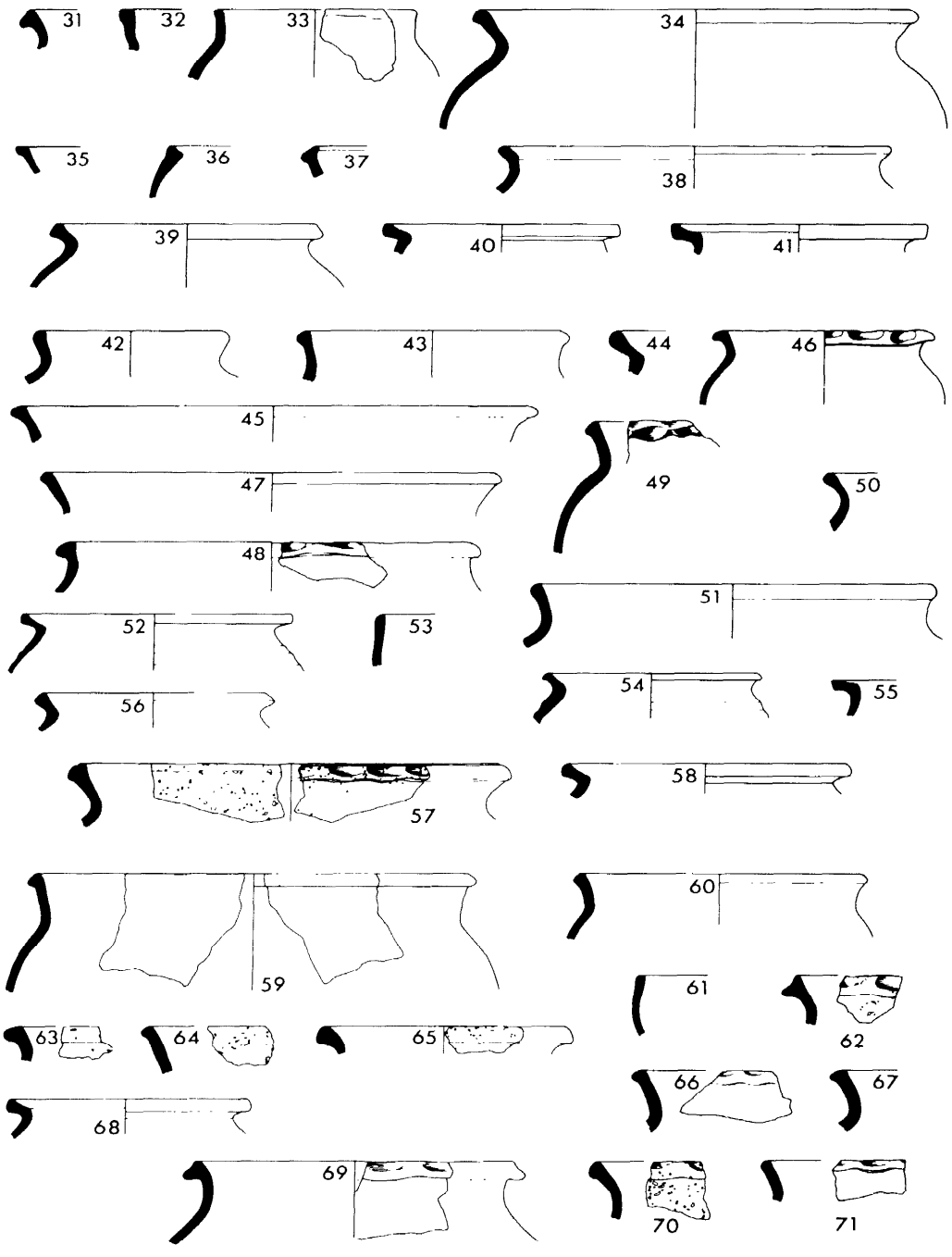


Fig 33 Sam-Norman pottery. Cups Hotel 1973-4: 31-41 (F46); 42-56 (F112); 57-8 (F43); 59 (F113); 60 (F91); 61-62 (F45); 63-71 (F97) (all 1:4). For descriptions see Appendix 6

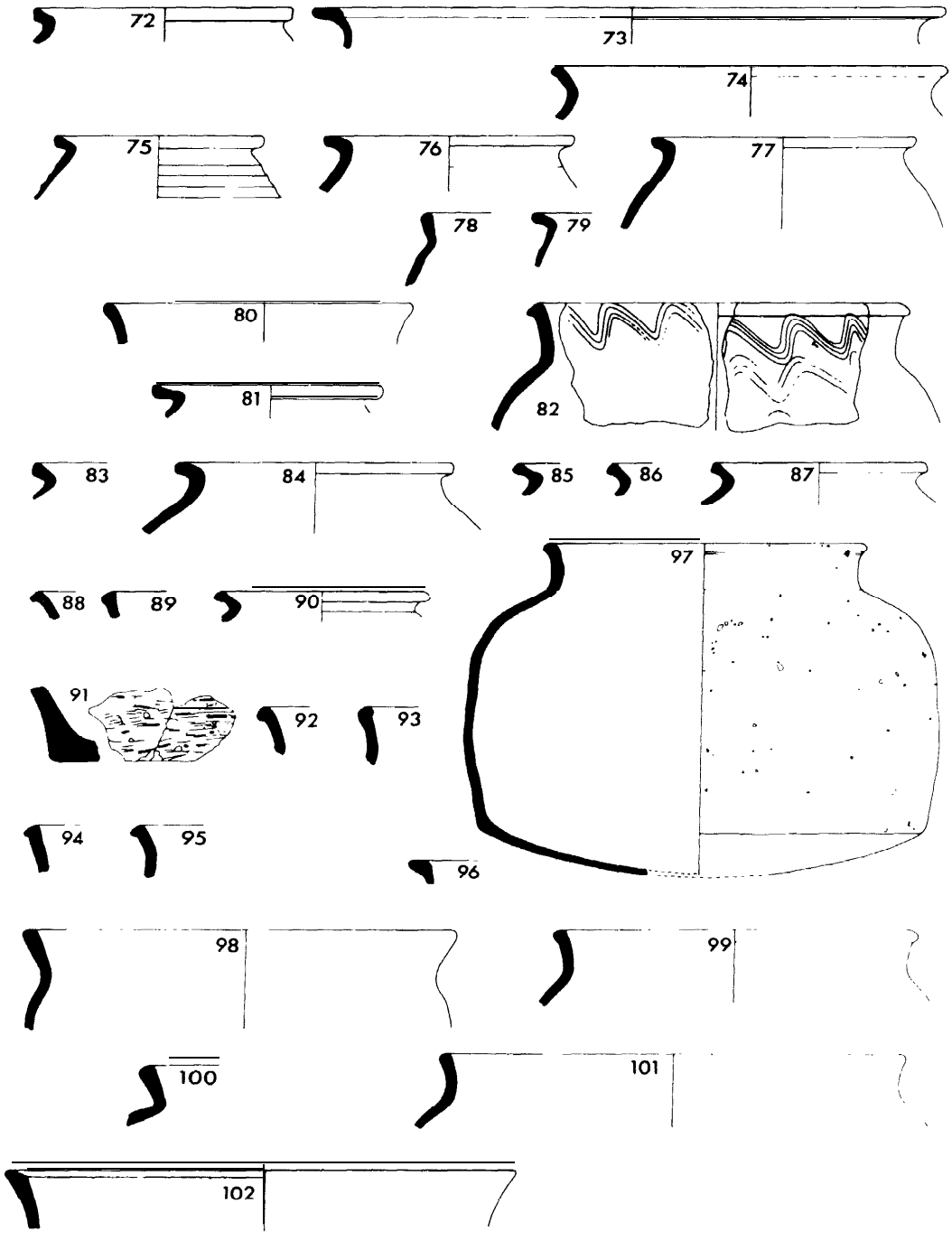


Fig 34 Saxo-Norman pottery. Cups Hotel 1973-74 (F97), Castle bank excavations 1950: 75-79 'wall tumble and robbing of wall; 80-82 'old turf-line': 83-95 rampart; 96-97 pit cutting rampart. Lion Walk ditch: 98-102 (all 1:4). For descriptions see Appendix 6

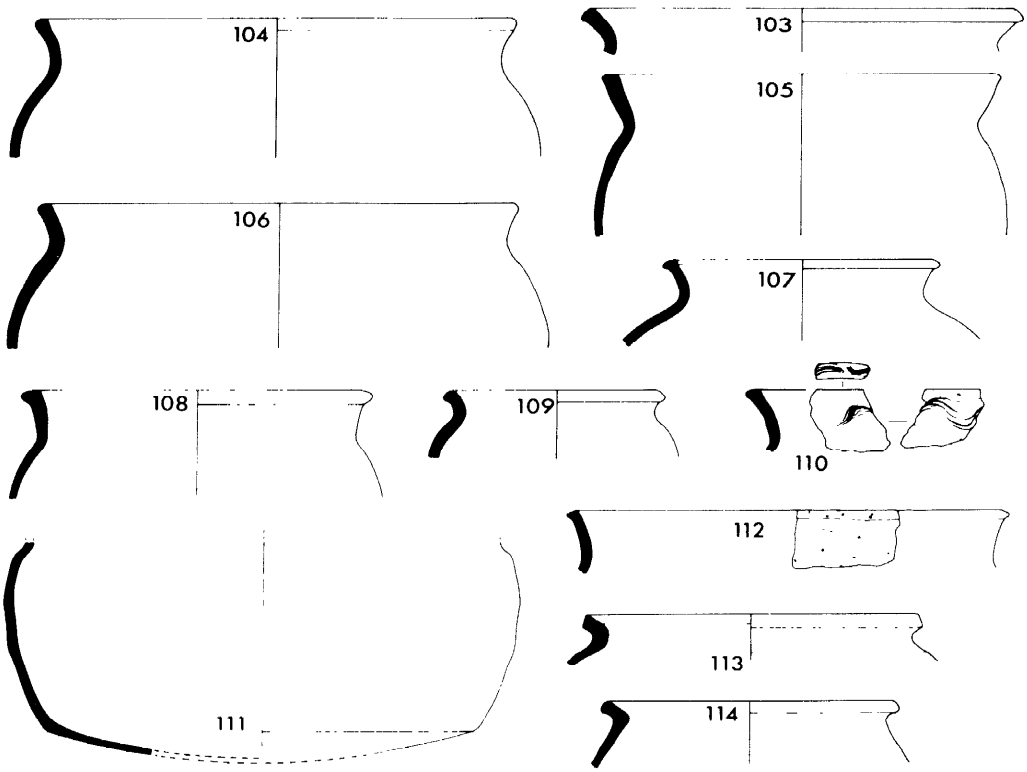


Fig 35 Saxo-Norman pottery. Lion Walk ditch: 103-14 (all 1:4). For descriptions see Appendix 6

A selection of sherds from the bottom of the ditch is illustrated in Figures 34 and 35 and the composition of the group as a whole analysed at the foot of Table 2. All the pots have unpronounced shoulders-except one sherd (Fig 35, 107) found near the top of the primary fill-and several have simple rims which lack beads. As far as can be gauged, all the pots have hand-made bodies. The body sherds exhibit not only irregular undulations but also indentations on the internal surfaces caused by the potter's fingers. The bases are knife-trimmed. The pots are not completely hand-made however since their rims in contrast to their bodies form regular arcs and are evenly finished along the lips implying the use of a wheel in a later stage of their manufacture.[1]

Of the sherds from the primary fill of the ditch, 90% have oxidized surfaces and reduced cores. The surfaces are consistently reddish brown (5YR 5/4) with reduced patches ranging in colour from reddish brown (5YR 5/3) and grey (10YR 5/1) to very dark grey (N3). This contrasts with the later sandy ware sherds from higher up in the ditch as well as the shelly and sandy wares from the other sites described in this chapter. These generally have reduced surfaces varying from grey (10YR 5/1) to very dark grey (N3) with cores which centre around reddish brown (10YR 5/2) and grey (10YR 6/1). A small proportion of the sherds have had crushed shell applied on the surface as a temper and a large proportion of the pieces contain inclusions of haematite. The type has recently been discussed (Hurst 1976, 342-3) and dated from *c* 1000 onwards.

St Nicholas's Church site, TL 99792519 (Fig 29, site D)

The site was excavated in 1955 by Mr M R Hull after the demolition of St Nicholas's Church. Nine sherds of Thetford-type ware were found in a pit dug down the side of a Roman wall foundation. No sherds of early sandy ware were reported as having been found (Hull 1960, 327-8).

Other finds of Thetford-type ware

A few sherds of Thetford-type ware were discovered during the excavations in the grounds of St John's Abbey (TL 99892479) between 1971 and 1977 (Fig 29, site E, and Chapter 4) and during rebuilding operations at 67 North Hill (TL 99392521) in 1935 (Fig 29, site C) and 30-1 High Street in 1936 (Fig 29, site A; TL 99622518) *(CMR* 1935-7, 45). The pottery from the last site is illustrated in Figure 32 (1 & 2). In 1977, a few sherds were also discovered during a small archaeological excavation at 1 Trinity Street (Fig 29, site G; TL99682514) and at 17 North Hill (Fig 2, site 0; TL9432541). Several more sherds were found during a watching brief in 1974 at 4 North Hill (Fig 29, site P; TL9938237).

Synthesis of the ceramic evidence of the 10th to 12th centuries

A major problem in establishing any pottery typology is the presence of residual material. In the main post-Roman pit groups from the Cups Hotel, Roman pottery

outnumbered the post-Roman sherds in some cases by as much as a factor of ten. By implication, therefore, the post-Roman element of these deposits is itself also likely to contain a high proportion of residual material so that clearly the back filling of the pits can only be dated on a *terminus post quem* basis, the post-Roman pottery having no validity as a sample of a contemporary group of pots. The difficulty appears to apply to most archaeological deposits from sites such as Colchester. Fortunately the unusual circumstances relating to the fill in the bottom of the Lion Walk ditch imply that most of the pottery from here may be contemporary and indeed the comparatively low proportion of Roman sherds occurring in this group (14%) bears this out (Table 2). The problems of residual material in relation to these groups is discussed at greater length in Crummy & Terry 1979, esp fig 23.

Of critical importance is the absence of Thetford-type ware from the bottom of the Lion Walk ditch (Table 2) which implies that when the ditch was being filled, early medieval sandy wares had ousted Thetford-style ware from the local markets. That the group from the Lion Walk ditch is not spurious is shown by the absence of Thetford-type ware from the large group of Norman pottery associated with the stone house at the junction of Lion Walk and Culver Street dating to after *c* 1120 (Chapter 6).

The earliest groups therefore contain predominantly Thetford-type ware and derive from the pit at St Nicholas's Church site, F106 and F95 at the Cups Hotel site, and the 'wall tumble and robbing' under the 'old turf-line' beneath the castle bank, whereas the latest groups discussed here are from F46 and F97 at the Cups Hotel site since these contained glazed sherds possibly no earlier than c 1200.[2] The large collection of pottery from the bottom of the Lion Walk ditch is similar to the few sherds found in the 'old turf-line' under the castle bank and may perhaps be typologically slightly earlier. A crucial piece in this respect is no 82 (Fig 34) which is very similar in fabric to the bulk of the material from the bottom of the Lion Walk ditch but in view of the beaded rim, the combed decoration, and the more pronounced shoulder is, if anything, slightly more developed than any piece from the ditch. On the other hand, the sandy ware rims from the castle bank itself are nearly all beaded and thus probably later than the pottery from the bottom of the Lion Walk ditch, but they are not as diverse in fabric and form as most of the groups from the Cups Hotel site, ie F105, F99, F96, and the robber trench. In general, the latest groups have a higher percentage of shelly sherds and a larger proportion of finger-pressed rims.

Certain of the Cups Hotel groups, ie F95, F45, F91, and F113, are too small to be of much value in dating the pits from which they derive, particularly because of the problem of residual material. The remainder of the groups can be tentatively dated as follows. The pit from St Nicholas's Church site, Cups Hotel site F106 and F95 (which is cut by F106), and the sherds from the 'tumble and robbing' below the castle bank date to no later than *c* 1000. The pottery at the bottom of the Lion Walk ditch can be attributed to 1000-75 and the latest material under the castle bank and in the bank itself to 1050-75 on the basis of the documentary evidence discussed in Chapter 2, The presence of beaded rims, which are a development of the simple early sandy ware pots, suggests that the date of the Lion Walk group is to be placed nearer to 1075 than 1000, say 1050-75. F105, F99, F46, F114, and the robber trench from the Cups Hotel are all likely to lie within the late 11th and 12th centuries whereas, as previously explained, F97 and F43 are datable to *c* 1200. The restored pot (Fig 34, 97) from pit Cl cutting the castle bank is developed in profile and with the rim sherd no 96 probably belongs to the 12th century.

Cups Hotel feature F106, while containing a high proportion of Thetford-type ware, also yielded several sherds of sandy ware and thus presents a number of conflicting conclusions. These are (i) that the sandy wares occur before *c* 1000, (ii) that the level of residual Thetford-type ware is fortuitously high in the pit group and the feature ought to be dated between *c* 1050 and 1200, or (iii) that the pit was back filled at the time when Thetford-type ware was just beginning to be replaced by the early medieval sandy wares, ie presumably *c* 1000-50. On balance a pre-1000 date seems preferable but to be confident about such an inference more pit groups of this period are needed.

The absence of Thetford-type ware at the bottom of the Lion Walk ditch implies that, when found in contexts later than this (notably in nearly all of the Cups Hotel pits), sherds of this type must almost all be residual and conversely that, when found in groups almost exclusively composed of Thetford-type ware (discounting Roman pottery), the deposits concerned are likely to be 10th or perhaps early 11th century in date. Unfortunately, however, no large stratified groups of Thetford-type ware have as yet been found in Colchester so that at present no feature or deposit can be ascribed with confidence to the 10th or early 11th century.

Notes

1 For example, as found in Roman black burnished ware (Farrar 1973, 72-3).

2 Glazed jugs were rare until the early 13th century (Rahtz 1969, 106).

Chapter 4

Excavations in the grounds of St John's Abbey

Summary

A series of small-scale excavations of varying quality took place between 1971 and 1977 within the precinct of St John's Abbey and in St Giles's Church. The principal discoveries were a small church predating the foundation of the abbey, some medieval burials, a large quantity of dumped soil, and some burnt buldings with walls of sandy clay. All these can be related to the written evidence.

Little is known of the monastic buildings since the remains of these, shown on Speed's map of Colchester in 1610, were almost completely destroyed during the siege of 1648 (Morant 1748, 2, 36-7). A drawing of the southern elevation of the abbey's church exists (Morant 1748, 2, facing p 36) but is suspect since it shows no traces of claustral buildings.[1] Some foundations south of the abbey gate are indicated in Cutts 1888 (facing p 34) and according to Hull were observed as turf or crop marks (Hull 1958, 295).

Early historical background of the site

The four texts which relate to the early years and foundation of the abbey have been discussed in Chapter 2 with the result that the essential trustworthy details can be set out as follows. The monastery **was** measured out on 29

August 1095 and dedicated on 10 February 1115. Its founder, Eudo Dapifer, died on 16 February 1120 and was buried in the monastery, his body being brought over from France. In 1133, the monastery and a large part of Colchester were burnt and all the offices and workshops *(officine),* which were originally on the north side of the abbey church, were transferred to the south side.

Although much of the Nero text is of dubious value (pp 28-30), there are two places where it appears to include threads of fact which do not appear in any of the other extant texts but which have been borne out by recent archaeological work, namely the existence on the site of a small church predating the foundation of the abbey and the existence of large quantities of dumped soil. The relevant parts are cloaked in highly coloured and suspect detail, and can be summarized as follows. The first part records that the site chosen for the abbey was where a priest named *Sigeric* had his house and a church which was built of wooden planking and dedicated to St John the Evangelist. The church, situated on the northern slopes of a little hill, was reputed to be the scene of a miracle and a place where inexplicable voices were often heard and strange lights frequently seen . . . No further mention is made of the building. The second part of interest relates to the monastery itself. Abbot Hugh, tired of the noise and bustle of the town, decided, sometime between c 1104 and the dedication of the abbey (1115, according to the other sources), to transfer the offices and workshops *(officine)* and the monks' dwellings *(habitula)* from the north to the south side of the abbey church. To do this, a little hill which overshadowed the abbey church was removed and the soil produced spread over the area north of the latter to make a cemetery.

The parish church of St Giles was outside the northern boundary of the abbey precinct. However, this was not always the case for originally it was situated in the monastic cemetery, as indicated in a number of early charters, eg in a document of William of St Mary, Bishop of London 1199-1222 (Cart St *J A,* 62). Of particular importance in this respect is a charter of Bishop Gilbert of London (1165-71) confirming that St John's held all of St Giles's Church which was 'founded' in their cemetery (Cart *St J A,* 87). This implies not only that the church post- dates the foundation of the abbey but that the church also belonged to it. Further corroboration of the last point is provided by a charter of Pope Innocent III dated to 1202 *(Cart St J A, 67).*

The excavations[2]

In 1971 several exploratory trenches were dug in the north-east corner of the abbey precinct (trenches T1 to T4, Fig 36). Trenches 1 and 2 were excavated by machine and revealed several metres of dumped soil and debris behind the abbey's precinct wall. This redeposited material accounted for much of the 5m difference between the ground levels on either side of the wall. In trenches 3 and 4, burials were found which from the associated sherds were mostly late medieval at the earliest.

In 1972, the north-east corner of the precinct was lowered by machine for a new roundabout and as a result the inside of the abbey wall was exposed. For much of its length the inner face was well preserved and contained a series of original putlog holes.

In 1973, part of the graveyard of St Giles's Church was lowered in order to construct a private car park. The deepest area of the contractor's excavations was in the south-eastern corner of the graveyard where the following observations were made in section. It was clear that the burials continued eastwards under the present graveyard wall and linked up with the series of burials found in trenches 3 and 4 in 1971. The burials were cut through a thick deposit of soil and sand which reached a depth of at least 1.75m and sealed a lime-pit and an original land surface containing spreads of charcoal with soil and occupation debris. Lying on the old land surface and at the base of the dumped material were large burnt lumps of grey sandy clay which derived from the walls of nearby demolished buildings (Fig 36). By a comparison of levels, it was apparent that the foundations of St Giles's Church were substantially higher than the buried land surface and therefore must have been dug through the thick deposit of dumped material.

In 1975, archaeological excavations directed by Mr N A Smith for the Colchester Excavation Committee (now the Colchester Archaeological Trust) took place in the nave of St Giles's Church." The area and depth of the work had to be strictly in accordance with the proposed building operations. The northern wall of the original nave was located and found to have been replaced with an arcade when the northern aisle was added, probably in the 14th century.[4] As only the foundations survived of the north wall of the Norman nave, it could not be determined whether the wall had contained a doorway opposite the one in the southern wa11.[5] Several burials were found north of the Norman nave but were sealed by the construction level of the 14th century aisle, implying that the cemetery had initially enclosed the church on all four sides. From this it is concluded that the abbey's precinct wall had originally extended across the northern side of the church so that St Giles's lay wholly inside the cemetery. The Norman foundations were found to have been dug into a layer of dumped soil, a discovery which is in accordance with the evidence noted in the church graveyard in 1973 and discussed above.

The addition of the aisle in the 14th century was accompanied by the construction of a tower at the west end of the nave. At the same time, the precinct wall adjacent to the church was possibly rebuilt further south (Fig 36). The hypothesis that this part of the precinct wall was rebuilt at this time is based on similarities in the stonework of both the wall and the tower (Cater 1919, 218).

The excavations of 1975 were confined to the nave but, as part of some minor building alterations in 1972, an east-west trench for a heating duct was dug along the length of the chancel and a straight north-south foundation observed in section by the architect for the works, Mr C M H Barritt.[6] This discovery represents the original east end of the chancel and indicates that the latter must have been rectangular rather than apsidal. The part of the present chancel which lies east of this north-south foundation contains a lancet window in its southern side (RCHM 1922, 43) implying that the east end of the chancel was rebuilt and extended in the 13th century.

In 1972, during salvage excavations to the east of St Giles's Church, a substantial part of another church was uncovered. The work had to be carried out very quickly under considerable pressures and constraints caused by both the rebuilding schedule and redevelopments elsewhere in the town. This in part explains the odd shape of the excavation (Fig 37).

