

7. P. M. Bruun, *Roman Imperial Coinage*, Vol. vii, (1966), 36.
8. This outline of events leading to Constantine I's sole rule is, of course, only very sketchy. A complete recital of even the principal events between A.D. 289 and 323 would take up too much space.
9. J. P. Wild, *Textile Manufacture in the Northern Roman Provinces*, (1970), 38. One fragment from Cambridgeshire, from a coin of Vespasian, has one S and one Z system; an S-spun fragment was found in the coffin of St. Paulinus of Trier.

'ST. CATHERINE'S THORPE'—THE BIRTH AND DEATH OF A MYTH

by Edwin J. Rose and Alan J. Davison

In 1951 Mr. D. W. Aldous, digging his allotment near Hilly Plantation, Thorpe St. Andrew, was surprised to discover a church (site 9646; TG 2671 0902). The site was subsequently excavated by the late R. R. Clarke, and various helpers. Building materials, human skeletons, and Late Saxon and medieval pottery were recovered and presented to Norwich Castle Museum. Apart from a brief note in *Norfolk Archaeology* XXXI, 411-2, the excavation has never been published. The aim of the present article is however not to consider the excavation, but to examine the identification of the church.

Blomefield (1805, IV, 425) has a paragraph describing a church on Mousehold Heath which it is worth quoting at length:

'At the extremity of Pokethorp hamlet . . . is the site of St. Catherine's Chapel, which stood northeast of the said hamlet, about a mile distant from it, upon Mushold Heath; it was an ancient parochial chapel, founded about the time of the Conquest, and was afterwards reconsecrated to the honour of St. William of Norwich, . . . and is commonly called St. William in the Wood; it had a cell of monks . . . residing by it . . . In 1230, Nigel de Hapesburg gave a messuage and lands in Wiclewood, and the moiety of the advowson of All-Saints church there, to the church of Norwich, on condition that the prior and convent should find a chaplain to serve daily in the chapel of St. Catherine by Thorp Wood, for his own and his ancestors' souls . . . and about 1410, it was united to St. James's parish, and the parochial service transferred thither, the almoner only serving it as a chantry, from that time to the Dissolution, when it was totally demolished; the site of it being now commonly known by the name of Pokethorp churchyard; and in 1550 was leased by the dean and chapter, to William Bleverhaysset, Gent., by the name of the Chapel-yard called St. Williams in the Wood. It was much frequented by pilgrims, who visited it to its dissolution, for in 1506 the almoner accounted for the offerings at St. William's chapel'.

R. R. Clarke, in the note in *Norfolk Archaeology* mentioned above, describes the building excavated in 1951 as 'the site of a medieval church to be identified as the church of St. Catherine which Blomefield and all later writers have confused with the chapel of St. William upon Mousehold Heath, Norwich'. In his handwritten notes in Norwich Castle Museum he writes 'Probably the remains of the church of St. Catherine de Monte' and 'Blomefield asserts that this church was founded about the Norman Conquest and rededicated to St. William in 1168 but this is an error due to confusion between St. Catherine's church and the chapel of St. William'. No detailed reasoning is given for the assumption that Blomefield was in error, except 'Parish of Pockthorpe extended to Gas Hill temp Henry VI'.

Clarke's identification has been followed by all subsequent writers who have mentioned the site, notably Campbell (1975) who suggests that the excavated building was 'the parish church

of Pockthorpe'. Other writers and lecturers have tended to replace 'Pockthorpe' with 'Thorpe' a process unintentionally started by Clarke himself who in an earlier note on the underlying domestic Saxon occupation layers in *Norfolk Archaeology* XXXI 409 names the site as 'the church of St