The walls and foundations of the excavated building were of broken Roman building materials, the foundations being simply rubble coursed with layers of sand (Figs 38 & 39). The sand was not in reality decayed, weak mortar but was natural redeposited from the foundation trenches. With the exception of one small section of wall (Fig 37), the building had been demolished down to foundation level and in some places the tops of the foundations had

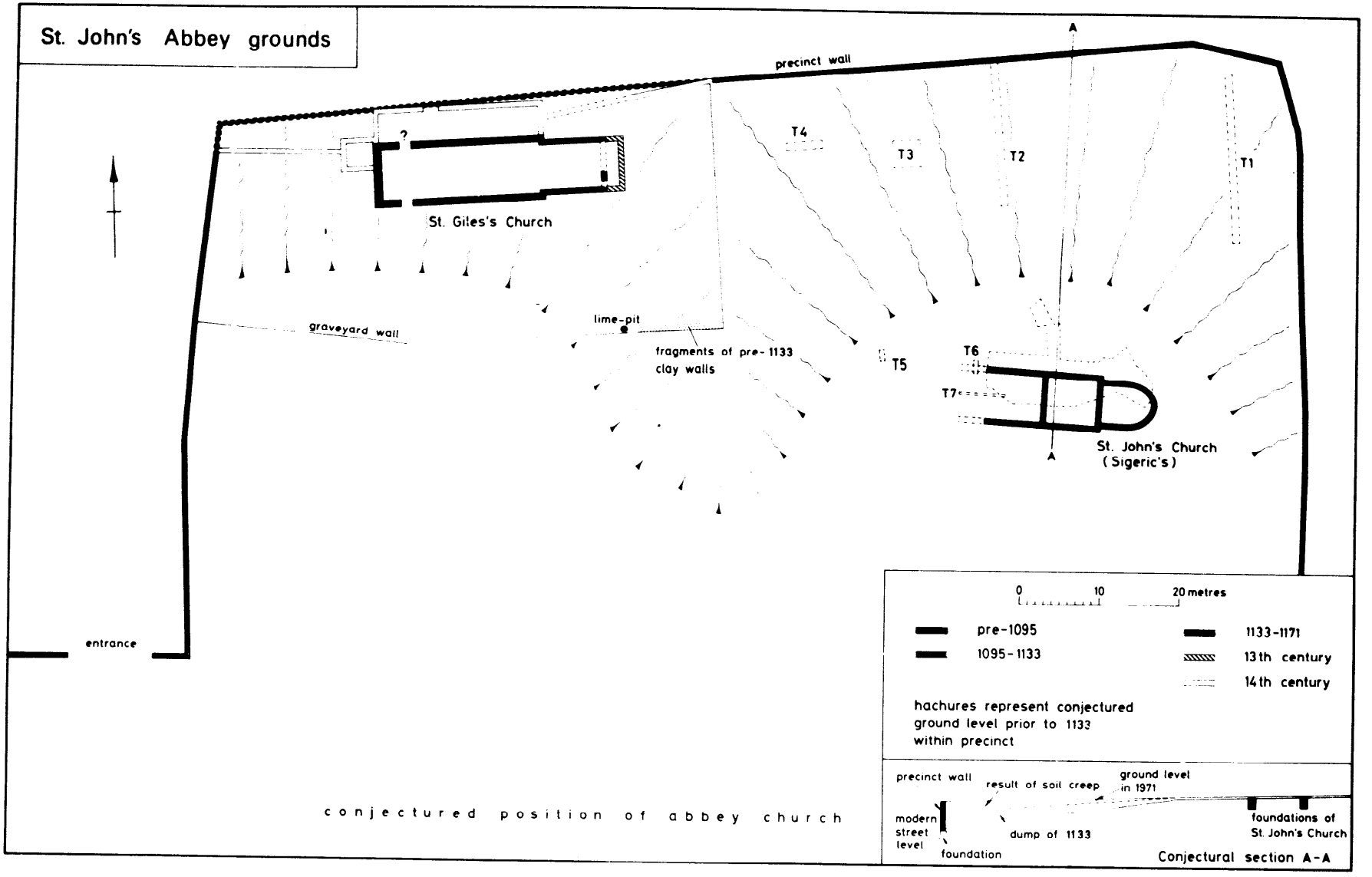


Fig 36 Excavations in the grounds of St John s Abbey

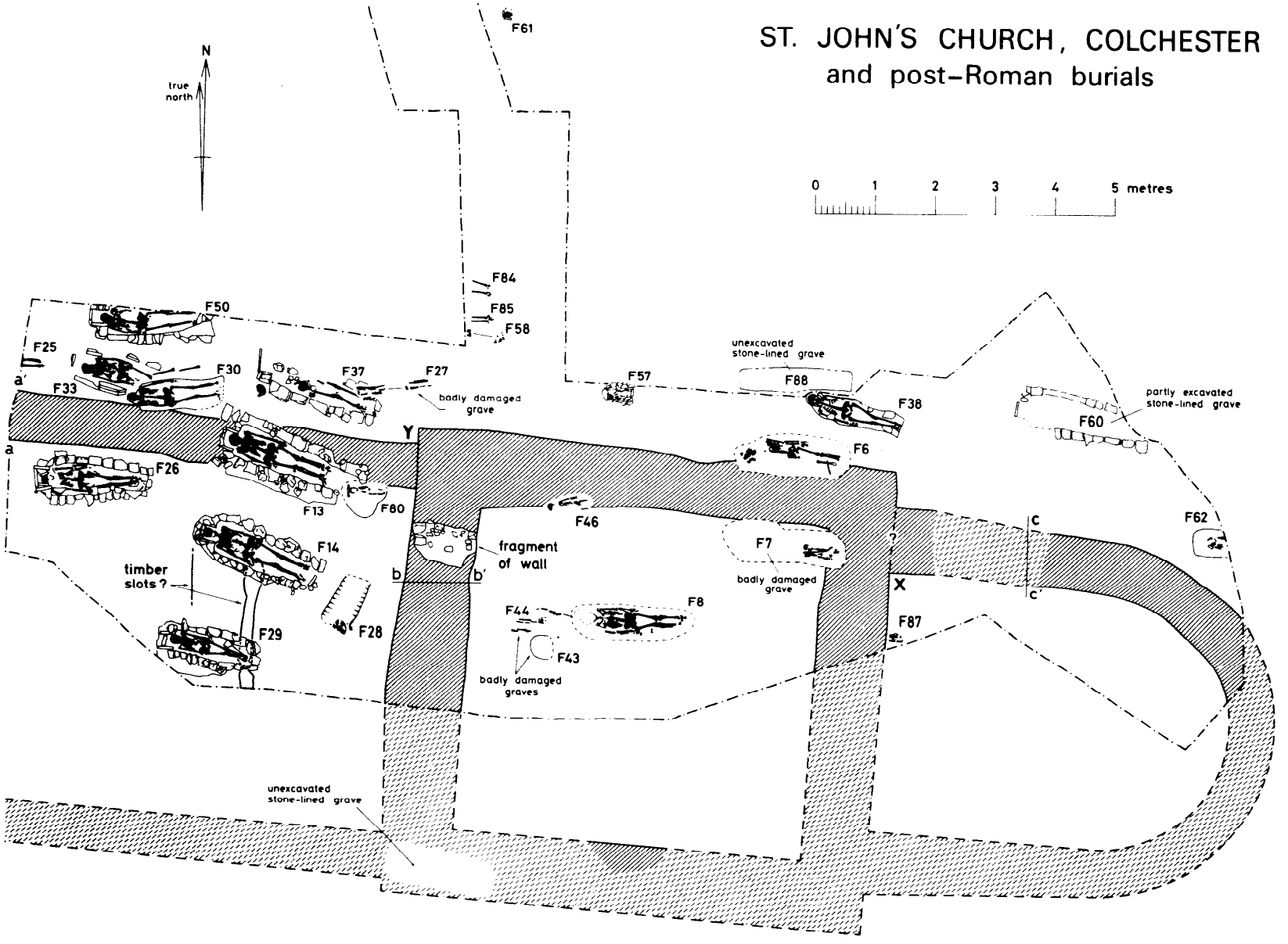


Fig 37 Foundations of St John s Church and later medieval burial ground

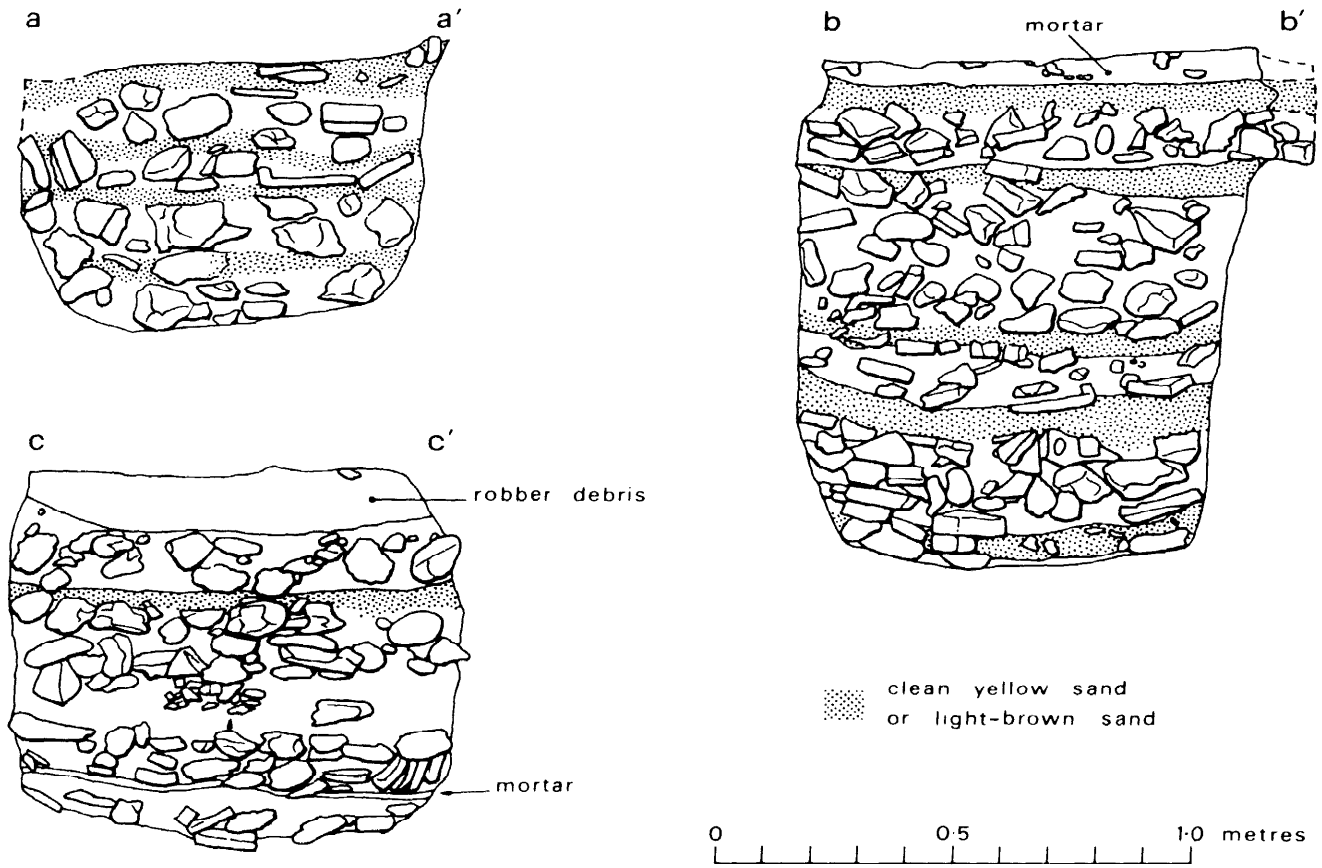


Fig 38 Foundations of St John's Church in section

been robbed out. The remains were sealed by a layer of dumped soil and broken building materials which derived from the demolished church. Cutting this deposit were burials, the earliest of which were in stone- and tile-lined graves (Fig 37). In addition the church sealed part of a 3rd to 4th century inhumation cemetery.[7]

The building was a three-celled structure. The middle compartment was almost square and this suggests that it had been a central tower. The junctions at X and Y (Fig 37) were sectioned to examine the relationship between each compartment. The results of this were inconclusive but it was felt that on balance the western cell butted on to the middle cell and that the latter was contemporary with the apsidal cell. If this interpretation is correct, then the building would have been of two phases, the earlier comprising probably a tower-nave" with a stilted apsidal chancel. The possibility, however, that the apsidal cell was butted on to the middle compartment cannot be discounted. If this was the case, all the butt-joints may simply be a result of the order in which the various sections of the church were erected. The distinctive method of constructing the foundations of all three cells suggests that they all belong broadly to the same period and that, since no Roman foundations of this type have been found in Colchester, they are all post-Roman. The closest parallel to these in Colchester is the foundations of the nave of Sc Giles's Church which consist of broken Roman building materials set uncoursed in a matrix of sand.

The small fragment of wall which survives (Fig 37) indicates that the opening between the western nave and the ?tower was at most 3.0m wide. In plan, the foundations of the western nave were offset to those of the ?tower. This need not rule out the walls of the latter being flush with those of the former. The offset in plan presumably is no more than a result of using narrower foundations in the western nave. Figure 36 shows the walls of the church reconstructed on this basis.

Early in 1977, a series of small trial holes was dug along the line of the nave walls to establish their western extent (ie trenches T5, T6, and T7: Fig 36). Unfortunately, the remains of the demolished church proved to be too deep for the scale of the excavation and the project was abandoned. However, it became clear as a result of this work that the soil and debris found in 1972 sealing the foundations of the church increased substantially in thickness to the west and was the same deposit as that observed in the graveyard of St Giles's sealing the old land surface and cut by the foundations of St Giles's. Thus from stratigraphic considerations, it seems that the construction of St Giles's postdates the demolition of this second church and that, as shown in the conjectural

Fig 39 Foundation of ?tower of St. John's Church

section A-A in Figure 36, the layer of dumped material sealing the foundations of the demolished church is probably the same as that up against the precinct wall. As a result of the various trenches and earth-moving operations, the gound level prior to the deposition of the dumped soil can tentatively be reconstructed as shown in Figure 36.

Reconciliation of the archaeological discoveries with the written evidence

The demolished church found in 1972 is almost certainly that described in Nero although the rubble walls implied by the foundations are at variance with the 'wooden planking unless planks were somehow incorporated in the structure higher up the walls. More likely, however, the wooden planks may have as little factual basis as some other parts of the Nero account (eg the miracles inside the Anglo-Saxon church), and perhaps stem from an attempt to demean the structure of the building to justify its demolition. The burnt walls of sandy clay are to be equated with the monastic buildings originally sited north of the abbey church but rebuilt on the south side of it in 1133 after the fire which destroyed the monastery and a large part of Colchester. The substantial quantities of dumped soil can be attributed to the levelling, as described in Nero, of the 'little hill which stood next to the abbey church although clearly it should be dated to 1133 not to the abbacy of Hugh as the writer of the Nero account thought.

If the 'little hill mentioned twice in Nero refers to the same feature, then it must have been situated to the south of Sigeric's church and to the east or south-east of the abbey church.[9] In view of the Roman cemetery discovered under Sigeric's church in 1972, the mound may have been a Roman barrow. Alternatively, a suggestion made by Hull is that the earthwork may have been the mound of a Roman temple since in 1891 a bronze votive plaque dedicated to Mars was found in the area (Hull 1958,248). However, it is clear from recent excavations that the volume of redeposited soil was so large that the feature from which the material was derived was most likely natural. The land surface today rises gradually to the south and in 1102 this slope may have been considerably greater. The 12th century earth-moving may simply have

been done to create a terrace into the natural slope south of the abbey church for the new monastic buildings. Certainly the description of Sigeric's church being on the northern slope of a little hill can be considered apt in terms of the natural topography of the area (Fig 36) since from Colchester's town centre the buildings must have been prominent on the southern landscape.

In conclusion, then, the work of 1971-7 can be broadly reconciled with the accounts of the abbey's early years. In particular, the discoveries of an Anglo-Saxon church, large quantities of dumped soil of early date, and burnt early buildings between the abbey church and St Giles's are compatible with the written evidence. In detail, the correlation between the sources, written and archaeological, is by no means complete but the essential elements are consistent.

Notes

1 The artist may have drawn the church as he believed it might have looked from the south had there been no such buildings.

2 Little useful pottery was recovered from the main deposits.

3 We are grateful to the Masonic Hall Co Ltd for permission to excavate and to their architect Mr C M H Barritt for his assistance and cooperation.

4 The date of the aisle is taken from RCHM 1922, 43.

5 The doorway could not be detected by an examination of the floor deposits since excavation was not permitted in the relevant part of the nave.

6 I am grateful to Mr Barritt for this information.

7 For a plan of this, see Crummy 1974, 29. These form part of the extensive series of burials which flanked the southern side of the Roman city (Crummy 1975, 9).

8 Tower-naves are rare, examples being Earls Barton and Barnack in Northamptonshire, Barton-on-Humber in Lincolnshire, and Sompting in Sussex.

9 'The Mount is a small mound in the south-east corner of the precinct (Fig 44). It apparently contains much human bone and traditionally is fancifully regarded as being a product of plague or the siege of Colchester in 1648. Its true character is unknown but the mound is too far from 'Sigeric's church to be the little hill referred to in Nero.

Chapter 5

Topographical evidence

Summary

From perhaps the 7th century or earlier, Old Heath served as a landing place for the town. It was superseded by the New Hythe by the early 12th century. Extensible robbing took place of Roman foundations in the 12th and 13th centuries for reuse; a few examples are known where Roman structures were reused in situ. Four periods of planning datable to before the 12th century are detectable in the layout of modem Colchester. The parish of Holy Trinity appears to postdate the initial parochial layout of the town. During the Lion Walk excavations of 1972 an 11th century defensive ditch was discovered at the foot of the town wall. A reassessment of previous excavations indicates that the ditch had not been dug around the full defensive circuit of the town. Rather than having been built in the middle of a market place, the position of St Runwald's can be explained as being the result of street widening to form a large market area around it.

In this chapter are brought together under the general title of 'topographical evidence a number of topics which are only slightly related. There is no clear unifying theme but instead several aspects of the layout and fabric of Anglo-Saxon and Norman Colchester, for which new

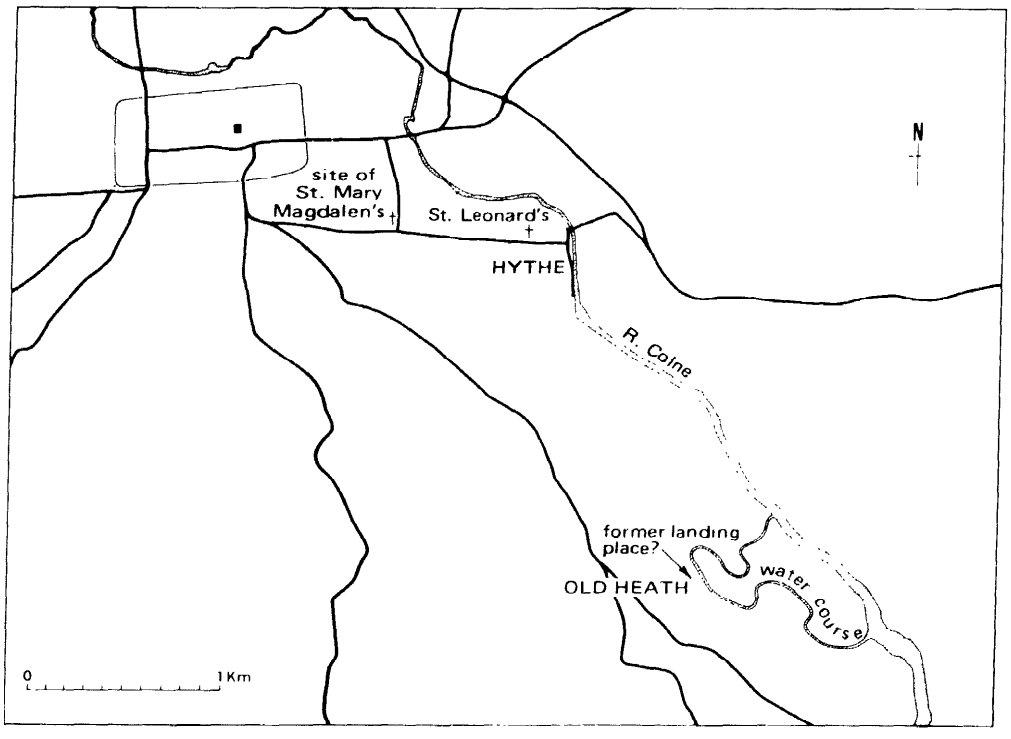


Fig 40 Colchester in relation to river Colne, the Hythe, and Old Heath

information and interpretations can be presented, are dealth with. In order, the topics covered are: the development of Old Heath and the Hythe, the reuse of Roman buildings and building materials, the origin of medieval property boundaries, the 'pinched-ends' of some medieval streets, evidence of probable town planning, the development of the parish of Holy Trinity Church, the recently discovered 11th century town ditch, and the position of St Runwald's in the High Street.

Colchester as a port (Fig 40)

Old Heath derives its name from the Old English *Ealdehethe* meaning old landing place (Reaney 1935, 376-7) and was presumably Colchester's original main landing area. The Merovingian pot from Old Heath (pp 21-2) indicates that the settlement and landing place may date from at least the 7th century if not before.

Old Heath was later superseded by the Hythe or New Hythe as it was known which was constructed further upstream nearer to Colchester's town centre. The Hythe derives its name from the same root as Old Heath (Reaney 1935, 376) and the earliest reference to it appears to date to 1276 (Morant 1748, 2, 23). There is a reference to *Ealdehethe* in 1272 (Reaney 1935, 376) implying that by that time there was a 'new' hythe. St Leonard's Church and parish provided the basis for the suburb needed to utilize the new port facilities. The earliest known reference to the church is 1237 *(Cart St. J A*, 95) although both St Leonard's and the Hythe were probably in existence some considerable time before this. If the suburb existed by the early 12th century when the leper hospital dedicated to St Mary Magdalen (Fig 40) was founded (Morant 1748, 2, 21), then its built-up areas were not contiguous with those of the town centre since hospitals of this type were invariably placed in isolation (Platt 1975, 55). The Hythe continued to be developed and expanded throughout the rest of the Middle Ages.'

By comparison with the Hythe, Old Heath must have been rather small and inefficient. It had no church of its own, but lay within the parish of St Giles. Modern Old Heath stands well back from a dried-up meander of the river Colne[2] and is some two miles from Colchester town centre. The original houses may have been much closer to the site of the waterfront than those of today, but there is no evidence for this.

Reuse of Roman buildings and building materials

There are several examples in Colchester of parts of Roman buildings which have been incorporated into later structures. The most well known case is the castle, where the keep was built around the podium of the Temple of Claudius (Fig 41a). Another example of this practice was St Nicholas's Church, built either on Roman foundations or, more likely, initially a modified part of a Roman building (Fig 41b). The church was rebuilt in the 14th century, enlarged and restored by Scott in the 19th century (RCHM 1922, 39-40) and demolished in 1955 when the archaeological excavations which produced the Thetford-type ware discussed above (p 39) were carried out. During these excavations no medieval walls were found resting on top of the Roman work. Instead only the remains of Scott's church were found, suggesting that the Roman walls had been reused above ground level in the medieval period and had not simply served as convenient foundations as the excavator believed (Hull 1960).

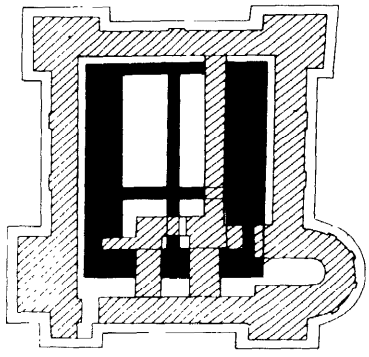
The base (of the north wall of St Helen's Chapel is also Roman (Fig 41 d), indicating another probable example of a Roman structure incorporated in a later context. The Roman work contains brick courses and therefore must survive above its foundation level since in Colchester brick courses are invariably absent in Roman foundations. The alignment of the present building is slightly different from the underlying Roman wall and suggests that the chapel has been extensively rebuilt. The wall appears to extend beyond the limits of the chapel because the Colchester and Essex Museum has a mortar sample collected in 1924 from 'the continuation of the wall' (Hull 1958, 105). The chapel is traditionally believed to be of Roman origin since the Colchester Chronicle records that when Eudo Dapifer built Colchester Castle, he also restored the chapel of St Helena, which she had erected and dedicated to St John (p 26). Whilst the historical association with St Helena is highly suspect, some credibility can be attached to the chronicle's assertion that the building was a Roman chapel, if only because evidence supporting such a date is provided by the Roman work in the north wall.

Few examples are known in Britain where the perpetuation in this manner of a Roman religious site can be paralleled. Bede, whose contribution in this respect is well known, wrote that when Augustine arrived in Canterbury in 597, King Ethelbert allowed the missionaries to build and restore churches in all places, 'restore' clearly referring to dilapidated Roman buildings (Bede, 1, ch 26). In addition, Bede recorded that Queen Bertha used to worship in a Canterbury church which had been dedicated to St Martin and built by the Romans (Bede, 1, ch 26). St Martin's still exists and there is a possibility that the earliest part of its fabric is Roman (Jenkins 1966). Furthermore, Bede stated that on the site of Christ Church Augustine repaired a Roman church and had it consecrated as his episcopal seat (Bede, 1, ch 33).

The conversion of pagan temples into churches by English missionaries was a process encouraged by Pope Gregory (Bede, 1, ch 30) and alterations to an early 7th century building excavated at Yeavering in Northumberland have been attributed to this practice *(Medieval Archaeol,* 1 (1956), 149). Similarly a 14th century chronicle by William Thorn, a monk in the monastery of St Augustine, Canterbury, states that the parish church of St Pancras, converted into a church by St Augustine, was originally a pagan temple used by King Ethelbert. It has been suggested that the chronicle may be reliable, although of late date (Fletcher 1966, 22). Another somewhat problematic case is the parish church at Lydd in Kent, where contained in the north-west part of the building is a structure thought to be Roman (Fletcher 1966, 38). The best attested surviving example of reused Roman work in a religious context is that of the parish church at Stone-by-Faversham which incorporates a Roman structure postulated as a *martyrium* (Fletcher & Meates 1969, 284; Radford 1972, 6).

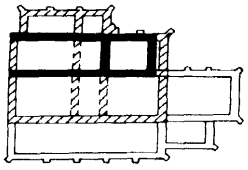
In its Roman form, St Helen's chapel in Colchester need not have had a religious function. The only clue to the plan of the original Roman building is provided by the large walls recorded by Mr Goodyear in 1891 (Fig 41d). Unfortunately, the shape and position of these appear to be highly conjectural (Hull 1958, 105), although their massive nature certainly indicates the site of one or more Roman public buildings. Hull believed that the walls had been part of a Roman theatre (Hull 1958, 106).

Robbed stone and tile were used in the construction of the castle keep, St Botolph's Priory, and in the late Anglo-Saxon and Norman churches. The last group is well illustrated by the discovery and partial excavation in 1972 of the rubble foundations of the church dedicated to St John the Evangelist (Fig 37) and discussed previously in Chapter 4. The construction of St John's Abbey in the



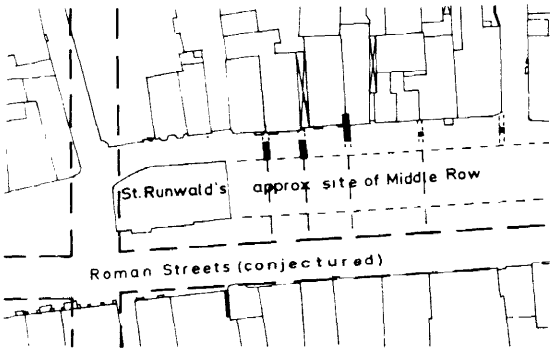
a. Colchester Castle keep

Roman
Norman

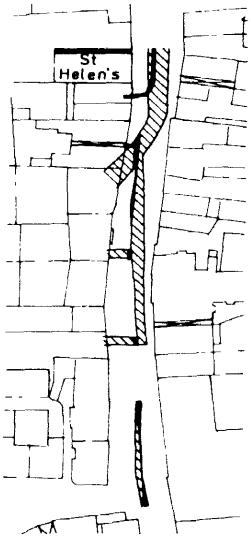


b. St. Nicholas's Church

Roman
14th. century
19th. century



c. St. Runwald's Church and High Street



d. St. Helen's Chapel and Maidenburgh Street

Roman Wall observed
Roman Wall conjectured

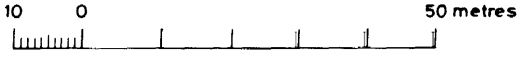


Fig 41 Reused Roman buildings and evidence of continuity of boundaries

late 11th and early part of the 12th century is also likely to have required large quantities of Roman building materials. Medieval walls of this period contain quantities of whole or nearly whole Roman brick which must have derived from above ground Roman remains since the foundations of Roman stone buildings were invariably composed of rubble and contained little tile or brick. This is especially noticeable at St Botolph's Priory Church, founded 1093-1100 (Peers 1964).

From the Lion Walk excavations in particular, it is clear that extensive robbing of Roman foundations occurred mainly in the 12th and early 13th centuries. This activity supports the view that by the end of the 12th century standing Roman ruins in Colchester had either been cleared away or amalgamated in more recent structures and that reusable building materials, apart from timber, were becoming scarce.

With the exception of the part by the Balkerne Gate, the town wall has lost its outer facing. The section through the wall at Lion Walk (Fig 31) demonstrates that this had occurred before *c* 1400 when the bastions were built and parts of the wall refaced. In the town's earliest surviving court rolls, the number of presentments recorded for the theft of stone indicates that in the 14th century and probably for many centuries beforehand, the town wall provided a convenient, albeit illicit, source of building materials.

Property boundaries

Figure 42 is based on the Ordnance Survey 1:500 maps of 1875-6 and is an attempt to compare the medieval property boundaries with the alignment of the Roman town underneath. The Roman roads are shown stippled and the parish boundaries indicated by broken lines. The property boundaries have been divided into three categories. The first consists of boundaries which are demonstrably of some antiquity and in Figure 42 are

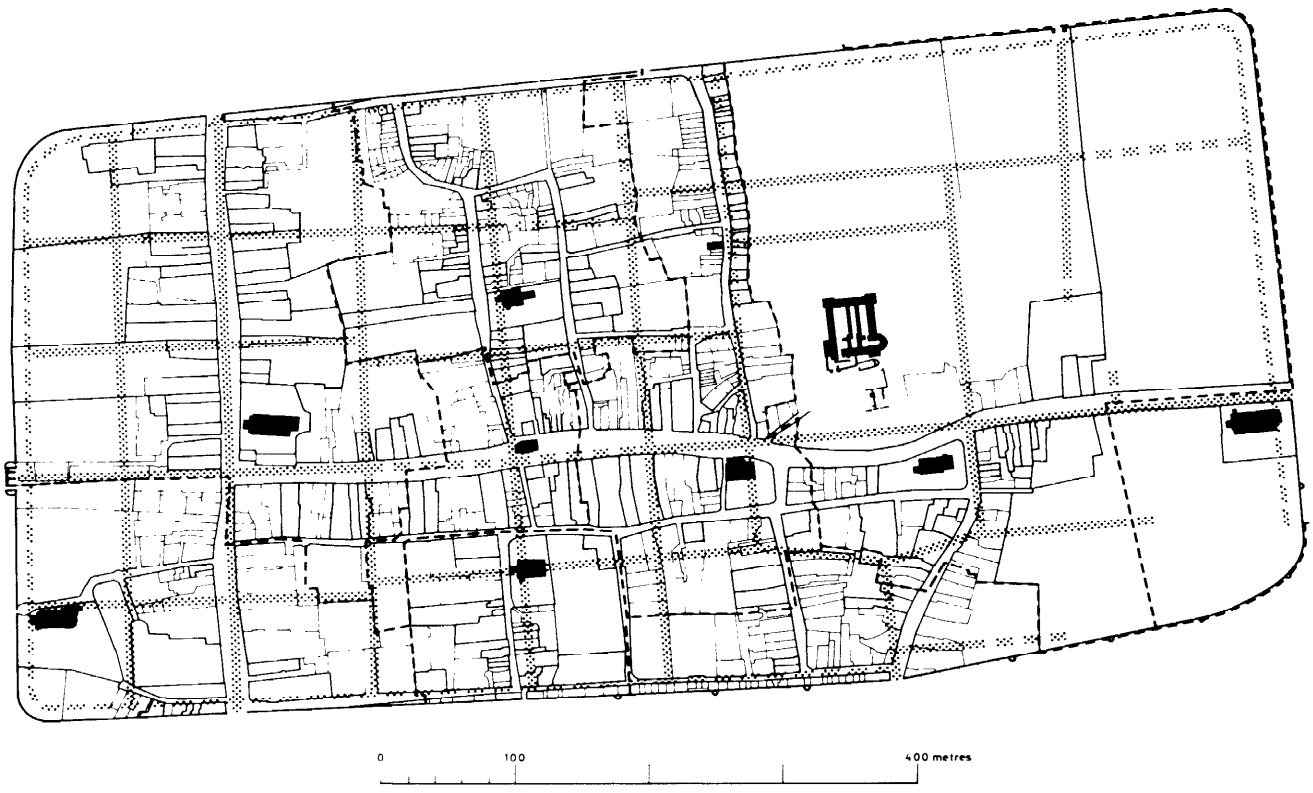


Fig 42 Medieval property boundaries in relation to the Roman town

shown in bold. The second category is composed of boundaries which are demonstrably not medieval or earlier and have consequently been omitted from the plan. The third type consists of property boundaries that cannot at present be allocated to either the first or the second categories; these are shown in faint. The principal method used to detect recent property boundaries is the examination of roofs of existing buildings and of those shown in photographs of demolished houses so that boundaries on the 1875-6 maps which divide plots under one roof into two or more properties can be omitted. Roads of recent origin (as detailed in Appendix 3) and their associated property boundaries have also been excluded as well as the house plots laid out over the castle ditch by Norfolk in 1680-3 (Morant 1748, **1,** 9).

The boundaries thus isolated cannot be claimed as all necessarily medieval, but only at least as old as their respective houses, few of which are likely to predate *c* 1500. However, the loss and change of boundaries in Colchester appear to be processes confined principally to recent times and many of the boundaries shown in bold in Figure 42 are likely to be much older than their respective buildings would imply. No doubt, since Figure 42 is highly subjective, it contains many inaccuracies but, since the purpose of the plan is to detect broad relationships between the orientation of the medieval plots and the earlier Roman town, a high proportion of error is tolerable.

From an examination of the plan thus produced, several points emerge. Only the High Street, East Hill, Head Street, and North Hill share the same position as earlier streets, a fact attributable no doubt to the use in the Anglo-Saxon town of the Roman gates at East Gate, Head Gate, and North Gate. All the other streets of medieval Colchester run across *insulae* of the Roman town and can only have been constructed after the Roman ruins in their vicinity had gone. The two main areas where the plots coincide with the orientation of the underlying parts of the Roman town are on the north side of the High Street between St Runwald's Church and Maidenburgh Street and at St Nicholas's Church. The boundaries in the first of these areas have a consistency of direction absent elsewhere in the town and in particular contrast with the bulk of the property boundaries to the south between High Street and Culver Street.

In a trench for a gas main dug in 1927 along the northern pavement of the High Street, four Roman walls were found (Fig 41c) all of which lined up with present day property boundaries to the north (Hull 1958, 159). Three of the four walls were again observed in 1975 in another trench dug this time along the northern part of the road itself. In 1973, a continuation of one of these walls was found to have been incorporated into the eastern side of the cellar of 125 High Street,[3] In addition to this group, a hitherto unrecorded fifth wall was uncovered which lined up approximately with the western frontage of East Stockwell Street (Fig 41c).

These discoveries represent further evidence that the frontage of the High Street between St Runwald's and Maidenburgh Street has fossilized the imprint of the Roman town underneath and are important because they suggest that post-Roman Colchester was never entirely replanned. St Runwald's itself fits neatly into the pattern particularly as it lies at the corner of two Roman streets

and consequently the reuse of Roman walls may have occurred here too. Unfortunately, the position of the east-west Roman road in this part of the High Street is not known exactly (Crummy 1978, 85), which may account for the slight discrepancy in alignments between St Runwald's and the Roman street as shown in Figure 41c.

A Roman wall has also been recorded which forms Dart of the east side of the cellar of 34 High Street (RCHM 1922, 55). (This is shown in Figure 41c just south of St Runwald's.) This arrangement may be fortuitous or may indicate that, in addition to St Nicholas's Church, the alignments of some other properties alone the southern High Street frontage are also related to earlier Roman remains.

'Pinched-ends'

Certain of the streets have constrictions at one end which for present purposes will be referred to as 'pinched-ends'. The generally accepted explanation for these is that they are the result of encroachments of properties onto their adjacent streets. However, another reason can be put forward. This is that pinched-ends can also occur when a strip of a property has been given up to form the T-junction of a new street and consequently, owing to pressures on space along the pre-existing frontage, has been kept to a narrow width. That this was a cause of Dinched-ends is shown by the creation of Nunn's Road in *c* 1842 when a Dinched-end was formed by convertine a private side entrance onto North Hill into the western end of the new street (Fig 1). In such cases, roads with pinched-ends are of crucial importance when studying the development of street plans, since they must be secondary.

The principal medieval streets in Colchester which have pinched-ends are West and East Stockwell Streets, Maidenburgh Street, and Culver Street (Figs 1 & 42), but it is not possible to determine with certainty which of the two causes was responsible for any of them. In the case of West and East Stockwell Streets and Culver Street, each pinched-end is slightly out of alignment with its street suggesting that the roads were laid out when the High Street and Head Street frontages were already built up. Their pinched-ends therefore are most likely the result of the second of the two causes described above.

Evidence of town planning

A number of boundaries survive which appear to relate to some early division of land within the walled area of the town. Figure 43 shows the positions of the principal medieval street frontages and also the boundaries which are primary, ie those boundaries to which others are butted to form T-junctions. An examination of the various dimensions shown in Figure 43 (Crummy 1979) reveals a fairly consistent pattern which suggests that within the walled area of the town there has been a systematic division of land based on a module four poles long (ie a unit of 22 yards). The land within the town walls can be split up into four main areas, three of which display some evidence of a regular layout. These three are (i) north of High Street and east of North Hill, (ii) west of Head Street and North Hill, and (iii) east of Head Street and south of Culver Street. The last two areas seem to have been divided up into units of 40 poles with subdivisions of 16 and 24 poles, whereas the first appears to have been laid out as 12 pole units. No standardized dimensions based on a four pole module are detectable in the fourth area which is situated between High Street and Culver Street although since the whole block is 108 poles long, it may have been laid out as, for example, nine 12 pole units.

When considering these dimensions, two further explanations have to be borne in mind. These are (i) that the standardized distances arc a reflection of the Roman town plan or (ii) that the apparent consistency in dimensions is simply fortuitous. Certainly in the case of the two 39/40 pole dimensions west of Head Street and North Hill, both of these might be related to the Roman town plan since the boundaries lie along Roman roads and each dimension encompasses a block of four Roman *insulae* (cf Fig 42). However, the other two areas which display elements of modular planning show no obvious correspondence with the underlying part of the Roman street grid.

Depending on the side of the road chosen, a variety of measurements is possible. It must be stressed, therefore, that the dimensions shown in Figure 43 are those which are closest to the distances of 12, 16,24, or 40 poles so that to a certain extent the evidence as presented here is contrived. Despite these serious qualifications, there is prima facie a good case for supposing that land within the walls was divided up on a planned basis.

Originally the whole area east of North Hill and Head Street is likely to have been divided up as a unified scheme. As shown by broken lines in Figure 43, Long Wyre Street almost lines up with Maidenburgh Street, and Trinity Street is in alignment with most of West Stockwell Street. These alignments would seem to indicate the unity of the original layout. Since Trinity Street and Long Wyre Street converge northwards, the difference in the pattern of modules north and south of the High Street could be explained as a result. On the other hand, the 12 pole dimension or multiples of it seem fairly consistent no matter how far north of the High Street these are measured and also, since twelve is a multiple of four, the dimension itself is convincing. (The significance of multiples of four poles is more apparent in Chapter 7 (pp 71-3) in the discussion of other examples of such planning.) Whatever the explanation, however, the orientation and the break between the road system north and south of the High Street indicate that the Culver Street-High Street area is later than the modular planning and represents a subsequent replanning of the town.

The eastern end of the High Street had to be diverted southwards for the construction of the new bailey defences in *c* 1076. Since the eastern end of Culver Street does not curve correspondingly, the reconstruction of the whole of the Culver Street-High Street area must have taken place by *c* 1076.

The development of the parish of Holy Trinity (Fig 44)

In 1974, it was tentatively suggested that the parish of Holy Trinity was likely to have been cut out of pre-existing parishes between 950 and 1050 (Crummy 1974,26-33). The date was reached on the basis of the two following points: (i) that the tower of' Holy Trinity Church is pre-Conquest (Taylor & Taylor 1965, 162-4), and (ii) that the framework of the parochial system in England was established as a consequence of the legislation of Edmund in 936-46 and of Edgar in 970 relating to the payment of tithes (Rogers 1972, 46-7).

The assertion that the parish of Holy Trinity postdates the initial parochial layout was based on the following points: (i) that the parish of Holy Trinity does not extend to the High Street and therefore is unlikely to be early, and (ii) that the parish boundaries of Holy Trinity are rectangular in layout and appear to have been cut out of the parishes of St Runwald's and St Nicholas's." However, when these conclusions were made, the evidence as discussed above for a systematic post-Roman division of

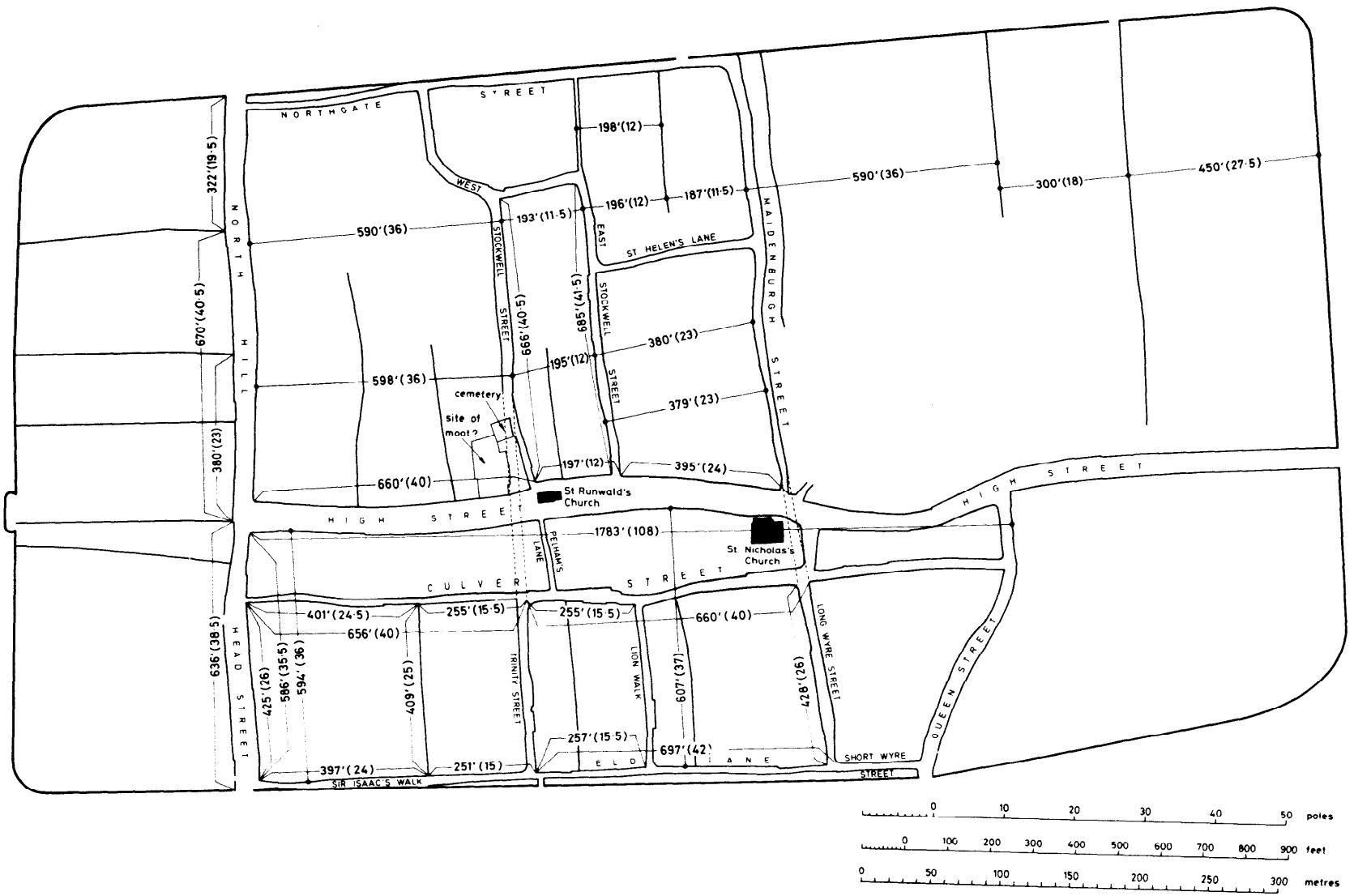
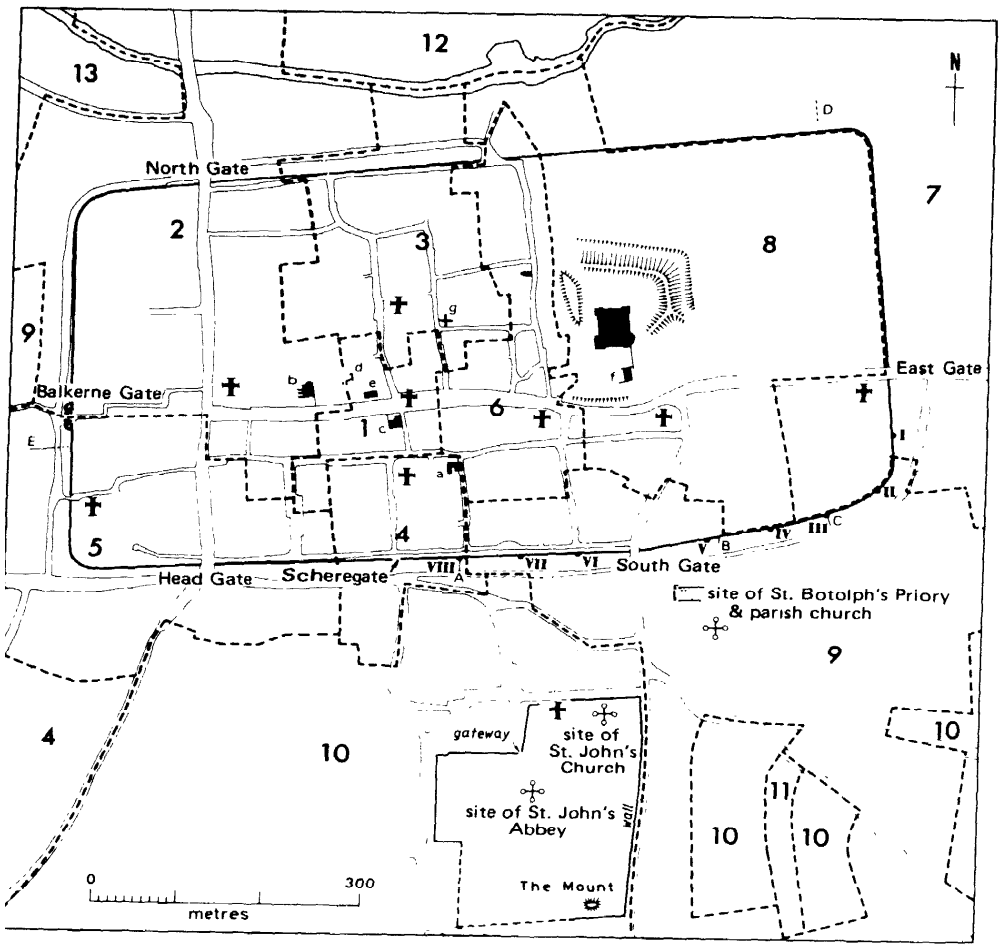


Fig 43 Colchester's town centre: evidence of town planning



PARISHES 1848

1 . . . St. Runwald
2 . . . St. Peter
3 . . . St. Martin
4 . . . Holy Trinity
5 . . . St. Mary-at-the-Watts
6 . . . St. Nicholas
7 . . . St. James
8. . . All Saints
9. . . St. Botolph
10. . . St. Giles
11 . . . St. Mary Magdalen
12 . . . St. Michael Mile End
13. . . Lexden

--- . . . parish boundaries
✝ . . . parish church
a-g. . . stone houses
A-E. . . sections across town ditches
I-VIII . . . bastions

Fig 44 Colchester: parish boundaries, churches, stone houses, bastions, and sections across town defences

land within the walled area of the town had not been recognized and since the boundaries of Holy Trinity parish are part of this scheme, the last point above needs revision. Despite this new aspect, it still seems likely that because of the position of Holy Trinity parish in relation to the High Street, it postdates the initial parochial layout of the town. Since Lion Walk and East Stockwell Street do not line up with each other, it seems likely that these streets are not part of the early street system but that they were laid out when their respective parishes were created.

There is no assumption here that the combined legislation of Edmund and Edgar was totally effective but the date of this does provide an indirect terminus *post quem* for the establishment of the parish of Holy Trinity.

11th century ditch at the Lion Walk site

In Chapter 3, the pottery from the bottom of the ditch is described and dated to 1050-75, The ditch has been identified only at the Lion Walk site, although other excavations (the locations of which are shown in Figure 44 by the letters A to E) show that the earthwork did not extend all the way round the wall circuit and was probably confined to the southern side of the town. The results of excavation B (Hull 1958,54-7) proved inconclusive and at excavations E and D the ditch was absent. In excavation C a feature was found, the position of which in relation to the town wall corresponds to that of the Saxo-Norman ditch at Lion Walk. Although a defensive role for this was discounted by the excavator because he felt that the feature was too shallow (Holbert 1965, 44-9), a comparison with the foundation level of the nearby bastion indicates an original depth of about 2·75m, which is roughly the same as that of the Lion Walk ditch measured on the south side.

The absence of the ditch north and west of the town may imply that, although planned, the circuit was never completed, although the occurrence of a series of bastions built *c* 1400 (Hull 1958, 45-57) along the same stretch of town wall as the ditch suggests that this need not necessarily be the case. The ditch, like the bastions, may have been confined to this part of the wall circuit because it was here that the Roman structure was in its poorest condition. Between East Gate and Scheregate the wall was in a particularly bad state before the repair work of *c* 1400 when the existing structure was renovated by rebuilding and refacing. In places the wall had cracked at the base of its inner face and tilted forward, whereas in others it had fallen over and been removed (Hull 1958, 47-57). The Saxo-Norman ditch can best be seen, therefore, as a measure intended to supplement the defensive wall circuit of the town without resorting to reconstruction or repair work in the manner of *c* 1400.

A gravel surface was observed at the southern end of the section through the Saxo-Norman ditch at Lion Walk (Fig 31) and appears to have been the edge of a gravel road constructed when the ditch was dug. This probably corresponds to a similar discovery at excavation C (Holbert 1965) and thus the two surfaces may represent the origin of Vineyard Street and Priory Street respectively, laid out as one scheme.

The position of St Runwald's Church in the High Street

An attractive explanation for the curious position of St Runwald's is as follows. The northern frontage of the High Street east of the church was formerly continuous with the southern side of St Runwald's nave and was firmly related to the position of the underlying Roman structures. Although the Anglo-Saxon frontage was 3 or 4m back from the edge of the Roman street, the gap corresponds to the standard width of the footways in Roman Colchester and therefore is consistent with the hypothesis that the positions of the Anglo-Saxon and Roman frontages coincided. The southern ends of the properties due east of St Runwald's were taken over and demolished to provide a large market place. St Runwald's was retained and left standing rather awkwardly in the market place. The present line of the frontage north of the church may have originally continued westwards to the southern side of the Moot Hall, thus explaining the encroachment there of 1373-4 (p 61). Middle Row (Fig 53) represented a later development originating from temporary stalls in the centre of the market place.

Notes

1 Made clear in the Court Rolls where the leasing of plots throughout the 14th century is recorded.
2 The meander is dried up on account of a man-made bank cutting it off from the main course of the Colne. The creek may have been navigable for small boats as late as the 16th century, although Morant was sceptical about this (Morant 1748, 2, 18-19).
3 During the course of a cellar survey undertaken by the writer.
4 St Nicholas's parish need not have been founded by this stage but may have been part of St Runwald's parish.
5 Large scale archaeological excavations at Balkerne Lane between 1973 and 1976 (Crummy 1977).
6 Unpublished section across the defences by Miss R Dunnett (now Mrs Niblett).

Chapter 6

Stone houses in Colchester

Summary

The remains of seven early medieval stone houses from Colchester are now known, including the recently excavated examples at Lion Walk and the Cups Hotel. The most remarkable of these was the Moot Hall, built c 1160 with carved windows and doorway.

In the post-Roman period, the practice of building with materials robbed from Roman ruins extended to secular circumstances where a total of seven buildings excluding the castle are known to have been constructed in this fashion. These are dealt with in turn below.

(a) Stone house at the junction of Lion Walk and Culver Street (Figs 45, 46, & 53)

The remains of the house were demolished in 1971 (Fig 46) and the foundations excavated archaeologically in 1972-3. The house appears to have been a first-floor hall with a basement at ground level. The foundations sealed a penny of Henry I dated to *c* 1120. Two rooms were added to the southern side of the hall. The western room may have been a kitchen or alternatively a ground-floor replacement for the first-floor hall. In one of its corners was a shallow semicircular recess which showed signs of being burnt and was probably the remains of a corner fireplace. The eastern room was demolished and the property enclosed on its two street frontages with a stone wall incorporating an entrance on the north. Clearly security was important to the occupants of the house.

The wall which survived until 1971 consisted mainly of coursed rubble and formed the northern side of the basement of the hall. It retained sections of two semicircular arches, the eastern one of which was part of a doorway. Not enough survived of the western arch to determine whether it had been part of a doorway or window. A doorway with a two-centred head was inserted into the eastern end of the surviving wall and the breach above made good with random rubble-walling. The central doorway was reduced in width by the construction of a new western jamb perhaps intended to support a wooden lintel similar to that of the inserted two-centred doorway. Subsequently, much of the eastern end of the wall was replaced with a new coursed-rubble wall which was extended to block the central and eastern doorways.

The lowest few courses survived of the jambs of a doorway linking the basement and the room on the south-western side of the hall. The doorway had been reduced in width by the addition of a new western jamb in the same manner as the central doorway in the northern wall of the basement. A further doorway presumably existed between the basement and the south-eastern room, but since the walls in this area had been demolished to foundation level, no evidence of any jambs was found.

The basement was not vaulted, but there is limited archaeological evidence to suggest that the upper floor may have been supported by two central posts, although the span of the hall is such that it is difficult to envisage why support of this nature should have been considered necessary. Nevertheless, a sub-rectangular pit with stones in the bottom may possibly have been intended to provide a base for a Samson post since it was neatly situated in the centre of the eastern half of the hall area. The existence of an equivalent feature in the western part of the floor could not be established because the area had been destroyed by a brick cellar.

The various additions and alterations in stone took place by the 15th or 16th century when the house was

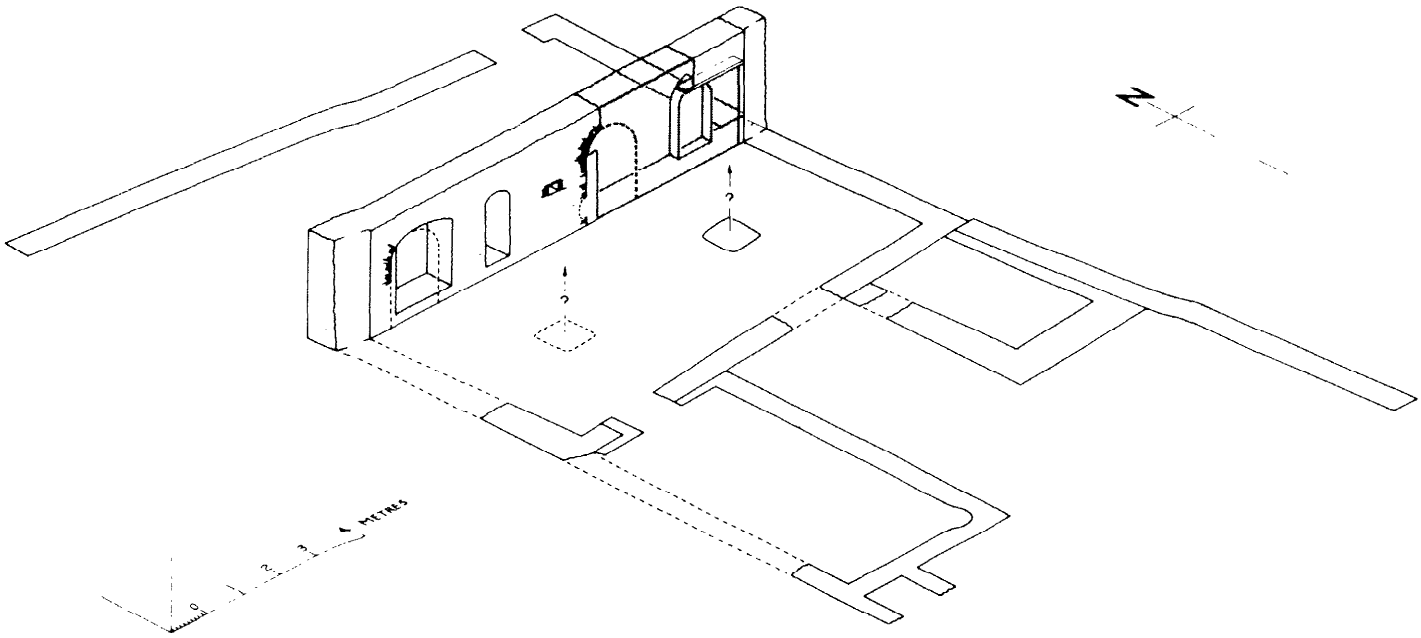


Fig 45 Lion Walk stone house. Isometric drawing. Grey indicates later rebuilding in stone

substantially rebuilt in timber.

Two gaps for doorways were made through the western half of the basement's northern wall. The eastern breach was narrow and had a rough three-centred head, whereas the new western doorway was wider and had a segmental head. To judge by the poor quality of the work, both doorways are comparatively late and are very unlikely to predate the rebuilding of the house in timber.

The possibility that the original house may have been a ground-floor hall should be considered since this cannot be ruled out on the basis of the available fragmentary structural evidence. However, no trace of either a wall fireplace or a central hearth was found within the hall area of the building, nor was any evidence discovered of internal partitions necessary to divide off a through-passage or service rooms, although admittedly the western part of the floor of the hall area had been destroyed and therefore could not be examined. The possibility should also be noted that the first floor may have been timber-framed rather than built of stone since the surviving walls did not extend above basement level.

(b) Stone house in Foundry Yard (Figs 47-51 & 53)

The house was demolished in 1886 but during the demolition works a ground plan and some elevations (Fig 47) were made and a series of photographs taken of which two are reproduced here (Figs 48 & 49). These were done at the instigation of Dr J H Round who with the assistance of some others also carried out some rudimentary excavations and established that the 'edifice was more extensive than has hitherto been suspected'. The results of this work and Round's conclusions are set out by him in a lengthy letter on the subject in the *Essex Standard* of October 1886.[1,2]

From these sources, including a painting of the basement by Mary Benham (Fig 50), an isometric plan (Fig 51) has been produced which illustrates the known features of the building. The ground plan as shown here can be taken as reliable, but at first-floor level the size and nature of the features should only be regarded as being broadly indicated since our only knowledge of these is photographic.

The structure consisted principally of a first-floor hall with a barrel-vaulted basement sunk partially below ground level and a narrow east-west room to the south. The basement contained four, probably five loop windows, four doorways, only three of which were apparently original, and seven round-headed recesses. The precise nature of the two apertures in the northern wall of the basement is obscure but of these Round in his letter wrote that'... the ground level must have risen, on the north by some three feet, for the lower portion of the doorway [ie the central aperture] has been broken through to form the later entrance.' The first floor of the hall contained at least three round-headed openings of which two were probably doorways and the other a window. The narrow east-west room was not a passage since its eastern wall contained a tall round-headed window rather than a doorway. The walls shown on the plans as adjoining the basement were presumably uncovered by Round and his assistants during their excavations.

Round thought the stone building formed part of a group of tenements that according to Morant'. . . are visibly the remains of an old Inn, and go in old writings under the name of the Berghold . . .' (Morant 1748, **3,** 7n). Unfortunately we are at present unable to confirm Round's claim that the building in Foundry Yard and that referred to by Morant are one and the same. If, as is evidently the case *(loc cit),* Morant's source for the name, his so-called 'old writings', is the *Oath Book,* then he misquotes the name because it is 'Bergholtes' not 'the Berghold'. Round compounds the error further by suggesting that this should read 'burghold' and that

Fig 46 The Northern wall of the Norman hall at Lion Walk, looking north

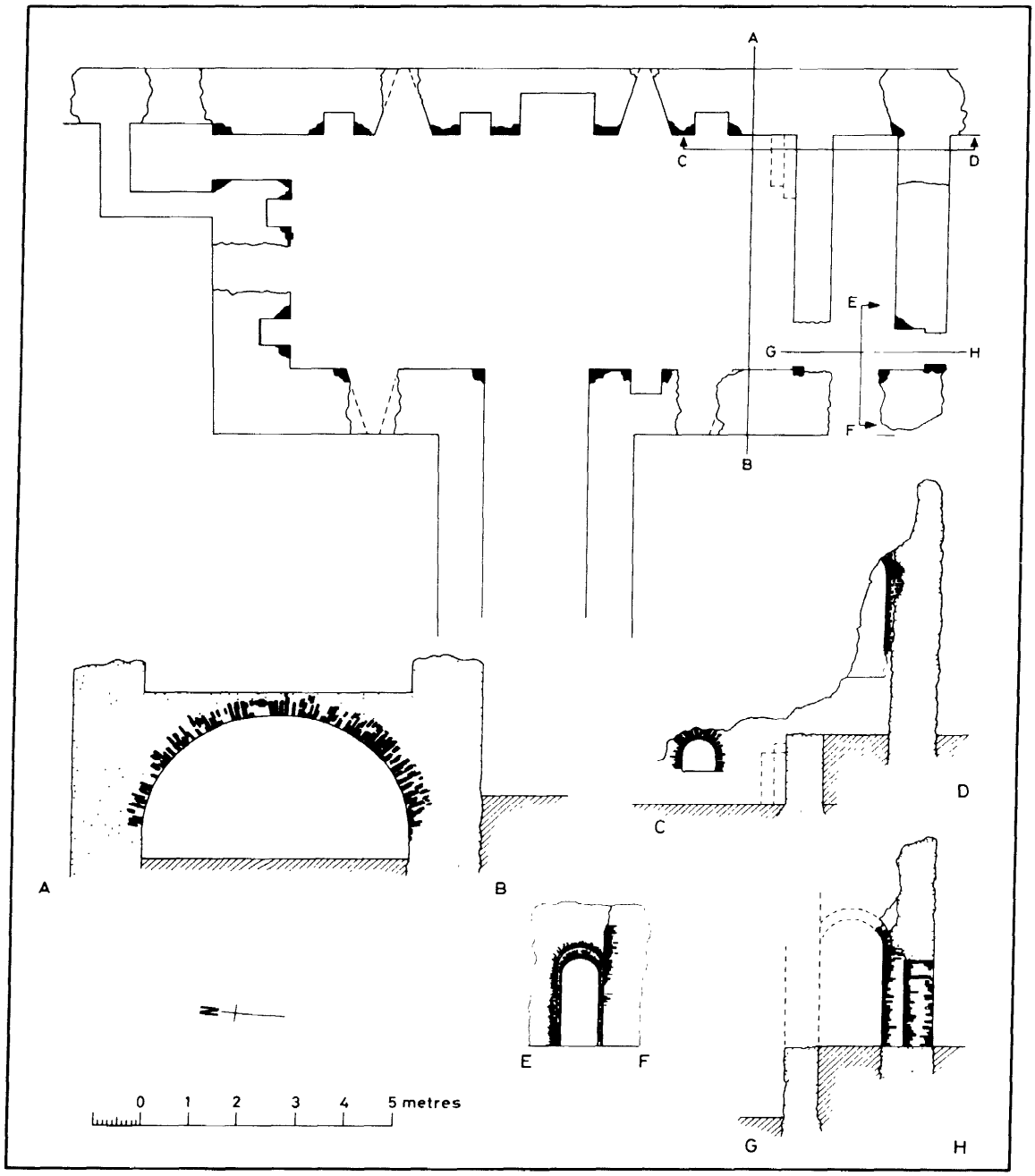


Fig 47 Foundry Yard stone house. Ground plan and elevations (after an original plan made in 1886 by L J Watts)

therefore the building was at one time the '(strong) hold of the Borough', a conclusion which in any case is etymologically unsound. More plausibly, the building was simply a private house associated in some way with East or West Bergholt.[3]

(c) Stone house at the junction of Pelham's Lane and High Street (Figs 52 & 53)

The house was demolished in 1730 but fortunately an elevation of the rear wall and a measured ground plan[4] have survived enabling the reconstruction in Figure 52 to be produced. This illustration, like Figure 51, shows only the features which can be drawn from the available evidence and does not necessarily illustrate the stone structure as it existed at the time of its demolition. The original drawing of the southern wall, whilst consistent at ground level with its accompanying plan and the width of the plot as shown in the 1876 Ordnance Survey map, appears to be proportionally too high. To counteract this anomaly, the three upper windows have been shown as being much closer to the floor of the hall than in the original drawing. In general, the horizontal dimensions of all the features in Figure 52 can be taken as fairly reliable, whereas the vertical ones cannot.

Fig 48 The stone house at Foundry Yard during demolition, looking south from inside basement. Photograph by J C Shenstone

Fig 49 The stone house at Foundry Yard during demolition: eastern wall of basement. Photograph by J C Shenstone

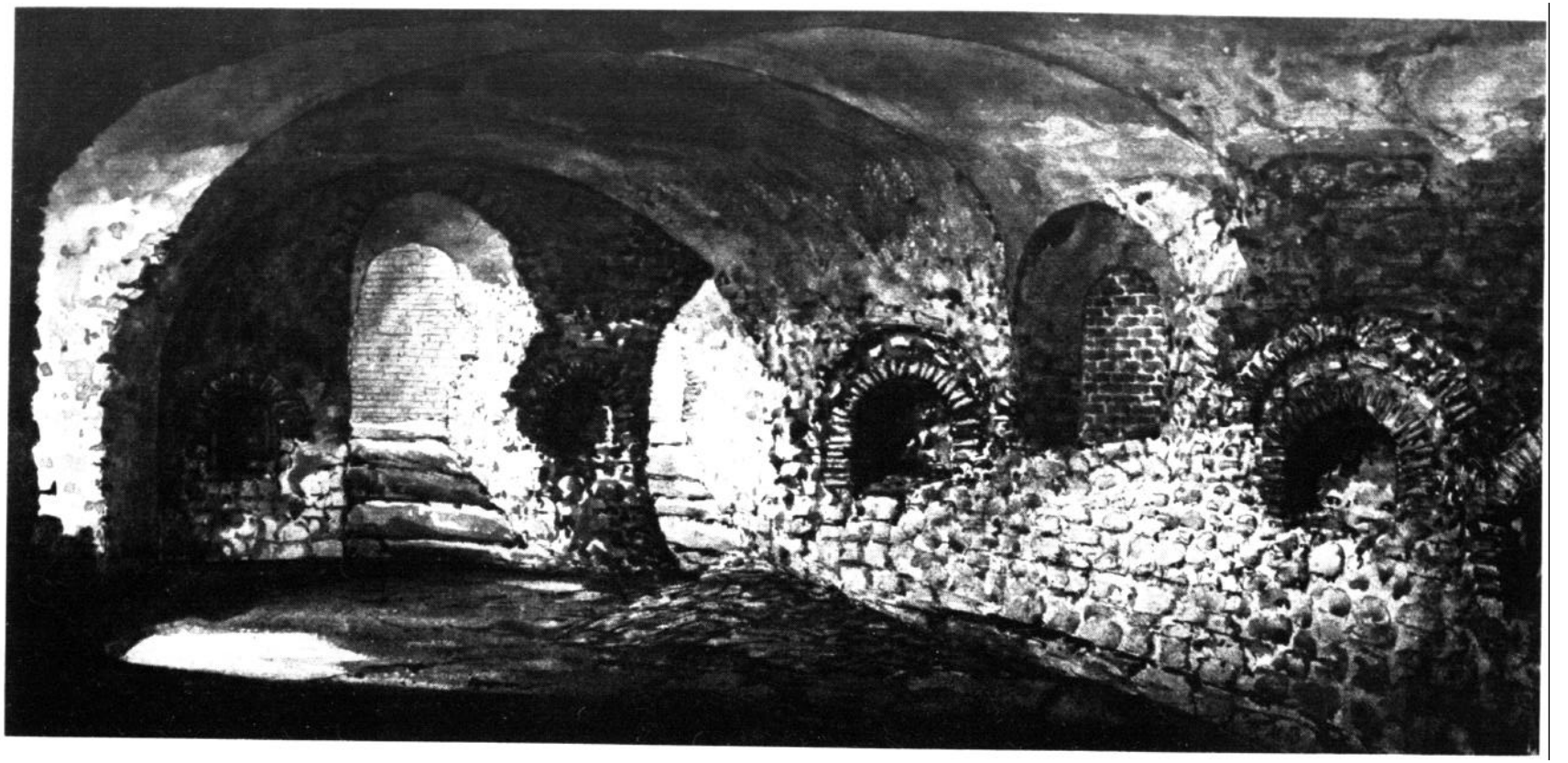


Fig 50 Basement of the stone house at Foundry Yard, looking north. Painting by Mary Benham

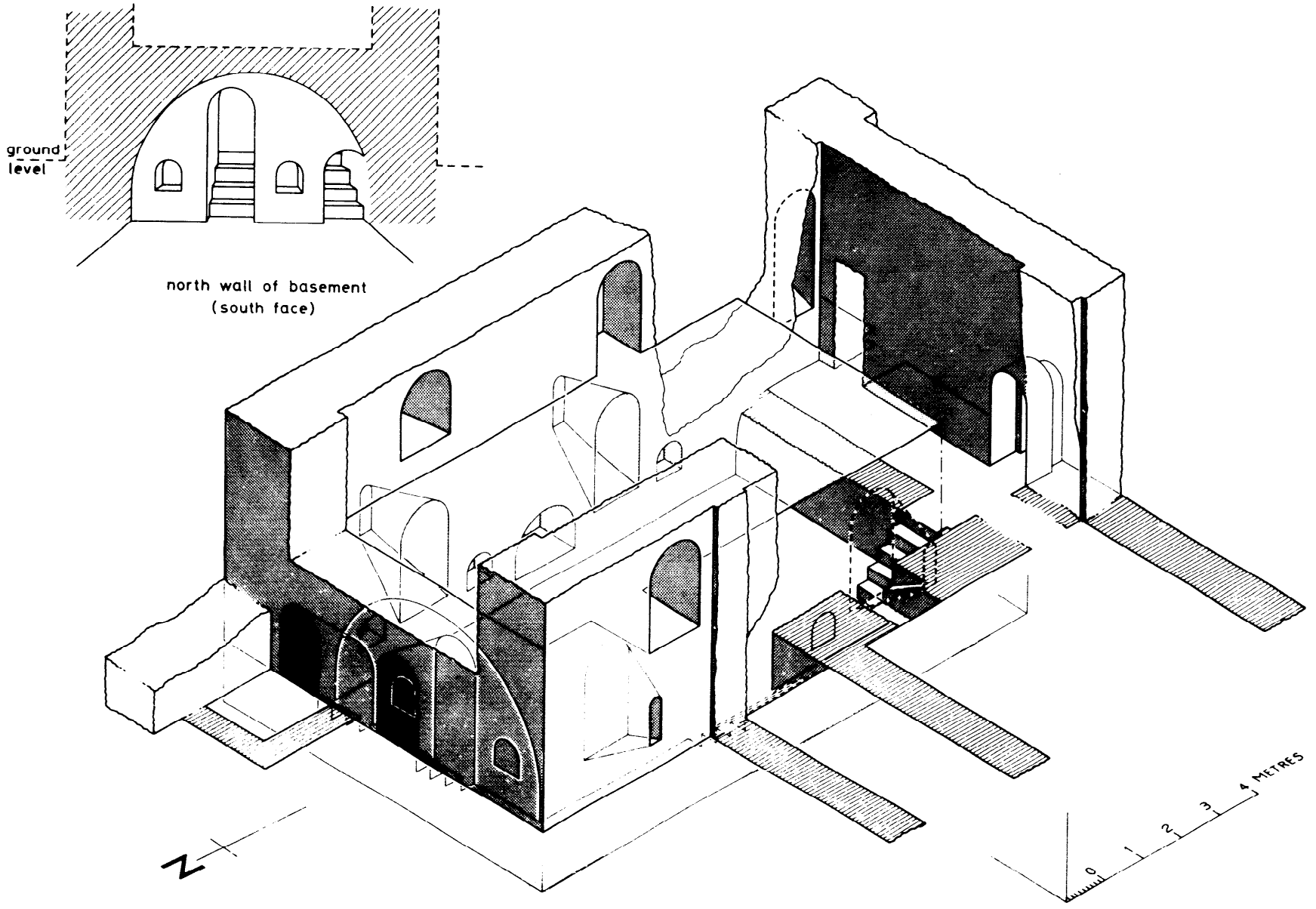


Fig 51 Foundry Yard stone house. Isometric drawing. The shading has no significance in terms of period

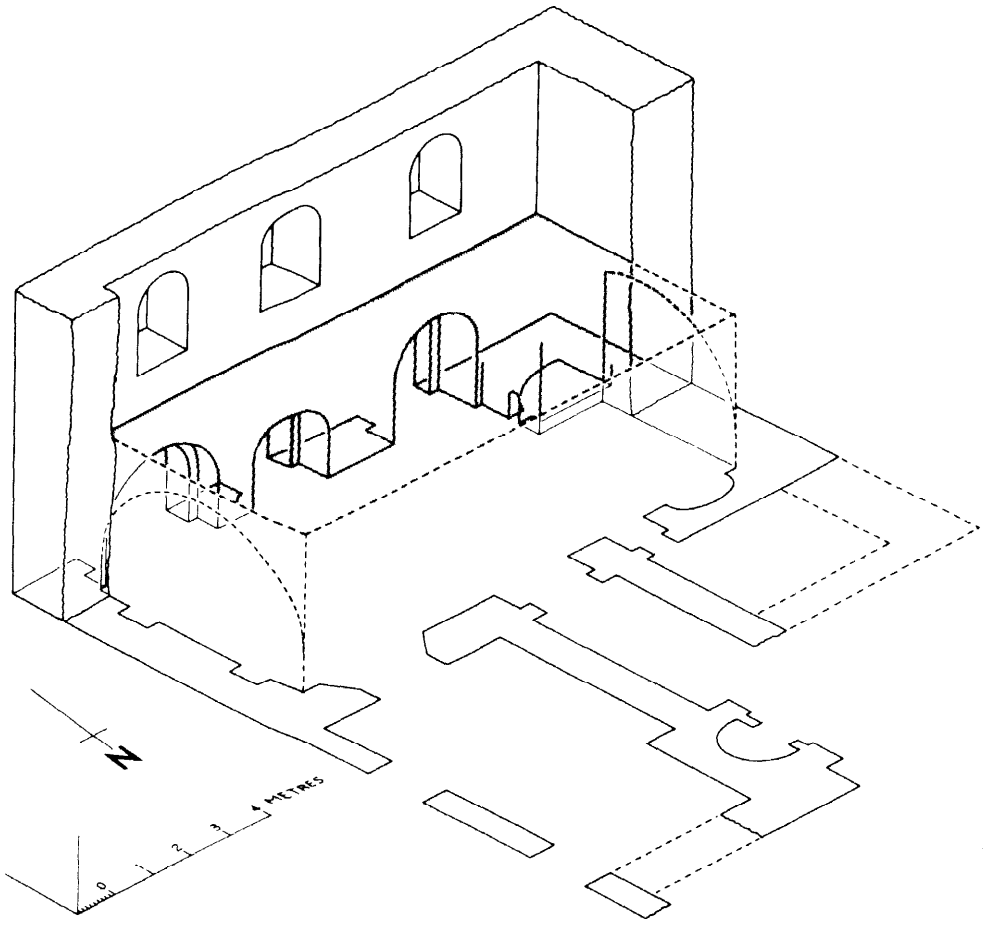


Fig 52 Pelham's Lane stone house. Isometric drawing. The shading has no significance in terms of period

The rear part of the house consisted of a first-floor hall with a barrel-vaulted basement and three south-facing windows. The basement was possibly at ground level rather than sunken since, if the situation had been otherwise, there might have been an indication of such on the original plan or a reference to a 'cellar'. There appears to have been a wall fireplace in the northern wall of the basement. This is probably not original since its recess is fairly shallow compared with 12th century and later types (Wood 1965, 261-76). The fireplace to the north-east of this would seem from its shape and central location to have been inserted and is likely therefore to date to no earlier than the 16th century.

The front Dart of the house was rebuilt in timber and apparently incorporated a fascia board along its bressumer with the date 1490. The question, hotly debated in the 18th century, about whether the date really read 1090 can be discounted,[5] although it perhaps helps to explain the house's popular, if fanciful, association with Eudo Dapifer (Morant 1748, 2, 32). Stone walls[6] and Thetford-type ware (Fig 32, 1& 2) were discovered on the site during redevelopment in 1935 *(CMR* 1935-7, 45).

(d) Stone house at the rear of the site of the Cups Hotel (Fig 53)

The plan of this building can only be partially restored. The information shown here (Fig 53) is based on a trench dug in 1974 by contractors to the north of the main building work on the site of the Cups Hotel. The rubble walls appeared to contain no peg-tile and are therefore unlikely to be later than the 13th century.

In a letter, Stukeley stated that the building was part of the Queen's Head (subsequently the Cups Hotel) and that it was either demolished or at least extensively altered early in the 18th century. He wrote that the Queen's Head was 'looked upon as one of the most valuable remains of antiquity, there being in it a very antique building, which the old people still have a notion of, under the name of temple' *(Surtees Soc Pubs* 76, 162; Hull 1958, 151n).

(e) The Moot Hall (Figs 53 to 59)

The Moot Hall and its associated buildings were demolished in 1843 and replaced by a new town hall on the same site. The plan of the building cannot be restored but from various sources the following facts emerge.

The main part of the complex consisted of a fine raised hall aligned east-west, the floor of which was elevated six feet (1.8m) above the level of the street and which had doorways in both its northern and southern walls. The southern doorway (Fig 54) was centrally placed and flanked by two roughly equidistant windows, the sills of which were three feet (0.9m) above the floor of the hall.

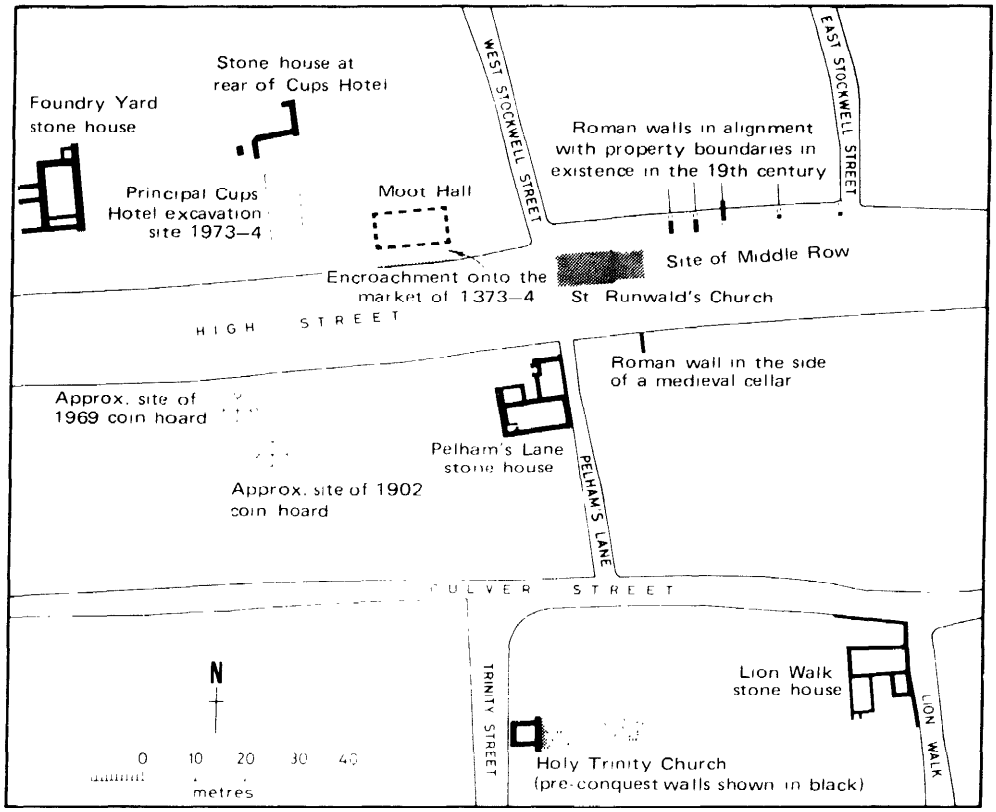


Fig 53 Stone houses in the town centre (The coin hoards are 13th century. See p 70 n 14 and Clarke et al *1974)*

Only one of these two windows survived. Fortunately this was drawn by Mr A J Sprague (Fig 55) who also prepared a scaled restoration of the remains (Fig 56). A third round-headed window was situated in one of the end walls (Fig 57) *(J Brit Archaed Ass,* **1** (1846), 143). The height of the hall floor in relation to the street suggests that the basement must have been partially sunk below ground level. In Figure 53 the dimensions of the Moot Hall are conjectural and the location derived from a plan of 1811 of St Runwald's Parish (ERO D/DR P20).

In 1373 several improvements were made. To provide facilities for a wool market, the basement was 'restored with decent windows for throwing sufficient light into . . . the cellar (ie basement) and . . . its walls . . . strengthened. In addition, two sets of steps were provided, one of which led from the market place to the southern entrance of the hall and is presumably that shown in Figure 54. The other set led from the northern entrance of the hall to a yard. A porch with an overhanging arched roof was constructed over the southern entrance to the hall and flanked by newly-built shops apparently occupying land previously vacant *(Red Paper Book,* 6- 10).

In 1748 Morant described the buildings to the north of the Moot Hall thus: 'and, North . . . a large Room; over which is the Freemens Chamber . . . Out of the large Room below is the Council-room . . . Partly under, and partly adjoyning to this Hall [? the Council-room], is the Town-gaol . . .' (Morant 1748, **2,** 10).

The prisons lay 39ft (11.8m) back from the High Street frontage on the north-east side of- the Moot Hall.[7] In 1843 they consisted of two adjacent buildings with walls the thickness of which Mr Hull took to imply vaults (Hull 1958, 151). Records of prisons at the Moot Hall date back to at least 1367 *(Court Rolls Col, sa* 1367).

Several illustrations survive which show the southern elevation of the Moot Hall complex. Two of these are reproduced in Figures 58 and 59. In Figure 58 the porch is shown in the centre and the roof of the Moot Hall is visible in the background. The bell tower at the rear of the porch presumably contained the bell which is now kept in the present town hall. This has been dated to probably *c* 1400 (RCHM 1922, 54) and consequently is likely to have been a product of the improvements of 1373-4. The four-centred entrance to the porch is characteristic of the 15th and 16th centuries rather than the 14th, so that the porch has probably been altered or rebuilt. Indeed, one illustration (Fig 59) shows mouldings of what may have been a destroyed two-centred archway.

Colchester received its first charter in 1189 so that it would be apposite to postulate that the Moot Hall dated to this event. However, among the list of privileges granted, the charter confirmed the rights of the burgesses to the proceeds from the fisheries and wharves of the river Colne as they had held them since the reign of Henry I *(Chart Col,* 2) implying that before 1189 the burgesses enjoyed some degree of corporate unity. Thus the Moot Hall could predate the charter and indeed Professor Zarnecki's discussion below of the Moot Hall sculptures indicates that this was the case by several decades.

No records exist of a merchant guild in Colchester so that the Moot Hall is unlikely to have originally been a guild hall. Clearly common halls as well as guild halls such as St Mary's Guild in Lincoln (Wood 1974, 37-40) must often have been lavishly decorated, considerably more so than would be expected in normal domestic stone buildings of

Fig 54 Doorway leading to the upper chamber of the Moot Hall (artist unknown but probably William Wire)

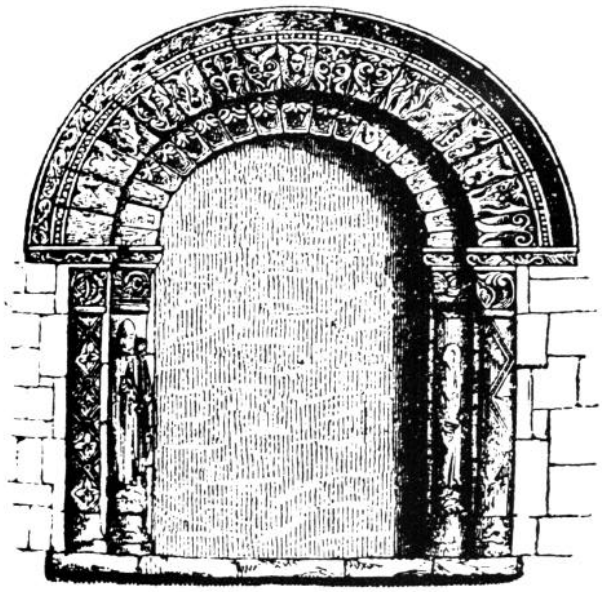


Fig 55 A J Sprague's drawing of the window of the Moot Hall

the time. The sense of civic pride which common halls could symbolize is illustrated in Colchester's *Red Paper Book* by the entry made after the improvements to the Moot Hall of 1373-4. This reads, ' . . . if you will now wisely consider with how great a veneration this house, which our fathers have occupied and have so much regarded, and have left us at the present time. is to be honoured; wherein the more important Archives of the whole commonalty are ratified, and the judgements and counsels of justice are continually delivered for the benefit of parties there assembling, so that this house of the commonalty of Colchester might be called the home of equity and honour. For as the-head is the essence of the body of every living soul, so this hall is the head and the glory of the whole commonalty of Colchester' *(Red Paper Book,* 10-l 1).

Attitudes and standards change, and in 1825 the historian Thomas Cromwell said of the hall, 'The aspect of the existing edifice is not only insignificant and even mean, but the accommodation within, for every official purpose, poor, and unworthy of the ancient borough. Surely, the public spirit . . . should, for its own sake, aspire to raise a building more suited to that most solemn of municipal purposes, the dispensation of public justice' (Cromwell 1825,194). Clearly Cromwell was not alone in this view for within twenty years the Moot Hall was demolished.

The sculptures of the old Moot Hall, Colchester

by George Zarnecki

Shortly after the demolition of the Moot Hall in 1843, a drawing of a window (Fig 55), which had fallen victim to the destruction, was exhibited by A J Sprague to the British Archaeological Association: and-was subsequently published in the first volume of its *Journal (J Brit Archaeol Ass,* 1 (1843), 143). In the accompanying note it was said that the window 'has been bricked up and plastered over, as was also a corresponding aperture, the stonework of which had been entirely removed'. The note also states that the two windows had 'ornaments of a similar character'. A further drawing by Sprague is preserved in the Colchester Public Library (Fig 56), inscribed: 'Restoration of the Ancient Arch discovered at the old Moot Hall Colchester July 1843. A Sprague, Colchester'. This restoration drawing, made to scale, differs in some important details from the drawing published in 1846 and, although useful, is far less reliable than the other, which was obviously drawn on the site when the plaster was removed, revealing the much-damaged decoration of the window. Since there were two windows similarly decorated, it is likely that in his restoration drawing Sprague combined elements of both to produce a perfect whole.

The destroyed windows of the Moot Hall were forgotten for over 100 years until, in 1951, A Gardner mentioned them in a footnote comparing them to the work at Civray in south-west France (Gardner 1951, 81, n 1). Gardner's comparison refers to a window in the facade of St Nicholas at Civray (Fig 60) which, like those at Colchester, consists of two orders, the outer one with colonettes, carved capitals, and a decorated archivolt, while the inner one has standing figures below the decorated archivolt. There is, however, one fundamental difference between the two works. The Civray figures are statues placed against the plain lower part of the continuous inner order, while at Colchester the inner order had, like its neighbour, large capitals and the figures were projecting from colonettes. Such column-figures were unknown in south-western France until they were introduced there during the Gothic period from the Royal Domain around Paris, for it was there that this feature was first used on a large scale (the three portals of St Denis Abbey, 1137-40), and subsequently taken up in practically all the large buildings of the province (eg Chartres Cathedral *c* 1145-55).[8] This is not the place to dwell on the importance of the column-figure in the history of architectural sculpture in Europe. In England, this French innovation was never wholeheartedly adopted, in spite of the fact that one of the earliest, if not the earliest, portal with column-figures outside France existed in Lincoln Cathedral *(c* 1145).[9] The peculiarity of the Lincoln portal was the reduction of the number of column-figures to two, which were placed only on the central portal, whereas at St Denis there were twenty on the three portals. The same procedure was adopted at Rochester Cathedral; when the west front was embellished *c* 1160 (Fig 61) (Gardner 1951, 81-3). There are reasons to suppose that a similar portal to that at Rochester existed at Dover Priory, and that it was the work of the same team of sculptors (Zarnecki 1972, 212, n 21). As already suggested by Gardner (195 1) the Rochester portal combines two artistic traditions. The column-figures derive from such works as St Denis, Chartres, and Le Mans, while the archivolts are typical of the south-west of France. They consist of voussoirs each carved with a separate, rather repetitive, motif placed along the radius of the arch.

The method of carving the Colchester window is the same as that employed at Rochester and, as at Rochester too, the motifs are of two inspirations; the archivolts are similar to those used in south-west France, while the column-figures are derived from the region around Paris. Significantly, like the other two English examples of portals with column-figures, Lincoln and Rochester, the Colchester window is provided with only one pair. An examination of the motifs of the Colchester archivolts leads to the conclusion that the sculptor of the window was the same person who was responsible for the work at Rochester. The pine-cone (or bunch of grapes) below a palmette leaf repeated nineteen times on the inner Colchester archivolt is very close to some voussoirs on the left side of the outer

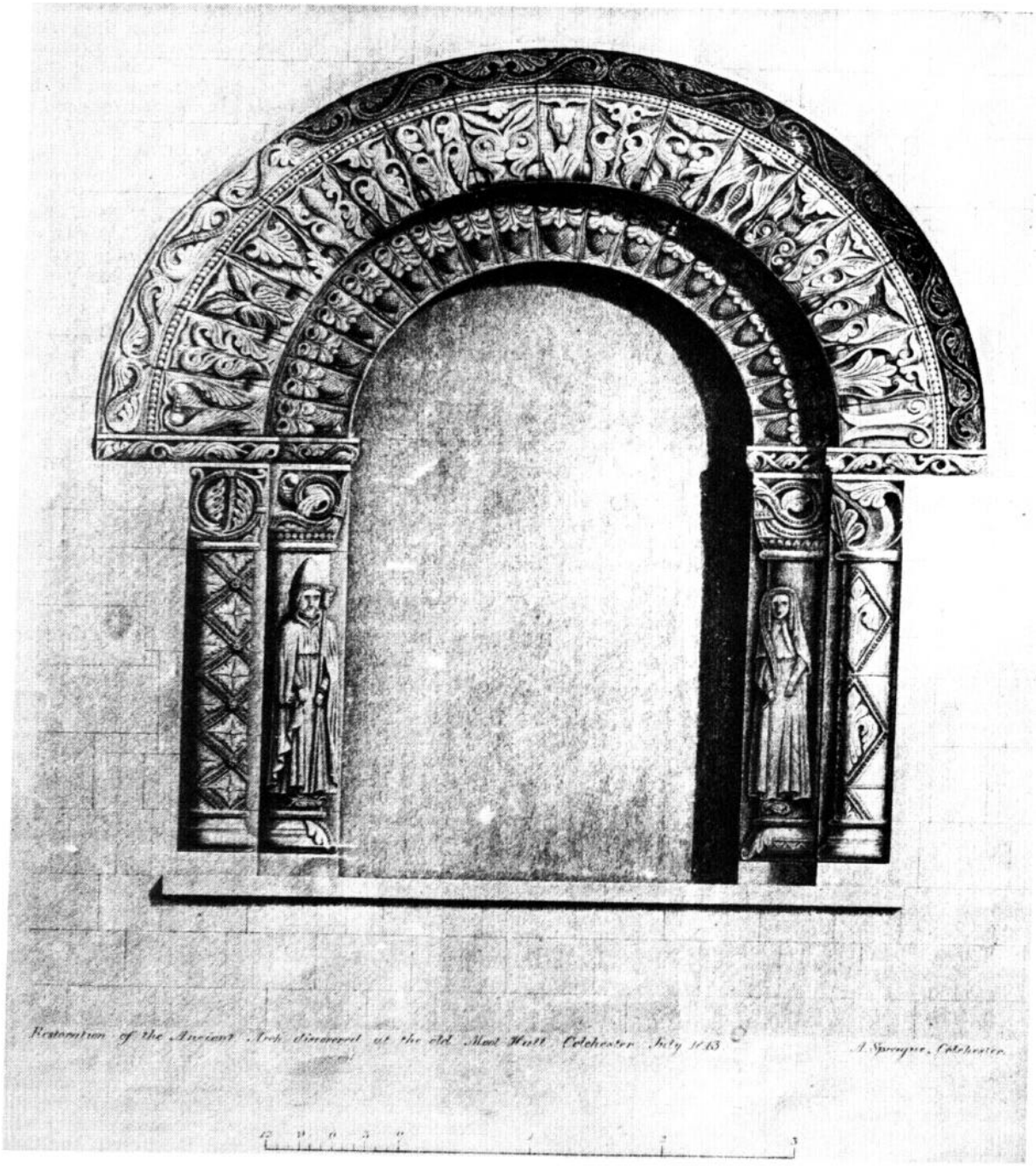


Fig 56 A J Sprague's restoration of the Moot Hall window

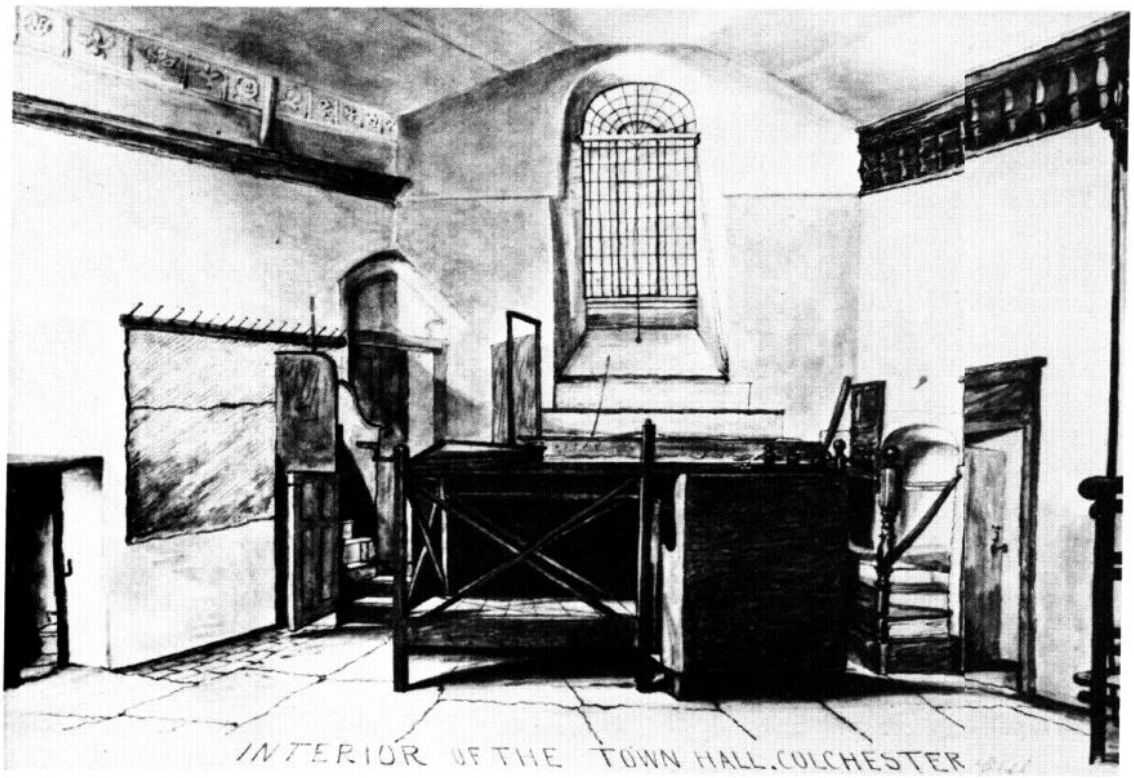


Fig 57 The upper chamber of the Moot Hall. Painting by John Vine

archivolt at Rochester. At the apex of the outer archivolt at Colchester was a human head with a leaf below and two scrolls above it, and although no exact parallel for this motif exists at Rochester, there are a number of voussoirs with human heads enclosed by leaves or scrolls. Unfortunately, the Rochester hood enclosing the five archivolts is too restored to be useful as a comparison for Colchester. The hood at Colchester was much weathered when drawn by Sprague, but it seems clear that it was separated from the outer arch by a band of beaded ornament, and that it was decorated with S-shaped scrolls with leaves. At Rochester, the beading is generously applied to some voussoirs but there is no band such as existed at Colchester.

The five capitals on either side of the door opening at Rochester are enriched with foliage and animals. The two pairs of capitals at Colchester are decorated with scrolls with large leaves, similar to though less delicate than their counterparts at Rochester. One of the Rochester capitals rests on a beaded necking. At Colchester, this ornament is placed in a horizontal band just above the necking of one of the capitals (the inner one, on the left side). The abaci, both at Rochester and Colchester, consist of scrolls but those at Colchester run horizontally, while at Rochester they take the form of small upright palmettes and other leaves, separated from each other.

In the middle of each column of Rochester portal is a carved boss, and it exists even oncolumns to which the column-figures are attached, th in those cases it is placed lower down. At Colches the colonettes were very much shorter and there vno need for bosses. Instead, the outer colonettes reed an enrichment in the form of diamond-shaped bed frames enclosing stylized leaves (on the left colu the diamonds were much smaller than those on thoht). Such diamond-shaped enrichments are not foun Rochester, but they exist at Lincoln and, earlier still St Denis, not on the portals but on the altar frontas covered during the excavations soon after the last waich relationships are difficult to interpret, especially the motif was not exclusive to these monuments anfound elsewhere, for instance in Italy (portals of Ferrand Verona, S Zeno), and in other media than stone, tories.

The most important feature of tholchester window is the column-figures. The figure the left was of a standing male with a rounded can his head, holding a long staff ending in a head. On thoght only the outlines of the figure were visible, and it dificult to understand why Sprague shows a woman this place on his restoration drawing. Perhaps heew Rochester, and assumed a similar arrangement atchester. The pair of column-figures at Rochester presbly represents King

Fig 58 Exterior of the Moot Hall complex, looking from High Street. The ridge of the hall-roof is indicated by arrows. The achievement above the entrance and the costumes of the figures suggest a late 18th century date. Reproduced from Cromwell 1825

THE ANCIENT MOOT-HALL, COLCHESTER.

Fig 59 Exterior of the Moot Hall complex, looking from High Street. The costumes of the figures and the reference to The Queen above the entrance indicate a date of c *1840*

Solomon and the Queen of Sheba, symbolic of Christ and His Church. There would be nothing inappropriate in using the same arrangement on a secular building, especially since Solomon was the model of a wise and fair judge, admired by the people of the Middle Ages. At Rochester, and on numerous French portals, he is shown with a crown on his head, so perhaps the Colchester figure with the conical cap is not Solomon and its identity is obscure. The cap he is wearing is surely not the mitre, as this would have been triangular in shape. The staff with a head could possibly be interpreted as referring to St Edmund, who was the principal saint of the eastern counties of England. His iconography was perhaps not sufficiently established by the 12th century, though it must be admitted that no other representation of him exists in this form. He was beheaded by the Danes, so a head on a staff would not be inappropriate. St Denis, who was also beheaded, is shown holding his own head. Since even the sex of the other column-figure is uncertain, it would be foolish to speculate on the meaning of that figure. On the restoration drawing, the bases below the column-figures are shown enriched with spurs in the form of large leaves, but this feature does not appear on the drawing made *in situ,* so it cannot be trusted.

The similarity of the Colchester window and the Rochester doorway is striking in many respects, though there are also some differences between the two works; however, these are not so great as to preclude the attribution of both to the same workshop. It is most unlikely that several teams of sculptors who combined similar elements from two widely separated regions of France, existed in England at the same time. The differences must surely be due chiefly to the much smaller size of the window, and to the more modest decoration required by a window than by the principal entrance to a cathedral. The date of the Rochester doorway is *c* 1160, and the Colchester sculpture must be dated to within a short period before or after that date.

When Gardner mentioned the Colchester window, he did not realize that there also existed a pictorial record of the Moot Hall doorway which, before its destruction, was placed between the two windows in the south wall of the building. This record is a rather poor watercolour in Wire's annotated copy of Morant in the Colchester & Essex Museum (Fig 54). In it, the doorway is shown in a dilapidated state, but enough can be seen to realize that here too, the closest stylistic connections were with Rochester. The two recessed archivolts are separated by a plain concave moulding and this is characteristic of the Rochester doorway, where at least three archivolts are separated in this way. The inner arch is narrow and seems to resemble, in its decoration, the hood of the Rochester doorway, while the large and almost square voussoirs of the outer arch appear to be of the same type as those of the outer arch at Rochester. Both arches rest on single capitals of which only the left one existed at the time the watercolour was made. It seems to have been decorated with two figures facing each other, presumably in combat, a popular theme in Romanesque sculpture whether secular or ecclesiastical. The depressed form of the arches was probably due to settlement rather than the original intention.

No other urban secular buildings of the 12th century with decoration as lavish as the Colchester Moot Hall survive in this country, nor are any recorded as having existed, and it is therefore a particular misfortune that it was allowed to be demolished. This building of *c* 1160 testifies to the wealth and taste of the burgesses of Colchester, who were able to obtain the services of a sculptor or sculptors who otherwise were employed on the decoration of such important buildings as the cathedral at Rochester and the Priory Church at Dover. ■

(f) Stone houses in the castle bailey (Figs 62, 44 site f, & 42)

In 1931-2, excavations were conducted in the castle bailey by Dr P G Laver and a series of rubble walls was found. The principal medieval discoveries consisted of a small chapel, a two-period forebuilding, and part of a range of domestic buildings. A short description of the last group is given here.[10]

A complete plan of the range could not be recovered. The walls were traced by means of trenches and no substantial floor levels were found. The plan as known at present contains a number of perplexing anomalies and probably does not reflect particularly well the layout of the remains. The earliest structure found was a ground-floor hall measuring internally 6.1 x 15.8m (20 x 52ft). The width is such that the hall must have been unaisled.[11] The eastern wall is narrower than the others and therefore was probably internal. Original features include doorways at A, C, and perhaps G although the last does not seem to have been rebated. The opening at E, only partly uncovered, occurs well above foundation level and since it did not have a splayed jamb, it was probably a recess of some kind rather than a window. Of particular interest is a wall fireplace which is a feature not normally encountered at ground level at this time. The fireplace was provided with a short chimney buttress and was of the arched type (Wood 1974, 82).

A number of alterations and additions in stone were made to the original block which have been tentatively phased on the basis of their construction. These consist of two inserted doorways (B & D) and a new block on the west side of the wall. The eastern part of the hall was rebuilt and

Fig 60 West window, Civray (photo: A Gardner)

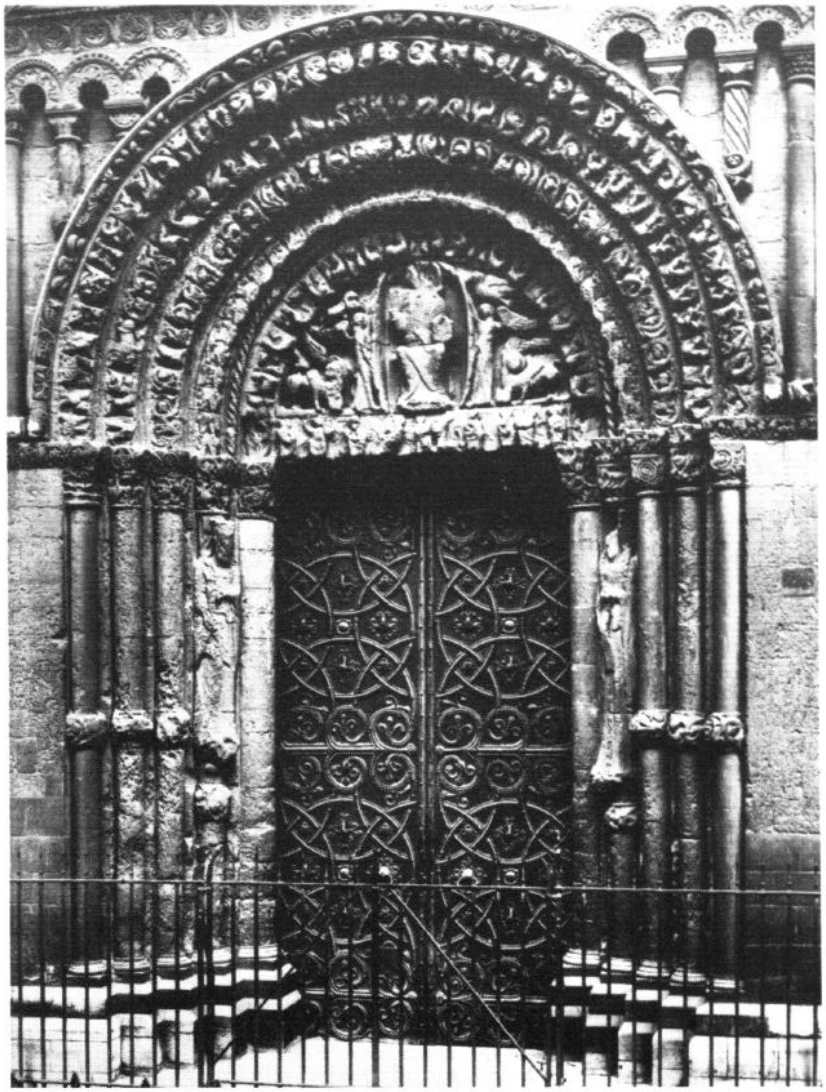


Fig 61 West doorway, Rochester Cathedral (photo: G Zarnecki)

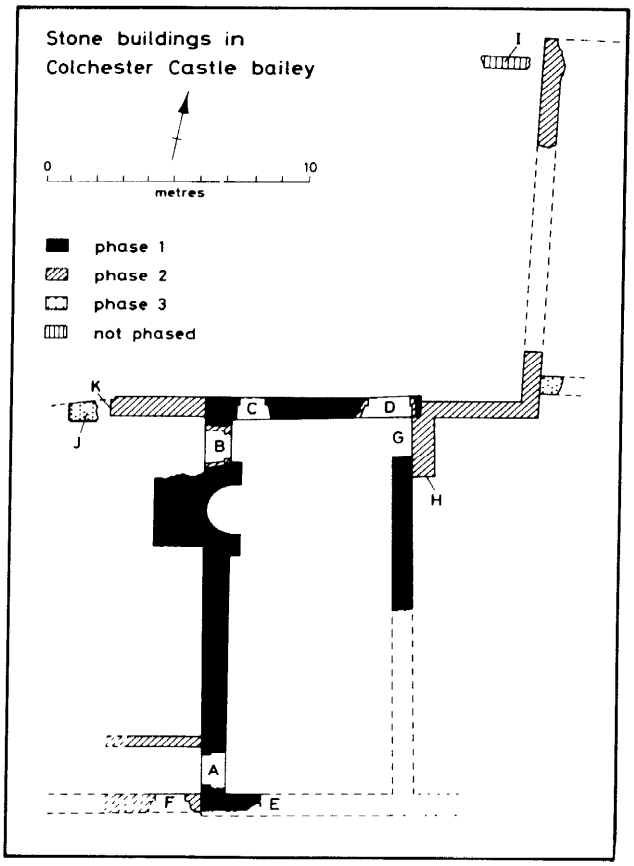


Fig 62 Stone buildings in the castle bailey (after M R Hull& J Drury, courtesy of J Drury)

the probable doorway at G blocked. The wall J may have been the blocking of a doorway in the wall K. Although the southern end of the range backed onto the bailey rampart or curtain wall, it could not have been hard up against it because there was a doorway at F.

Dating evidence for the range is meagre. Although the arched type of fireplace continued to be built after 1200, the limited number of examples available for study suggests that this was the standard variety until the late 12th century (Wood 1965, 261-76).

The hall may have been the 'house in Colchester Castle, where the justices used to sit for their deliberations which was demolished by Adam le Bloy, Sheriff of Essex, and the building materials carted away *(Cal Inq Misc* 1307-1349, 346-7, *sa* 1334).[12]

(g) The Gables, East Stockwell Street (Fig 44 site g)

The present building contains a north-south rubble wall (RCHM 1922, 63) and is likely therefore to be on the site of another example of a stone house.

Discussion (Fig 44)

Several general points must be made about the buildings described above. The first-floor halls, a, b, and c, were all sited back from their respective street frontages. The hall, a, was presumably the first stone structure on its plot although this may not have been the case with b, c, and d. The last three examples could have been additions to pre-existing stone buildings which extended up to their respective street frontages. In the case of the Moot Hall, the building originally appears to have been sited on the edge of the market so that the construction of the porch and houses of 1373-4 represented an encroachment into the market area.

Dates within the Norman period for the halls a, b, c, e, and f are sound but there must be some doubt about the other cases for it is clear that in Colchester the use of stone in house building was by no means confined to the Norman period. The alterations and additions to the Lion Walk house cannot be closely dated but many, if not all of them, occurred after the close of the 12th century. Similarly, the additional walls adjoining the halls b, c, d, and f indicate that the tradition of building in stone was a persistent one and unlikely therefore to have been restricted to the Norman period. The use of stone in domestic circumstances after the 12th century in Colchester is illustrated by the extensive series of cellars with rubble walls. There are seventeen known examples of which only four are datable. These contain two-centred doorheads and appear mainly to belong to the 14th century (RCHM 1922, 56-60). Furthermore, at the Cups Hotel site during the archaeological excavations of 1973-4, fragmentary remains of rubble foundations were discovered of a house which dated at the earliest to the 13th century.

In general, there appears to have been a high number of doorways in the stone houses although not all of them may have been original, particularly in the case of b. It should be borne in mind that, in several cases, because the halls may have formed part of a sequence of structures, the positions of windows and doorways must have been dictated as much by expediency as traditional design.

Although the remains of seven stone houses are known from Colchester, there were probably substantially more examples than this. A hint of these is to be found in a reference of 1275 in which two lots of stone houses are recorded as being in St Runwald's parish implying at least four such buildings there, two more than known at present (halls c and perhaps d). The houses had originally been bought by Aaron the Jew but had to be resold later by his two sons in order to raise money to pay their tallages (Rigg 1905, 235-6). The number of stone houses in Colchester is reminiscent of Canterbury where at least 30 such buildings existed by the end of the 12th century. These were owned by financiers (Urry 1967, 193).

To what extent the scone houses of Colchester are to be linked with Jews is unclear.[13] But certainly there was a connection as the houses in St Runwald's parish illustrate. The Patent Rolls of 1293 indicate that the Colchester Jewry consisted of at least six houses, a vacant plot, and a synagogue *(Cal P R,* 1292-1301). The Jewry is generally thought to have been in Stockwell on account of a somewhat tenuous reference to this effect in a document of 1252 (Cutts 1888, 121) although from other evidence it seems that some Jews lived outside this area. For example in 1277 (Jenkinson 1929, 317), the Sheriff was fined £10 because Bonenfaunt of Royston and other Jews lived outside the Jewry. In addition, Colchester's Court Rolls of 1337 mention a 'tenement of Adam de Castell opposite to Cornhill (ie the west end of the High Street-see Appendix 3) formerly belonging to Armerin the Jew'.[14]

Stone houses are a distinct phenomenon of the early medieval period in Colchester and elsewhere where building in timber is the predominant tradition. If, as it appears, stone houses were highly favoured by Jews presumably for the security they provided, then perhaps the expulsion from England of the Jews in 1290 is the obvious explanation for the fading away of the type?

Notes

1 Here Round mentions another less detailed plan as well as other photographs, none of which can now be found.

2 I am grateful to Mr A Phillips and Dr D Stephenson for bringing my attention to this letter as well as an account of a visit of the Essex Archaeological Society to the building *(Essex Standard,* 31 August 1855) where it is stated that the large upper chamber had for many years been used as a Duth Chapel.

3 I am indebted to Nina Crummy for guidance on this point.

4 Copies of the plan are contained in some of the original 200 copies of Morant 1748. These are listed in Rudsdale 1949, 94.

5 Nina Crummy has provided the following note on the subject:

There are four varying representations of the disputed numeral from the Pelham's Lane stone house, as well as other conflicting verbal descriptions. Morant published a 'wet paper' copy taken from the timber itself (Morant 1748, 3, 30). This could be assumed to be accurate were it not that the disputed number is shown as so unformed at the bottom as to be completely open to interpretation. Among Morant's notes there is an 'Exact copy of an Impression' which is markedly different from his published drawing and seems to be a schematic representation of a cursive 1490 (ERO D/Y 2/2, 311). Also among Morant's paper is a letter from Deane incorporating a third drawing which shows the numeral as indeed open to interpretation by enthusiasting of both schools of thought, but sufficiently formed as to support 1490 rather than 1090. furthermore, Deane points out that fascia boards and window sills were commonly carved in the 15th century, and the timber in question was one of a set of four window sill (ERO D/Y 2/2 315). The fourth representation is in Cromwell's history (Cromwell 1825, facing 195); this leaves no room for any interpretation other than 1090, and consequently is perhaps the most suspect in terms of accuracy. Indeed, the attitudes of the animals and general proportions of all parts of the carving on the engraving of the complete timber differ considerably from those on Morant's description and 'exact copy'.

The original carving is unfortunately lost, leaving only the conflicting evidence summarized above. It seems to be most likely that the date in question is 1490, bearing is mind that carving and dating on fascias, bressumers, and vertical faces of window sills were most common in the 15th, 16th, and 17th centuries. However, there is always the possibility, extremely unlikely though it may be, that Morant was correct in suggesting that the timber carving could be a transference to Arabic numerals of an original Roman numeral date of 1090. ■

6 The discovery of stone walls is mentioned in Rudsdale MS 'Norman Colchester' in the Colchester & Essex Museum.

7 Measurement form a plan no longer available (Hull 1958, 151).

8 For the best account of the early use of the column-figures in France, see Sauerländer 1970.

9 For the discussion of the English reluctance to use the sculptural innovations of St Denis, see Zarnecki 1976.

10 An account of the excavation should appear in a future edition of *Essex Archaeol Hist.* I am grateful to the late Mr Hull for permission to publish these notes on this and to Mr P J Drury who has prepared the account for publication.

11 Cf the dimensions of aisles and unaisled halls in Wood 1965.

12 I am indebted to Dr D Stephenson for this reference.

13 The relationship between Jews and stone houses is discussed in Wood 1974, 13-15 where it was concluded that not every surviving stone house had a Jewish owner.

14 I am very grateful to Dr D Stephenson for pointing this out to me and for supplying other information and references cited above concerning the Jews of Colchester. Without doubt, Armerin lost his house as a result of the expulsion of the Jews in 1290. Dr Stephenson suggests that the two coin hoards from Colchester (Fig 53) may have been Jewish in which case these might indicate another Jewish home outside the Jewry. The Jews came under increasing pressure throughout the 13th century and therefore a Jewish attribution for the hoards is a very attractive hypothesis.

Chapter 7

Colchester from the 5th to the 12th century: general discussion and summary

In Chapter 1, the archaeological evidence of Anglo-Saxon occupation in Colchester from the 5th to the 9th centuries was discussed. The equivocal implications of the early Saxon material and the late Roman military equipment were stressed although it was preferred, albeit on little better than an intuitive basis, that these finds should not be taken to imply any continuity of occupation from the Roman period. The date and distribution of all the Anglo-Saxon finds from the town were taken to indicate the collapse of the Romano-British administration *c* 440-50 and continuous Saxon occupation thereafter.

In Chapter 3, the distribution and dating in Colchester of Thetford-type ware were examined in some detail since it was suggested that finds of this type derived from occupation between 900 and 1000-50. The distribution maps (Figs 2 & 29) are in effect extremely crude models of Colchester in their respective periods and have to be interpreted with care. In any domestic situation, a certain amount of refuse is bound to be deposited some distance around the occupied areas themselves. Unfortunately, the extent of this 'corona' effect cannot readily be gauged, so that it cannot be established whether the finds of Thetford-type ware (Fig 29) at Lion Walk reflect late Anglo-Saxon occupation on the street frontages such as Culver Street and Trinity Street or whether these simply emanated from 10th or early 1lth century occupation on the High Street.' All that can be said at present is that the total volume of Thetford-type ware from Lion Walk is very small and is less than the total from the much smaller area at the Cups Hotel site. Consequently had there been late Anglo-Saxon occupation along minor streets in the Lion Walk area, it was not as dense as that on the High Street or probably North Hill. At any rate, because of the

corona effect, the Thetford-type ware from Lion Walk cannot be taken to imply that Culver Street, Lion Walk, Trinity Street, or Eld Lane were in existence in the late Anglo-Saxon period.

The same difficulty applies to Figure 2 except that because of Hut 1 at Lion Walk, and because of a much larger number of sherds spread over the whole site there, it seems that post-Roman occupation in Colchester at least until the 7th century was dispersed throughout the town and heavily influenced by the standing remains of the Roman colony. This relationship is underlined by the continued use of some of the Roman cemetery areas until at least *c* 700.

The apparent absence of finds datable to the 8th and 9th centuries at Lion Walk seems to imply that the pattern of occupation changed at this time with a movement towards the High Street frontages, an hypothesis that is enhanced by the discovery in the Cups Hotel site of a few pieces of pottery apparently dating to this period (pp 18-19). The contrast between the dispersed occupation in early Anglo-Saxon times and the concentration of activity along the High Street in the later Anglo-Saxon period is reminiscent of the difference in layout of early rural settlements such as Mucking and West Stow on the one hand and the typical nucleated pattern of the later village and town settlements on the other.

Superimposed on the remains of the Roman colony are detectable three major reorganizations of the town plan (Fig 63). The first of these involved most of the area within the town walls and was a systematic division of the land, apparently on the basis of multiples of four poles. The second resulted in the laying out of a series of properties which fronted on to the High Street and extended southwards to a new back lane, known until recently as Culver Street. In this area, traces of the first period of replanning were lost. The third took place when the construction of the castle, beginning *c* 1075, resulted in the diversion southwards of the eastern end of the High Street around the new bailey defences and presumably the loss of houses along the northern frontage of the old High Street in this area.

The survival of the positions of the Roman walls as boundaries on the north side of the High Street east of St Runwald'ss Church suggests that when the first period of replanning took place, properties already existed in the town and Colchester was therefore inhabited. This reorganization of the town's lay-out cannot therefore be taken to imply the refounding of a deserted town, but may represent an attempt to revitalize a small community situated presumably mainly along the High Street. The pinched-end at Culver Street's junction with Head Street reinforces the inference above, that Culver Street was secondary.

A difficulty with this conjectural sequence of development of Colchester is the credibility of the four-pole module in town planning because no published parallels can be cited as supporting evidence. To tackle this problem, a small study was undertaken to establish whether or not units of this kind could be detected elsewhere. In addition to Colchester, the towns chosen were Winchester (Fig 64), part of London (Fig 65), Bury St Edmunds, and Salisbury. About 100 measurements were made using large scale maps. The details of this work cannot be set out here[2], but subject to a more rigorous mathematical approach, the conclusions from it can be summarized as follows:

(i) The street systems studied were laid out, in part at least, on the basis of units four-poles long;

(ii) The precision of the dimensions as laid out on the ground varies, but most are within half a pole of a multiple of four poles;

(iii) The most accurately laid-out parts of the street systems tend to be along the street frontages;

(iv) The occurrence of the four-pole module shows that this was a standard unit of land measurement in the late Saxon and medieval periods (if not before) which was redefined as the 'chain *c* 1600.

The 40-pole distances at Colchester, west of Head Street-North Hill and south of Culver Street, may originate from early fields since these equal one furlong, the traditional length of the headland of a common field.

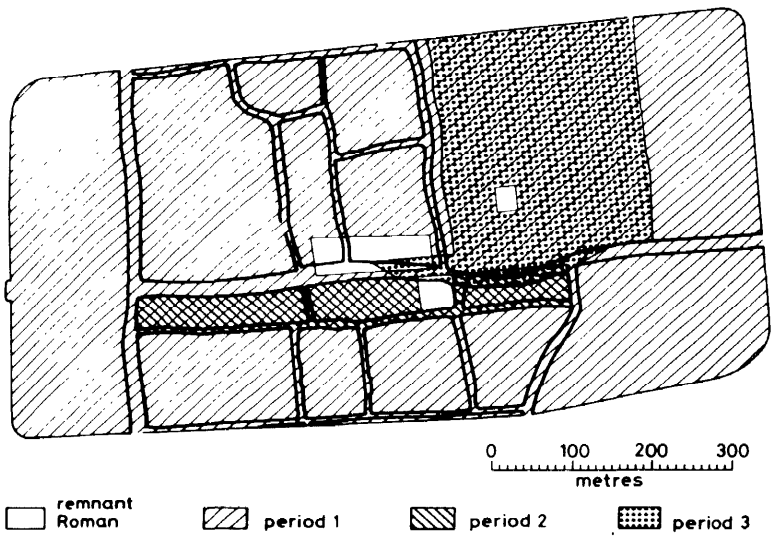


Fig 63 The replanning of post-Roman Colchester

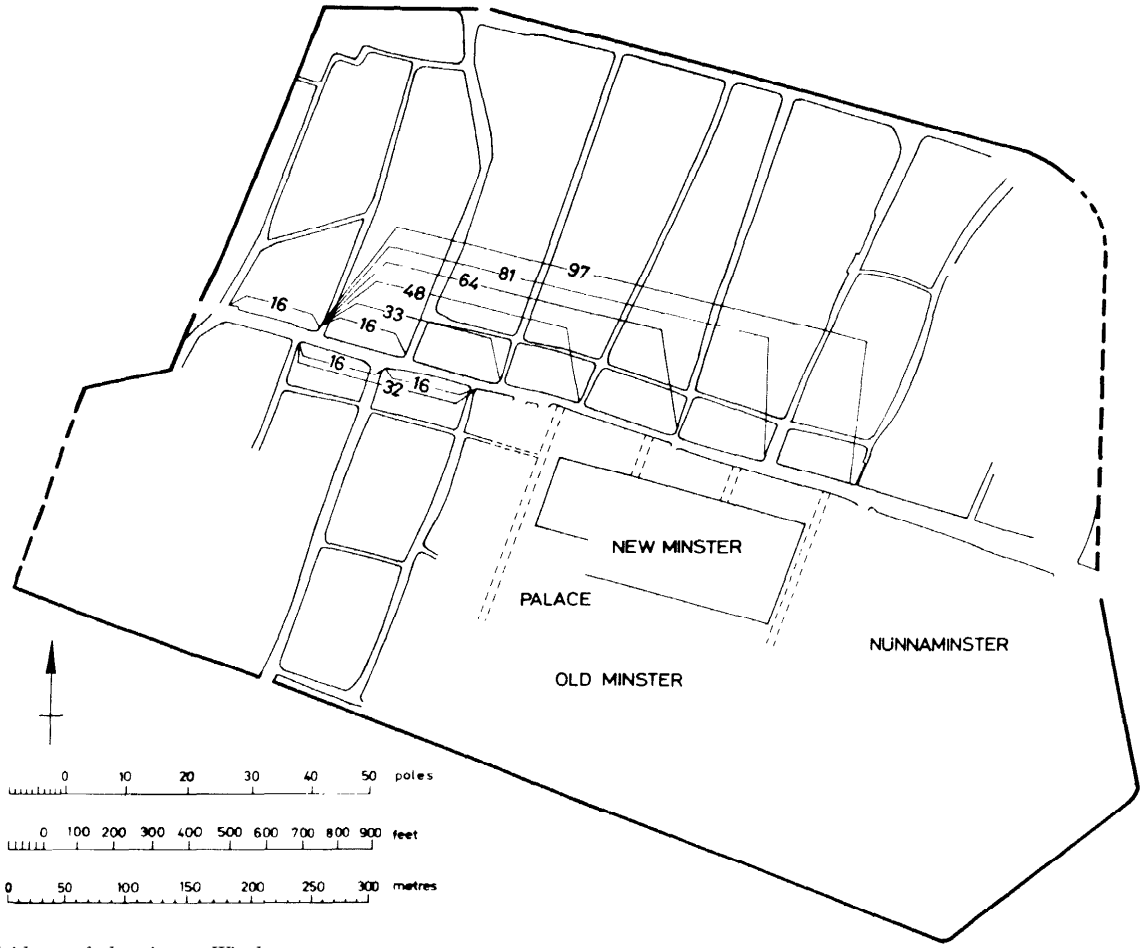


Fig 64 Evidence of planning at Winchester

The laying out of Lion Walk and the subdivision of the 40-pole dimension south of Culver Street would therefore represent the encroachment of the built-up areas of the town on to its ancient Anglo-Saxon fields. A similar situation occurred at Bury St Edmunds (Beresford 1967, 333) and perhaps at Oxford (Beresford 1967, 322). New towns too must in some instances have been laid out on existing fields. For example, this seems to have been the case at Salisbury where it has been suggested that the boundaries of earlier fields are detectable in its street system (Rogers 1969, 1).

The volume of Anglo-Saxon finds from the town is too low and the factors affecting their rates of loss and recovery too diverse to draw anything but tentative conclusions about the size of the town's population throughout this period. But certainly compared with Roman and medieval times, the impression is that between the 5th and the 11th centuries the town's population was very small and that during the late 8th and 9th centuries for which there is a noticeable dearth of finds, Colchester was either deserted or its population had dropped to an all-time low. Thus the replanning of the town in either the late 9th or 10th century following a period of sparse occupation would explain the resurgence of the town about this time.

The relationship between the Danes and the town *c* 917 when Colchester was captured by the English is not clear although, rather than Colchester having been used as a defensible strongpoint by the Danish army, the most likely explanation is that a Danish settlement had been founded in the town sometime after the Treaty of Alfred and Guthrum of 879. Whether the town was deserted or not during the years leading up to the establishment of the Danish settlement cannot be determined but Colchester was certainly repopulated by Edward in the early 10th century.

Although the distribution of Thetford-type ware is widespread in the town, the total number of sherds found is only around 200 which is very small compared with the number of sherds of early medieval sandy wares. Thus it can perhaps be concluded that the town's population probably did not start to expand markedly until the end of the 10th century. This is in accordance with the numismatic evidence suggesting the establishment of a mint in the 990s. These two factor-the comparatively low number of Thetford-type sherds and the date when the mint appeared-hint that the period 1 replanning of the town should be placed in the 10th century and perhaps well on in it.

The suggestion has been made that Colchester's medieval street system was laid out in one complete operation under the direction of Edward the Elder in the early 10th century as an extension of the policy embodied in the Burghal

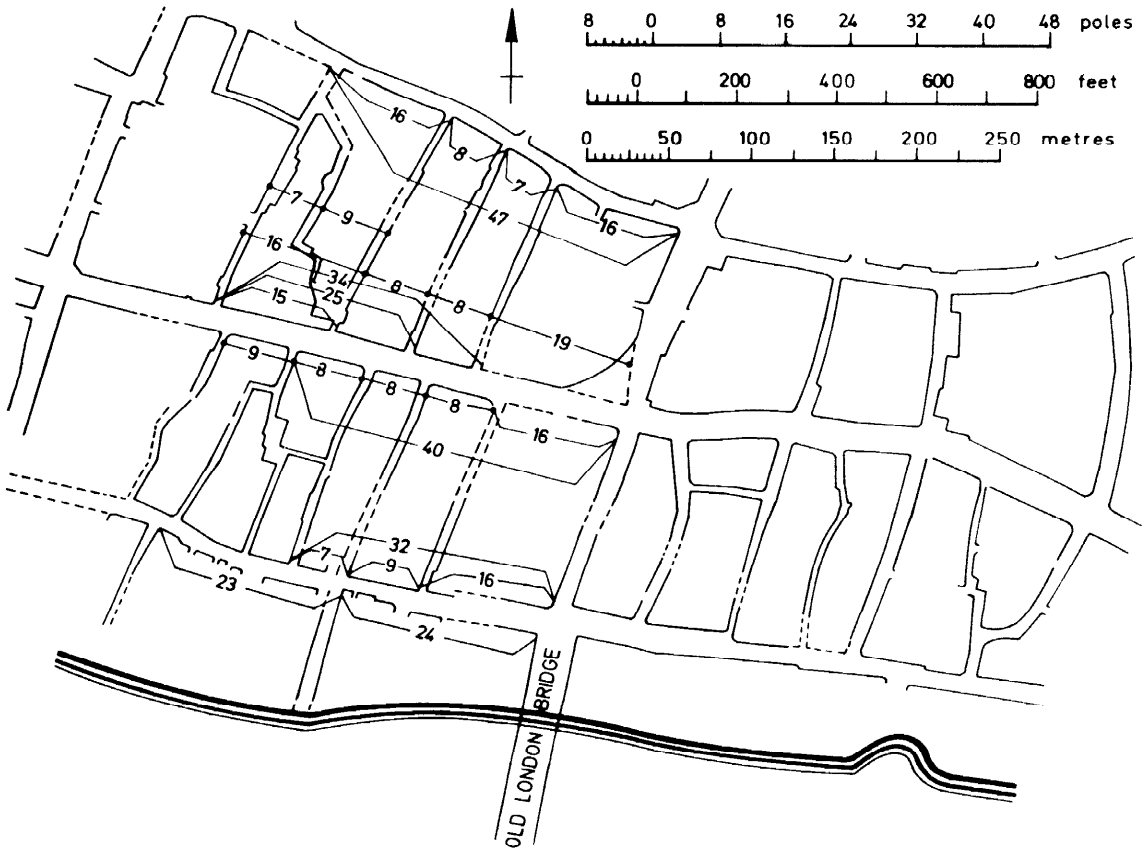


Fig 65 Evidence of planning at London

Hidage (Biddle & Hill 1971). Colchester, it is argued, displays elements of regular street planning in common with several other places in southern England and is the result of a burgeoning of town planning initiated by Alfred (Biddle 1976, 134).

The importance of the Burghal Hidage in the spread of town planning is debatable since the strategy implied in it is only concerned with the establishment and maintenance of a network of defensible sites throughout Wessex such that for each site there was a balance between the length of its defences and the size of the population of the surrounding countryside (Stenton 1971, 265). To postulate links between the construction or restoration of these defences and the creation of streets and house plots is a highly conjectural step. The Burghal Hidage indicates that four men were required for each pole of the defensive circuit so that, in the case of Colchester, well over 2000 men would have been needed on this reckoning, a figure which exceeds the total probable number of suitable men in Domesday Colchester by a factor of perhaps three." On this basis, the first phase of replanning (which accounts for the rectilinear elements referred to in Biddle & Hill 1971) can only have an oblique relevance to either Edward's restoration of the town's defences or the policy implied in the Burghal Hidage.

Winchester could have been replanned not in the time of Alfred but after the storming of the city in 860 *(A-S Chron)* during the reign of Ethelbert. Such a context creates no conflict with the archaeological evidence relating to the date of Winchester's street system (Biddle 1975, 27) and the destruction of much of the city by tire would have provided the opportunity for replanning. An obvious explanation for the eight-pole planning in London is the restoration of the city by Alfred following its recovery from the Danes *c* 886 when he allocated plots of land bounded by streets to various magnates (Biddle & Hill 1971, 83). Again it is the damage done by the Danes which provides the need for replanning. The effects of fire must frequently have been widespread in Anglo-Saxon times and consequently must have often left large parts of many towns ripe for replanning. Against this background, the replanning of period 1 or 2 at Colchester *could* be reconciled with Edward the Elder's restoration of *c* 917 (pp 00-00) since Edward's work followed the expulsion of the Danes from the borough, although the description 'where it had been broken' in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (p 24) suggests reinstatement rather than major innovation.

At Colchester, the laying out of the plots along the High Street's southern frontage and the division of the land within the walls were schemes which were so radical that they were presumably imposed on the town by royal authority. The same might have been true to some extent of the establishment of the parochial system. St Runwald's differs from the other High Street churches in that it lay in the centre of the town and in or at least on the frontage of the market; the others stood back a little from their

frontages. Thus, of all Colchester's town centre churches, St Runwald's is likely to be the earliest. Perhaps it was followed by St Peter's, St Nicholas's, All Saints, and St James's, all being based on the High Street axis. As a series these may have followed shortly after the period 1 replanning of the town or even been part of it. Later presumably came the parishes of Holy Trinity (pp 50-2) and St Martin's, since neither extended to the High Street.

Historically, it would be apposite if the Lion Walk ditch could be linked with the town's restoration by Edward the Elder, but the pottery in the ditch indicates a later date. Events of the later 10th and 11th centuries, notably the Viking campaigns which occurred throughout the reigns of Ethelred II and his son Edmund Ironside, would have provided ample motivation for a refurbishing of Colchester's defences. The Danish sacking of the town, reputedly in 1071 but presumably in 1069 (p 30), may have accounted for the Lion Walk ditch, although alternatively the raid may have precipitated the construction of Colchester's keep rather than further reinforcement of the town defences.

R E M Wheeler (later Sir Mortimer) was of the opinion that the wall which blocked the Balkerne Gate was probably pre-Conquest and may have been the result of the repair work carried out in the town by Edward the Elder. The basis for this suggestion rests on the rough appearance of the stone and brickwork (Wheeler 1921; see also Crummy 1977, 94). Although not a sound guide, the absence of peg-tile is the only tangible evidence of date and indicates that the wall is most likely to have been built sometime before the 13th century.

The siting of St John's Abbey and St Botolph's Priory, the two largest and earliest monastic foundations of Colchester, requires comment since they are both outside the walled part of the town and in the same area (Fig 44). St Botolph's was a late 11th century Augustinian foundation which almost certainly regularized a pre-existing Anglo-Saxon monastic institution (Peers 1964). This, combined with its position in a presumed Roman cemetery outside the site of Roman South Gate, makes it very likely that the Priory was based on a Roman cemetery church. A building of this kind has recently been postulated elsewhere at Colchester (Crummy 1980, 264-6), the difference between the two being that the latter was never re-established as a church after the pagan period. Other parallels are common in Rhineland cities, notably Xanten, Mainz, and especially Köln where many early churches lie in Roman cemetery areas.[4]

The proximity of St John's Abbey to St Botolph's is likely to be a coincidence since the choice of site was probably influenced by the availability of land. The precincts of St John's and probably St Botolph's (although the limits of the latter are not known) were so large that it is doubtful if areas on this scale could have been obtainable within the walls. The presence of an earlier Anglo-Saxon church within the grounds of St John's Abbey was probably of little consequence since, as we have seen in Chapter 4, it was soon to be demolished.

Colchester's growth throughout the 11th and 12th centuries seems to have been rapid. By this time, few traces survived of the Roman colony apart from the town wall although a large number of stone buildings constructed with reused Roman building materials were to be seen. Curiously, Colchester's keep was one and a half times the size of the White Tower of London and the largest of its kind. Its size was no reflection of the strategic importance of Colchester but was in part a result of the castle having been built on the podium of the Temple of Claudius and in part the result of the experimental nature of the building. The 12th century saw the growth of Colchester's suburbs, particularly in the parishes of St Giles and St Leonard at the Hythe.

Notes

1 IF there were sufficient numbers of sherds of sherds, a way round this problem would be to compare the densities of Thetford-type ware per unit area for alla excavated sites to determine whether or not here were significantly higher densities along street frontages.

2 Published in Crummy 1979.

3 This is calculated using a multiplier of 3.5 (Russell 1948,50) and allowing for females and male children.

4 Useful references for these and other early churches are Friedrich 1926 and Radford 1971.

Appendix 1

Origins of personal names of burgesses in Colchester Domesday and of moneyers operating in Colchester during the period 979-1087

by Nina Crummy

Abbreviations

Cont Germ	Continental-Germanic
ODan	Old Danish
dim	diminutive
OE	Old English
fern	feminine
OFr	Old French
OG	Old German
masc	masculine
ON	Old Norse
OSW	Old Swedish
OW	Old Welsh

A Domesday

Personal name (masc unless otherwise indicated)	No	*Origin*	*Reference or derivation*
OLD ENGLISH			
Ailbriest	1	Ædelbeorht	von Feilitzen 1937, 182
Alfeihc	1	Ælfheah	*id* 174
Alfgar	2	Ælfgar, Ædelgar, Ealdgar	*id* 144
Alflet (fern)	2	Ælfflaed, Ædelfloed	Tengvik 1938, 229
Alfsi	2	Ælfsige, Ædelsige	von Feilitzen 1937, 151
Alsi	1		
Alfstan	2	Ælfstan	*id* 152
Alstan	2	Ælfstan, Ædelstan, Ealdstan	*id* 152
Alnod	1	Ælfnod, Ædelnod, Ealdnod	*id* 149
Alric	3	Ælfric, Ædelric	*id* 150
Alvric	12	Ælfric	*id* 150
Alveva (fern)	2	Ælfgifu	*id* 173
Alvolt	1	Ælfweald, Ædelweald	*id* 154
Alwolt	1		
Alward	1	Alfweard, Ædelweard	*id* 155
Alwart	2		
Alwen	2	Ælfwine, Ædelwine, Ealdwine	*id* 160
Alwin	8		
Ascere	1	Æschere	von Feilitzen 1945, 72
Berda	1	Bearda	Tengvik 1938, 290
Best	1	Baest	von Feilitzen 1968, 7
Blacstan	3	Blaecstan	von Feilitzen 1945, 74
Brictric	2	Beorhtric	von Feilitzen 1937, 196
Brictwin	1	Beorhtwine	*id* 199
Brumman	1	Brunman	*id* 210
Brungar	1	Brungar	*id* 209
Brunloc	1	Brunlocc	*id* 210
Brunuin	2	Brunwine	*id* 210
Chentinc	1	Centing	von Feilitzen 1945, 76
Dela	1	Dealla	Redin 1919, 75
Dereman	1	Deormann	von Feilitzen 1937, 223
Duttel[1]	1	Duddel, dim of Dud(d)	Redin 1919, 16 & 140
Elebolt	1	? Ædelbeald	1st element *OE* & del 'noble'; 2nd element *OE beald* 'bold'; von Feilitzen 1937, 182 & 193
Edric	4	Eadric	*id* 233
Eduard	1	Eadweard	*id* 237
Eduin	3	Eadwine	*id* 237
Edwin	4		*id* 238
Coda	5	Goda masc, Gode, -a fern	Redin 1919, 49 & 114
Goddae	1		
Godeva (fern)	2	Godgifu	von Feilitzen 1937, 264
Godesun	1	Goda sunu	Tengvik 1938, 156
Godsune	2		
Godid (fem)	1	Godgyd	von Feilitzen 1937, 264
Godinc	3	Goding	*id* 265
Godric	6	Goding	*id* 266
Goduin	2	Godwine	*id* 269
Godwin	9		
Goldere	2	Goldhere	von Feilitzen 1945, 81
Goldinc	1	Golding	von Feilitzen 1937, 273
Goldric	1	Goldric	von Feilitzen 1945, 82
Golduin	1	Goldwine	von Feilitzen 1937, 273
Gold win	1		
Colman	1	Goldman	Reaney 1976, 149
Golstan	1	Goldstan	von Feilitzen 1937, 273
Got cill'	1	God(e)cild	1st element *OE god* 'god' or *god* 'good'; 2nd element *OE cild* 'child'; von Feilitzen 1937, 262 & 215
Gotflet (fern)		Godflaed	1st element OE *god* 'god' or *god* 'good'; 2nd element *OE floed* beauty; von Feilitzen 1937, 262 & 251
Hestan		Heahstan	Tengvik 1938, 144

Personal name (masc unless otherwise indicated)	*No*	*Origin*	*Reference or derivation*
Hunec	1	Hunec(a), dim of Hana	Redin 1919, 17 & 67
Ledmar	1	Leodmaer	von Feilitzen 1937, 310
Leffesse	1	Leofsige/Leofhyse	Reaney 1976, 218/von Feilitzen 1937, 312
Leffiuf (fern)	1	Leofgifu	Suggested by J Dodgson; *-iuf* as a form of *-gifu* does not appear to be paralleled elsewhere'
Leflet (fern)	1		
Lefflet (fern)	1	Leofflaed	von Feilitzen 1937, 311
Lesflet (fern)	1		
Lefstan	3	Leofstan	*id* 316
Lefsun	1		
Lefsune	1	Leofsunu	*id* 316
Levesun	1		
Lemer	1	Leofmaer	*id* 313
Levier	1	Leofgeat	*id* 311
Levot	1		Reaney 1976, 215
Levret	1	Leofraed	von Feilitzen 1937, 313
Levric		Leofric	*id* 313
Leveva (fern)	4	Leofgifu	*id* 312
Lewin	13	Leofwine	*id* 317
Lividi	1	?Leofede	*id* 322
Manstan	2	Manstan	*id* 324
Mansune	2	Mansunu	*id* 325
Manuin	1	Manwine	1st element *OE mann* 'man'; 2nd element *OE* wine 'friend, lord'; von Feilitzen 1937, 324 & 415
Manwin	8		
Not	1	Not	Tennvrk 1938, 324
Orlaf	1	Ordlaf	1st element *OE'ord* 'point? spear'; 2nd element *OE laf* 'survivor, son'; von Fethtzen 1937, 335 & 307
Oriet	1	Ordgeat	von Feilitzen 1945, 86
Osiet	1	Osgeat	von Feilitzen 1937, 339
Pecoc	1	Peacocc	von *Feilitzen* 1945, 86
Pic	1	Pic	Tengvik 1938, 326
Pote	1	Put(a)	*id* 329
Saewele	1	?Saeweald	von Feilitzen 1937, 354 & 410
Sagar	1	Saegar	*id* 352
Saulf	1	Saewulf	*id* 355
Sawart	1	Sarweard	*id* 354
Siric	1	Sigeric	*id* 361
Siward	2	Sigeweard	*id* 361
Sprot	4	Sprot	*id* 370
Stamburc (fern)	1	Stanburh	von Feilitzen 1945, 89
Stan	1	Stan	von Feilitzen 1968, 11
Stanart	1	Stanheard	von Feilitzen 1937, 371
Stanhert	1		
Stotinc	1	Stoting	von Feilitzen 1945, 89
Tate	1	Tata	Tengvik 1938, 208 & 395
Tunric	1	Tunric	von Feilitzen 1945, 90
Ulfeih	1	Wulfheah	von Feilitzen 1937,420
Ulnc	1	Wulfric	*id* 423
Ulvric	12		
Ulsi	2	Wulfsige	*id* 424
Ulstan	5	Wulfstan	*id* 425
Ulvart	1	Wulfweard	*id* 425
Ulwart	4		
Ulveva (fern)	2	Wulfgifu	*id* 420
Ulwin	13	Wulfwine	*id* 427
Vudebill	1	Wudubill	*id* 417
Wed	1	Wedd	Byname from *OE wedd* 'pledge'
Westan	1	Waerstan	1st element *OE waer* 'faith, fidelity'; 2nd element *OE stan* 'stone'; von Feilitzen 1937, 410 & 371
Wicga	1	Wicga	*id* 412
SCANDINAVIAN			
Cullinc	1	Rollungr *ON*	von Feilitzen 1937, 307
Got Hugo	1	Gubhugi *ON*	Reaney 1976, 150
Grimolf	1	Grímólfr *ON,* Grimulf *ODan, OSw*	von Feilitzen 1937, 275
Hacon	1	Hákun, -kon *ON,* Hakun, -kon *ODan, OSw*	*id* 283
Osgot	1	Asgautr *ON,* Asgut, -got *ODan, OSw*	*id* 165
Sacrim	1	Saegrimr *ON,* Segrim *ODan*	*id* 353 *&* 128
Sagrim	1		
Sueno	1	Sveinn *ON,* Sven *ODan, OSw*	*id* 380
Suertinc	1	Svettingr *ON,* Swerting *ODan,* Swatting, Swerting *OSw*	*id* 381
Suertlinc		Svartlingr *ON*	*id* 379
Tovi	1	Tófi *ON,* Tovi *ODan,* Tove *OSw*	*id* 384
Turchill	1	porkell *ON,* Thorkil *ODan, OSw*	*id* 394
Turstan	1	porsteinn *ON,* Thorsten *ODan, OSw*	*id* 396
OLD GERMAN			
Ainolf	1	Einolf *OG*	Forssner 1916, 15
Coleman	1	Col(e)man *OG*	von Feilitzen 1937, 218
Filieman	1	Filimann *OG*	Given by J Dodgson
Frent	1	Franco *OG*	Forssner 1916, 92
Radulf	1	Radulf *OG*	von Feilitzen 1937, 345
Roger	1	Rodger *OG*	*id* 350

Personal name (masc unless otherwise indicated)	No	*Origin*	*Reference or derivation*
Salvare	1	Savaric *Cont* Germ, *OFr*	Forssner 1916, 223
Sunegot	1	Sunegot *OG*	*id* 226
Tescho	1	Tazzo, Tezzo *OG*	Tengvik 1938, 200
Walter	1	Walter *OG*	Forssner 1916, 243
Willelm	1	Willihelm *OG*	*id* 255
Winemer	1	Winemar *OG*	*id* 258
OTHERS			
Artur	1	Artur *Celmc*	von Feilitzen 1937, 163 n 8
Blanc	1	Blanc *OFr*	Reaney 1976, 37
Herdedun	1		Obscure
Horrap	1		Obscure
Lorchebret	1	Lorchebret ? *Norman*	Ewen 1931, 63
Dimidius Blancus	1	Dimidius Blancus *OFr*	Byname from Latin *demedius* 'half and *OFr* Blanc; Reaney 1976, 37
Owin	1	Oue(i)n *OW*	von Feilitzen 1937, 342
Rosell	1	Rosell *OFr*, dim of Rosce	Reaney 1976, 299
Scadebutre	1	Scadebutre ? *Norman*	Ewen 1931, 63
Calebot	1	Talebot *OFr*	Tengvik 1938, 225

TOTALS AND PERCENTAGES

	Persons	*Names*	*Percentage*
Old English	241	97	87·5%
Scandinavian	13	12	4·5%
Old German	12	12	4·5%
Others	10	10	3·5%

B Moneyers

Personal name (all masc)	*Reference or derivation*
OLD ENGLISH	
Ælfhere	von Feilitzen 1937, 174
Ælfsige	*id* 180
Ælfwine	*id* 181
Beorhtric	*id* 196
Brunhyse	*id* 209
Brunman	*id* 210
Burgman	Reaney 1976, 42
Deormann	von Feilitzen 1937, 223
Eadmund	*id* 233
Eadsige	*id* 236
Eadwine	*id* 238
Godric	*id* 266
Godwine	*id* 269
Goldman	Reaney 1976, 149
Goldstan	von Feilitzen 1937, 273
Leofraed	*id* 313
Leofric	*id* 313
Leofstan	*id* 316
Leofweald	*id* 316
Leofweard	*id* 316
Leofwine	*id* 317
Manwine	1st element *OE mann* 'man'; 2nd element *OE wine* 'friend, lord'; von Feilitzen 1937, 324 & 415
Siduwme	*id* 359
Stanheard	*id* 371
Stanmaer	*id* 372
Sweting	*id* 381
Wulfod	*id* 422
Wulfric	*id* 423
Wulfstan	*id* 425
Wulfweard	*id* 425
Wulfwig	*id* 426
Wulfwine	*id* 427
SCANDINAVIAN	
Toca Tóki ON, Toki *ODan*, Toke *OSw*	von Feilitzen 1937, 385

TOTALS AND PERCENTAGES

	Names	*Percentage*
Old English	32	97%
Scandinavian		3%

Notes

1 *DuHel* in Farley & Ellis 1783, 2, f105

2 I am indebted to John McN Dodgson, Reader in English of University College, London, for both this derivation and that of *Old German* Filiman.

Appendix 2

Bronze mount from the castle bailey

A bronze mount (Fig 66, CM 852.36) was found in 1936-7 by workmen who were digging in the castle bailey near the southern entrance to the keep. Dr D M Wilson has kindly provided the following note:

The openwork bronze mount is an object decorated in the Urnes style; basically this is a Scandinavian style which is normally dated to between 1060 and 1130 (this latter date can be extended in certain areas but this object belongs to the classic phase of the late 11th century). It may well have been made in England but not, as Kendrick has it (Kendrick 1937, 45) in the same workshop as the Wisbech object (illustrated in Kendrick 1949, pl 82). The head of the animal is very close to that on the Pitney brooch (also illustrated in Kendrick 1949, pl 82) and I would plump for a southern English origin for the mount; this is not at all strange as there are a few examples of Urnes style ornament in the south of England, perhaps caused by influence from the Scandinavian town of Dublin. I doubt if the object was made in Scandinavia. ■

The mount thus appears to be linked with the early history of the castle and is not to be associated with the pre-Conquest activity on the site implied by the finds of Thetford-type ware (pp 12-3 above).

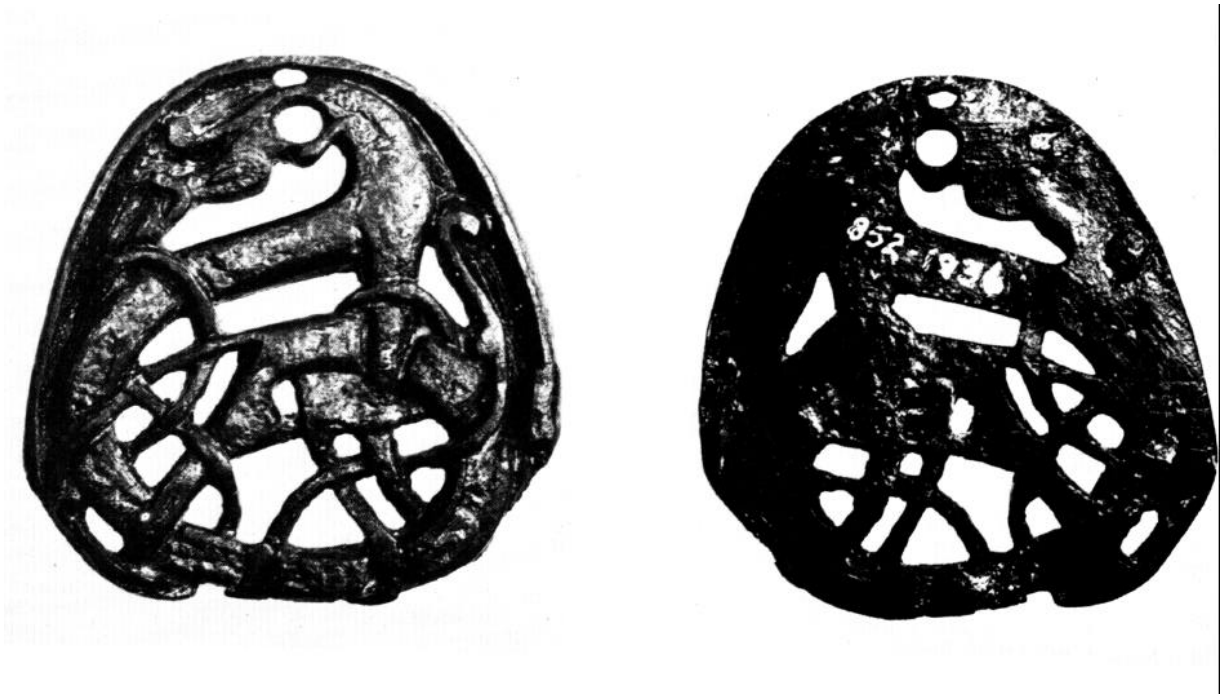


Fig 66 Bronze mount from the castle bailey (40 mm wide)

Appendix 3

Earliest known references to present streets in Colchester town centre

by Nina Crummy

These early references should be regarded as only provisional. Without doubt further research, particularly into central government records (p vii), will provide earlier dates for many of the streets below.

12th century

1154-89	unnamed street now High Street *(Cart St J A,* 24)
1196	Head Street *(Feet of Fines,* 1, 10)
1196	'North Street', now North Hill and North Station Road *(Feet of Fines,* 1, 10)

13th century

1207	'St Mary's Lane', now Church Street *(Feet of Fines,* 1, 39)
1207	'the lane next Havedgate', now Church Walk *(Feet of Fines,* 1, 39)
c 1242	'East Street', now East Hill, East Bay, and East Street *(Cart St J A, 609)*
1248	Maidenburgh Street (Blaxill 1936, 19)
1252	'Stockwellstreet', now Stockwell (Cutts 1888, 121)
1275	'Morestrate', now Priory Street (Blaxill 1936, 21)
1277	'Wirstrate', now Long Wyre Street, Short Wyre Street, and St Nicholas' Street (Blaxill 1936, 19)

14th century

1311	East Stockwell Street (possibly included Ball Alley) (Court *Rolls Col,* 1)
1312	'Bere Lane', now Vineyard Street *(Court Rolls col,* 1)
1319-20	'Cat Lane', now Lion Walk (Morant 1748, 2, 35 A)
1327	West Stockwell Street *(Courr Rolls Col,* 1)
1334	'Culver Lane', now Culver Street *(Oath Book,* f 32 dorso)
1340	Eld Lane (possibly included Sir Isaac's Walk) *(Oath Book,* f 36)
1345	'Whitefotes Lane', now Pelham's Lane (Court *Rolls Col,* 1)
1366	'le Balkerne', now Balkerne Hill, Balkerne Lane, and Balkerne Passage *(Court Rolls Col,* 2)
1373	St Helen's Lane *(Court Rolls Col,* 3)
1379	'Croucherchestrat', now Crouch Street (Court *Rolls Col, 3)*
1382	'Southgate Street', now Queen Street *(Court Rolls Col, 3)*

16th century

1509-47	'street between Scheregate and Headgate', now St John's Street (ERO D/Y 2/2, 13)
1509-47	Trinity Street (ERO D/Y 2/2, 13)

17th century

1610	part of East Stockwell Street (qv), now Ball Alley (Speed 1610)
1610	unnamed, now George Street (Speed 1610)
1610	unnamed, now Museum Street (Speed 1610)
1610	unnamed, north end of Ryegate Road (Speed 1610)
1610	unnamed, possibly part of Eld Lane (qv), now Sir Isaac's Walk (Speed 1610)
1610	unnamed, now Swan Passage (Speed 1610)
1695	'the passage into the churchyard', now St Nicholas' Passage (Morant 1748, 2, 14)

18th century

1748	unnamed, now Castle Bailey (Morant 1748, 1, Ichnography)
1748	'Duck Lane' and 'Little Hill', now Northgate Street (Morant 1748, 1, 4)
1748	'Quakers Alley . . . made within the memory of man' (Morant 1748, 1, 3)
1748	'Deadman's Lane', now St Peter's Street (Morant 1748, 1, 4)
1748	unnamed, now, with altered west end, William's Walk (Morant 1748, 1, Ichnography)

19th century

c 1842	Nunn's Road (Blaxill 1936, 20)
c 1842	Short Cut Road, part of Nunn's Road development
1848	Bank Passage (ERO D/CT 98)
1852	under construction, now Castle Road (Wire's *Journal,* 14/3/52)
1852	under construction, now Roman Road (Wire's *Journal,* 14/3/52)

20th century

1922	Cowdray Crescent (Park gates)
1923	St Runwald's Street (OS 1923)
1923	Shewell Road, southern end only (OS 1923)
1923	Victoria Place (OS 1923)
1969-70	Kingsway, built to replace The Arcade

Appendix 4

Notes on Colchester keep

Plan of the keep

Twentieth century plans of the castle 'tend to show only the surviving remains of the structure and there is a need for a series of drawings which illustrate as many of the original features as can be reconstructed from available sources. The purpose of these notes, therefore, is to attempt such a series. The plans in Figure 67 are based on RCHM 1922, 52, although like all the other published plans those of the RCHM contain minor discrepancies which can only be eradicated by a fresh survey.

Features restored are numbered in Figure 67 and the sources used listed below beside the appropriate number. The area west of the crypt and chapel could not be reconstructed satisfactorily as there is not sufficient information.

1 Buckler 1876, 32.

2-3 From Nelson's plan of the castle in 1704 illustrated in Buckler 1876, 46-9.

4-5 Buckler 1876, 14.

6 As 2 and 3 above; Jenkins 1869, 60; the upper part still survives.

7-8 Nelson's plan in Buckler 1876, 49. The upper part of no 7 still survives.

9-11 Nelson shows these as three niches in the internal face of the wall. No 11 was not a niche but, according to the engraving made in 1732 of the southern elevation of the keep (illustrated in Buckler 1876, 43), was a window of *c* 17th century date and therefore Nelson is unlikely to have seen any niche there. It is suggested therefore that no 9 was originally a loop window which was subsequently enlarged. No 10 is shown here as a niche but the possibility that it was a fireplace or the gap left in 1683 from the demolition of a north-south wall cannot be ruled out. No blocked window at no 10 is visible from the outside.

12-13 Buckler 1876, 56; the latrine chutes are still visible.

14-16 Bases of the window (no 14), small room (no 15), and southern gallery (no 16) are still visible and easily accessible.

17 Base of the apse and apsidal side-chapel shown in RCHM 1922, 54.

18 Northern jamb of the window still survives.

The plan of the second floor is based on Cutts 1853, pl 3 with additional material from Buckler 1876, 39 and the evidence listed under nos 14-18 above. With the exception of the north-west tower, not enough of the second floor survived the demolition operations of 1683 to enable restoration of the windows, latrines, etc. The arcade of the chapel is reconstructed by taking into account the positions of the vaults below (shown dotted) and the responds of the apse illustrated in RCHM 1922, 54.

By analogy with the White Tower, the position of the chapel in Colchester keep implies the previous existence of a third floor of which there is now no trace.

A gap (not shown here) in the north wall left by the demolition of the western internal north-south wall is illustrated by Buckler 1876, 32 & 35 where, to judge by the scar visible today, the gap is drawn as being too narrow. In Buckler 1876 the gap is shown at first-floor level suggesting that the demolished wall rose the full height of the keep.

Some points of detail

(a) The original entrance to the crypt was through its west wall (Jenkins 1869, 59-61). This is still partly visible behind a museum case.

(b) The present entrance to the keep seems to be a later insertion. Professor Zarnecki has kindly indicated that in his view a date for the door of *c* 1100 would be most appropriate. He stated that the mouldings and capitals are late 11th century and compare well with the work of Bishop Remigius at Lincoln, *c* 1092. The adjacent landing however seems to be of one build with the plinth but is markedly narrower than the doorway. The implication is therefore that the present doorway replaced an earlier entrance similar in size to that in the north wall. The level at which the original doorway was sited cannot be determined with any degree of certainty but the adjacent tower does not appear to have been rebuilt or show convincing signs of the landing having been lowered so that on balance the original doorway may well have been at ground-floor rather than first-floor level. If this is correct then the inserted door must have been designed to provide an entrance which was of greater width and which incorporated a portcullis. If, as is generally now accepted, the raising of the keep was stopped at the base of the first floor for temporary crenellations (RCHM 1922, 51; Renn 1968, 151) then a doorway in this position (ie at the ground floor) would have provided access into the early keep.

(c) It is possible that the inserted doorway could be contemporary with the second phase of the keep (ie from the first-floor crenellations upwards) since its portcullis appears to be an integral part of the second-floor wall. In this case, the inserted door would provide a *terminus ante quem* of *c* 1100 for the building of the crenellations, a date which is consistent with Renn's suggestion of 1086-7 for the latter (p 00). The buildings in the bailey (pp 67-9), including the chapel, presumably belong to this period, ie between *c* 1075 when building works started (p 30) and *c* 1100 or later when the keep was completed.

(d) The western internal north-south wall is likely to have been arcaded because (i) the absence of a scar on the lower 2m of the internal face of the main north wall is consistent with an arcade and (ii) because the presence of an arcade would explain why a wall of such thickness could be demolished so thoroughly when others of lesser width were not.

(e) The windows on the second floor were not of the 'loop' variety but were wider.

(f) From the first-floor level upwards, the eastern internal north-south wall is inserted. The butt-joint is quite clear at the northern end of the wall but not distinct at the southern end, The position of the windows in the north wall suggests that a north-south partition was always intended here.

(g) The chapel as reconstructed in Figure 67 was very similar to that in the White Tower. The internal dimensions are close to those of the White Tower and the number of bays the same. The main difference lies in the positions of the entrances.

(h) The similarity between Colchester keep and the White Tower is more apparent as a result of the reconstruction of the chapel. An important difference, however, is the occurrence at Colchester of a gallery at second-floor level within the thickness of the keep's outer walls.

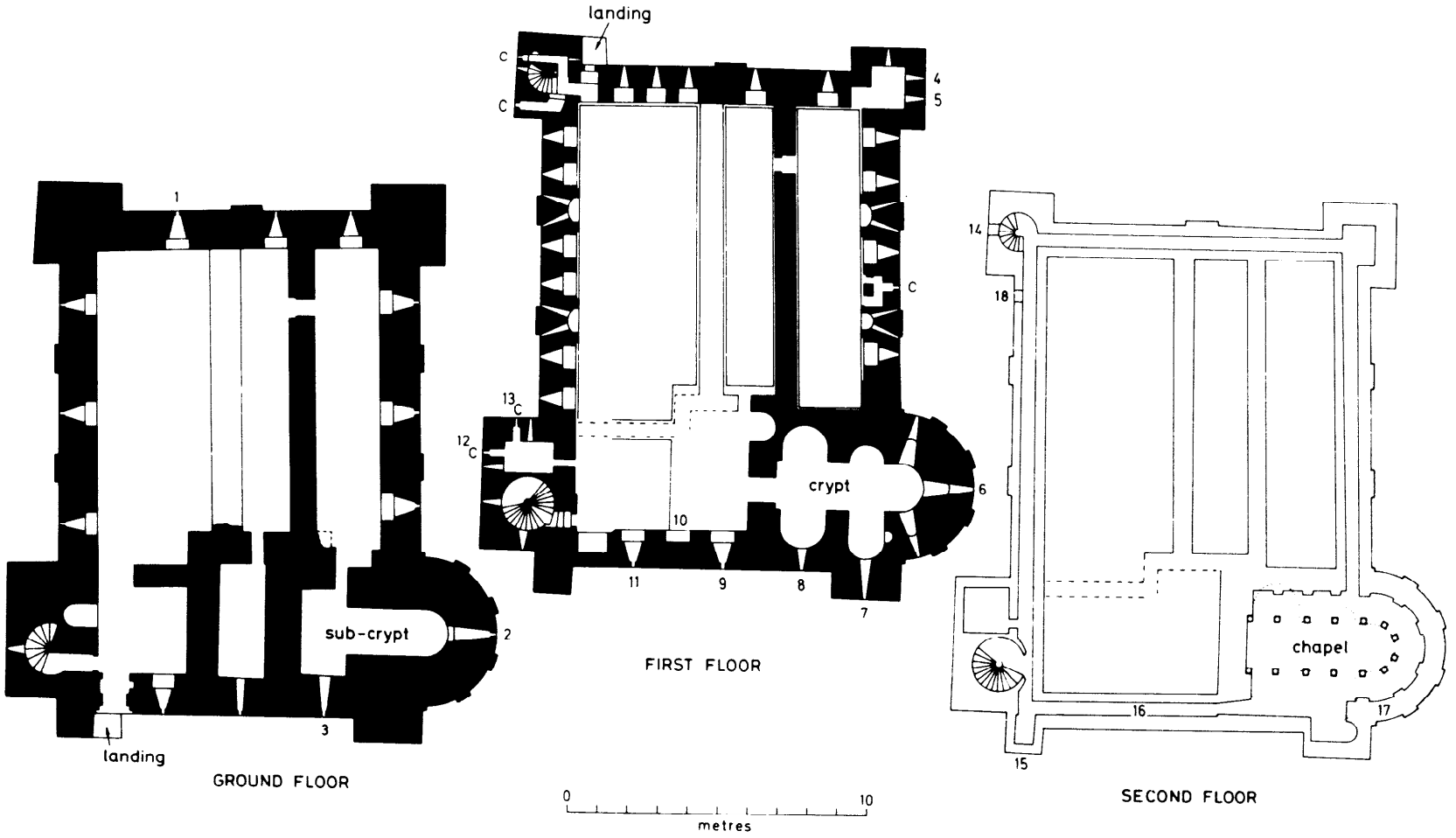


Fig 67 Colchester Castle keep. Latrine chutes are indicated by the letter C

Appendix 5

Notes on the borough seals of Colchester

Much has been written about Colchester's borough seals *(Oath Book;* Benham 1914, 1-8; Blaxill 1950, 26-32; Laver 1889; Pedrick 1904, 55-7) and therefore it is not proposed to present an exhaustive reexamination of them here. Nevertheless, some useful points can be made which are of relevance to our present study of Norman Colchester.

The earliest of the seals is known as the 'Raven Seal', the design of which consists of a raven surrounded by a legend which reads (S)IGILL. CUSTOD. (P)ORT. CO(L)ECEST(R). There are two possible translations of this, perhaps the most likely of which is 'seal of the custodian of the port of Colchester'. If this is so, then the seal would have been used by the town's chief officer until the time of the borough charter of 1189 which granted among other privileges the right of burgesses to elect two bailiffs to govern the affairs of the borough. Previously, a portreeve would have been appointed by the king or his agent, or at least his appointment would have been subject to royal approval. By way of contrast, it is interesting to note that in London, for example, after its charter of 1189, the office of portreeve seems to have been retained and restyled 'mayor' (Webb & Webb 1963, 675n).

The Colchester charter of Richard I confirmed the rights of the burgesses to the proceeds from the river and wharves north and east of the town' as they had held them since the time of Henry *I (Chart Col,* l-2) and thus implies that before 1189 the burgesses had established some kind of corporate unity. There is no good reason, however, to believe that the burgesses had elected bailiffs before 1189 as is often supposed, and consequently there are no grounds for surmising that the office of portreeve did not survive until this time. The relevant part of the 1189 charter reads as follows[2]: *Sciatis nos concessisse et praesenti confirmasse carta nostra burgensibus nostris Colcestrie quod ipsi ponant de suipsi ballivos quoscumque voluerint et justiciares ad servanda placita corone nostre et ad placitanda eadem placita infra burgum suum.* Dr D E Greenway has kindly written: 'There is nothing to suggest that the burgesses had elected their bailiffs earlier. The perfect infinitives *concessisse* and *confirmasse* and the future perfect subjunctive *voluerint* indicate nothing about the past state of affairs in Colchester. Charters were usually framed in the past tense even when the grants were new. Of course, Richard I and John did often make confirmations look like new grants in order to extract more money, but good documentary evidence would be needed to show that this was the case here.'

An alternative interpretation of the 'Raven Seal' was put forward by Birch *(Cat of Seals in the. . . British Museum,* ii, no 4831) who thought the bird was an eagle and described the seal as that of the Gate Warden. Certainly *custod. port.* can be translated as keeper of the Gate or Gate Warden and, although the office was a rare one, this possibility cannot be ruled out.[3] But the bird certainly looks like a raven, not an eagle. Mr M A F Borrie suggests (by letter): 'Birch might have been influenced by the generally sinister symbolic connotation of ravens in medieval art; they were the Devil's birds,'

The surviving impression of the Raven Seal is attached to a deed of 1348[4] where it is described as *'sigillum commune vill.*[5] In the *Colchester Oath Book (227,* f 179), a memorandum dated by Benham to probably 1450 also makes it clear that the Raven Seal was used as a common seal throughout the medieval period. The entry is as follows: *M-d. qd. scriptura in sigillo de le Ravene sic continetur in bordare sigilli predicti:-Sigillu. custod. port. Colecestr. Et in alio sigillo communi sic continetur in borda*[1]*: --Colecestrensis sui Burgi comune sigillum-super le Castelside (sui* was written in mistake for *sum).* Translated, this means 'Memorandum that the writing upon the seal of the Raven is thus contained in the border of the aforesaid seal:- Seal of the Warden of the Port of Colchester. And on the other common seal is thus contained in the border:- I am the common seal of the Eorough of Colchester-upon the castle side of the seal'.

The other common seal described in the memorandum is shown in Figure 68 and is a crudely executed piece of work. The reverse depicts a castle with towers and is surrounded by the legend as set out in the memorandum above. The fish and water under the arches symbolize the fishery and the customs from the wharves which were held by the burgesses." The building is certainly meant to represent Colchester Castle since a similar design appears on the so-called 'Castle Seal' of late medieval date (Colchester and Essex Museum). The obverse shows St Helena seated on a canopied throne holding a cross and three nails. The legend reads *Quam crux insignit Helenam Colcestria gignit,* meaning 'Colchester gives birth to Helena whom the cross makes famous'.

As might be expected, the castle with its round-headed openings and its two-light windows is, if anything, Norman in character, but the reverse of the seal is Early English in style. The arcades of two-centred arches, the quatrefoils, and the lack of elaboration suggest a date in the 13th century.[7]

The burgesses' right to have a common seal does not seem to have been granted by charter until 1462 *(Chart Col,* 47), although they plainly had such a seal before this time. Possibly as a result of the 1462 charter the two earlier seals were replaced, the Raven Seal by the 'Bailiffs' Seal'[8] and the old common seal by one of slightly smaller size (Fig 69). Such a date would tie in well with the estimated *c* 1450 date of the memorandum in the Oath Book relating to the period when the old seals were still in use."

The reverse of the 15th century common seal is generally taken to represent a castle within the walls of a town and assumed to be symbolic rather than realistic. An alternative view is that the design is a debased version of the *turris* and *castellum* mentioned in the charter of Henry I (p 26 above) as they appeared in the mid 15th century. Morant wrote that the castle bailey was enclosed on its south and west sides by a curtain wall which contained two gates, the southernmost of which was the principal entrance (Morant 1748, 1, 7-8). The position of the southern entrance seems from Speed's map of Colchester in 1610 to have been to the south-west of the keep. Thus the reverse of the 15th century seal can be interpreted as showing the curtain wall with two tall towers on either side and the southern entrance flanked by towers of lesser height. The tall structure to the right of the 'keep' could be the chapel in the bailey. The base of a D-shaped tower which was found during the 1964 excavations along the southern side of the bailey[10] is presumably the eastern tower of the gateway depicted on this seal.

The legend on the seal reads 'Jesus went into a certain castle and a certain woman received him' which is an adaptation of Luke X, 38 (Blaxill 1950, 30). The illustration has been distorted in order to convey the sense of the castle being entered. The flight of steps overlaps the border and is depicted in a manner to draw the eye towards the entrance, the portcullis of which is raised in readiness.

Fig 68 First common seal of the Borough of Colchester (1:1)

Fig 69 The reverse of the great seal of the Borough of Colchester (1:1)

The lower part of the south-west tower of the keep has been twisted and the door shown in a higher position than it should be in order to emphasize the means of entry into the keep. The portcullis of this doorway is also raised.

The water and leaping fish (just visible on the left over the water) show further links with the earlier common seal. In the case of the latter seal, the entrance is also not only given prominence but in addition the door is shown as being partly open. Both features are reflected in the 15th century common seal.

Notes

1 From North Bridge to 'Westnesse

2 The original charter is lost. This extract is taken from the charter of Richard II which includes a copy of the 1189 document.

3 I am indebted to Professor G Martin for pointing this out to me and for guidance in this matter.

4 The deed is Lord Frederick Campbell Charter XXIII. 14 (British Library).

5 I am indebted to Mr M A F Borrie for this information.

6 For a discussion of this kind of symbolism, see Mâle 1961, 2.

7 Benham dated the seal to the late 14th or early 15th century when, he claimed, the spelling *colcestia* superseded *colecestia (Oath Book, 227).* Even on internal evidence this cannot be so for in the memorandum above, dated by Benham to *c* 1450, the form *colecestrensis* is used rather than the *colcestrensis* which appears on the seal itself.

8 Now known as the 'Mayor's Seal as a result of the 1635 charter *(Chart Col,* 82).

9 The two later seals are usually dated to *c* 1413, no doubt in reference to the charter of that date.

10 The Roman remains from this site are described in Hebditch 1971. A summary report on the medieval discoveries is in preparation (Chapter 6, 10). I am grateful to Mr P J Drury for information regarding the tower.

Appendix 6

Descriptions of illustrated pottery and other clay objects (where not given in text)

No indication below about the method of manufacture implies that the sherd in question is either wheel-thrown or wheel-finished. Generally this applies to rims where not enough of the body survives to establish if it is hand-made. Where a distinction can be made with the sandy wares between wheel-thrown and wheel-finished sherds, the relevant term is included in the descriptions. Where standard, descriptions of Thetford-type ware have been omitted. Although described as shell below, the possibility of other forms of calcareous tempering being present in small quantities is not precluded. Haematite inclusions are listed where visible to the unaided eye. The descriptions of the forms of the hand-made Anglo-Saxon types follow Myres 1969. The colours given are as in the *Munsell Soil Color Chart.* A general description of the sandy wares is given on p 39.

Figure 5

1 Rim of wide-mouthed cooking-pot. Fabric grass-tempered, black. Exterior pinkish grey. Burnished on exterior surface and on inner lip. Carbon on interior of rim.

2 Fragment of annular loomweight. Fabric sandy, light brown, very dark grey to black.

4 Spindlewhorl. Surfaces reddish brown. Surfaces and edges smoothed probably through wear rather than burnishing. Grooves probably functional rather than decorative.

5 Rim of hollow-necked burnished bowl. Fabric sandy, gritty, black. Surfaces well burnished.

6 Bodysherd decorated with five vertical grooves. The three on the right are on a small boss. Fabric sandy, gritty, very dark grey. Surfaces very dark grey with greyish brown patches. A little grass-tempering.

7 Shallow bowl. Fabric sandy, very dark grey to black. Surfaces burnished, heavily burnished on rim.

8 Round-bottomed biconical bowl. Finish similar to 5 above.

9 Probably upper part of shouldered urn. Fabric sandy, gritty, some shell-gritting, very dark grey. Exterior patchy, reddish brown and dark reddish brown to very dark grey.

10 Wide-mouthed globular bowl. Fabric grass-tempered, very dark grey. Surfaces light brown to dark brown with very dark grey patches on exterior. Exterior surface well burnished.

11 Bodysherd. Fabric sandy, very dark grey. Surfaces shell-gritted, burnished. Decorated with four horizontal grooves, The probable edges of two facets are at the bottom of the sherd.

12 Rim of biconical bowl with faceted decoration and two wide, horizontal ill-defined grooves. Fabric sandy, black. Surfaces highly burnished.

Figure 10

1 Fragment of annular loomweight. Fabric sandy, a little grass-tempering, strong brown to dark grey.

2 Fragment of annular loomweight. Fabric reddish yellow to grey.

Figure 17

Globular urn. Fabric grass-tempered. Surfaces reddish brown to strong brown with light grey patches. Not burnished.

Figure 20

13 Globular urn. Fabric grass-tempered. Surfaces reddish brown to black. Exterior burnished.

14 Similar to 13.

15 Globular urn with tallish neck. Fabric grass-tempered. Surfaces reddish brown to black. Exterior burnished.

Figure 21

1 Bodysherd. Fabric grass-tempered, very dark grey. Interior very dark grey. Exterior dark greyish brown. Decorated with one diagonal and three horizontal grooves and four pear-shaped stamps, of which only a corner of the uppermost survives.

2 Rim. Fabric sandy, black. Uneven surfaces. Highest points of exterior surface and interior surface of lip burnished.

Figure 27

Carinated pot. Fabric sandy, dark grey. Burnished externally. Wheel-thrown.

Figure 32

1 Thetford-type ware (CM 403.35).

2 Thetford-type ware (CM 402.35).

3-11 Thetford-type ware.

12 Thetford-type ware, sandy, very dark grey. Patches of carbon on exterior surface.

13 Sandy, gritty, reddish brown; haematite. Surfaces light brown to black, with a little shell-grit (?accidental). Carbon on exterior surface. Wheel-thrown,

14 Thetford-type ware.

15 Thetford-type ware. Sandy, very dark grey with grey patches. Wheel-thrown.

16 Sandy, gritty, greyish brown; haematite. Surfaces reddish brown and shell-gritted. Method of manufacture not clear.

17 Sandy, gritty, dark grey. Surfaces reddish brown to black. Carbon on exterior surface. Hand-made body with a ?wheel-finished rim.

18 Thetford-type ware.

19 Sandy, gritty, shelly, grey; haematite. Surfaces patchy grey to black. Hand-made body with a ?wheel-finished rim.

20 Sandy, grey. Surfaces pink and light reddish brown to grey.

21 Sandy, light red.

22-6 Thetford-type ware.

27 Sandy, grey. Surfaces reddish brown to very dark grey and shell-gritted. Finger-tip decoration on rim. Method of manufacture not clear, possibly wheel-thrown.

28 Sandy, grey; haematite. Surfaces reddish brown to very dark grey. Finger-tip decoration on rim.

29 Sandy, gritty, grey; haematite. Surfaces patchy, reddish brown to grey. Finger-tip decoration on rim.

30 Sandy, dark grey. Surfaces reddish brown and shell-gritted. Method of manufacture not clear.

Figure 33

31 Sandy, grey. Surfaces grey to very dark grey with reddish brown patches and a little shell-grit.

32 Sandy, grey; haematite. Margins yellowish red. Surfaces very dark grey. Wheel-thrown.

33 Sandy, black. Exterior patchy, reddish brown to very dark grey. Hand-made.

34 Sandy, grey. Surfaces light brownish grey and light reddish brown to black.

35 Sandy, grey. Surfaces grey and light reddish brown.

36 Sandy, grey. Surfaces reddish brown to very dark grey.

37 Sandy, grey; haematite. Surfaces dark grey.

38 Sandy, grey. Surfaces patchy reddish brown to very dark grey.

39-41 Thetford-type ware.

42 Sandy, dark grey. Surfaces black and dark grey. Carbon on surfaces.

43 Sandy, dark grey. Surfaces patchy reddish yellow to grey.

44 Thetford-type form. Sandy, very dark grey. Surfaces patchy very dark grey to reddish yellow.

45 Sandy, grey. Interior brown. Exterior reddish brown. Vesicular surfaces.

46 Sandy, gritty, grey. Surfaces patchy reddish yellow to very dark grey. Finger-tip decoration on rim. Handmade body with a ?wheel-finished rim.

47 Sandy, black. Surfaces patchy pink to black.

48 Sandy, grey. Some shell-grit on interior surface. Surfaces reddish brown to very dark grey. Finger-tip decoration on rim.

49 Sandy, grey. Interior pinkish grey. Exterior brown. Finger-tip decoration on rim. ? Wheel-thrown.

50 Sandy, dark grey. Surfaces patchy dark grey to very dark grey.

51 Sandy, gritty, grey. Interior reddish brown.

Exterior light brownish grey. Carbon on exterior surface.

52 Thetford-type ware.

53 Rim of small bowl in Thetford-type fabric.

54-56 Thetford-type ware.

57 Sandy, grey; haematite. Surfaces reddish brown to very dark grey and shell-gritted. Finger-tip decoration on rim.

58 Thetford-type ware.

59 Sandy, light red- Surfaces red and shell-gritted. Wheel-thrown.

60 Sandy, gritty, dark grey. Surfaces patchy light reddish brown to very dark grey. Carbon on exterior surface.

61 Probably Thetford-type fabric: sandy, grey. Surfaces grey. Rim of a small bowl.

62 Sandy, grey. Interior reddish brown. Exterior very dark grey. Shell-grit on exterior surface. Finger-tip decoration on rim.

63 Sandy, shelly, grey. Surfaces grey.

64 Sandy, shelly, grey. Surfaces patchy dark reddish grey to very dark grey. Carbon on exterior surface.

65 Soapy, dense fine shell inclusions, grey. Interior pinkish grey. Exterior grey to dark reddish brown. Wheel-thrown. Probably from Ouse Valley.

66 Sandy, grey. Surfaces patchy reddish brown to dark grey. Finger-tip decoration on rim.

67 Sandy, grey. Surfaces reddish brown.

68 Thetford-type ware.

69 Thetford-type ware. Fabric sandy, grey. Interior dark grey to grey. Exterior very dark grey to reddish brown. Finger-tip decoration on rim. Wheel-thrown.

70 Sandy, pinkish grey. Surfaces very dark grey to brown and shell-gritted. Finger-tip decoration on rim. Wheel- thrown.

71 Sandy, grey. Surfaces dark grey. A little shell-grit on exterior surface. Finger-tip decoration on rim.

Figure 34

72 Thetford-type ware.

73 Sandy, grey. Surfaces pale brown to grey.

74 Sandy, light brownish grey. Surfaces dark grey to light brownish grey, with a little shell-grit. Slightly vesicular surfaces.

75-77 Thetford-type ware.

78 Grass-tempered, fabric and surfaces very dark grey. Hand-made.

79 Thetford-type ware.

80 Sandy, grey. Surfaces reddish yellow to very dark grey.

81 Thetford-type ware.

82 Sandy, grey. Surfaces patchy reddish brown and light red to very dark grey. Combed decoration on surfaces. Wheel-thrown.

83-87 Thetford-type ware.

88 Sandy, grey. Exterior light reddish brown.

89 Sandy, grey. Surfaces reddish yellow to grey.

90 Thetford-type ware.

91 Sandy, grass-tempered, dark grey. Exterior light reddish brown to dark brown.

92 Sandy, grey. Surfaces reddish yellow to very dark grey.

93 Sandy, grey. Surfaces very dark grey.

94 Sandy, grey. Surfaces patchy reddish yellow to dark grey.

95 Sandy, grey. Surfaces greyish brown to very dark grey. Carbon on surfaces.

96 Sandy, light brown. Surfaces grey.

97 Sandy (pot restored). Interior dark reddish brown. Exterior weak red to red. A little shell-grit on surfaces. Exterior burnished.

98 Sandy, grey. Surfaces reddish yellow to grey.

99 Sandy, grey; haematite. Surfaces reddish yellow.

100 Sandy, red; haematite. Surfaces patchy reddish yellow to grey.

101 Sandy, grey. Interior' very dark grey. Exterior brown to dark grey.

102 Sandy, grey. Surfaces reddish yellow.

Figure 35

103 Sandy, grey. Surfaces patchy light reddish brown to dark grey.

104 Sandy, reddish yellow. Exterior reddish brown. Hand-made body with a ?wheel-finished rim.

105 Sandy, reddish yellow, Exterior reddish brown. Hand-made body with a ?wheel-finished rim.

106 Sandy, grey; haematite. Surfaces pink with grey patches. Hand-made body with a ?wheel-finished rim.

107 Sandy, grey. Surfaces reddish brown with grey patches. Hand-made body with a wheel-finished rim.

108 Sandy, grey; haematite. Surfaces reddish yellow. Hand-made body with a wheel-finished rim.

109 Sandy, dark grey. Surfaces very dark grey.

110 Sandy, gritty, grey. Interior very dark grey. Exterior dark grey. Combed decoration.

111 Base and bodysherd. Sandy, grey. Surfaces reddish yellow to grey. Hand-made body with a knife-trimmed base.

112 Sandy, shelly, grey. Surfaces reddish yellow with grey patches.

113-114 Thetford-type ware.

Bibliography

Abbreviations

A-S Chron	*Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*
B R G K	*Bericht der Römisch-Germanischen Kommission*
CM	Colchester and Essex Museum accession number
ERO	Essex Record Office
Jos	Joslin Collection accession number, Colchester and Essex Museum

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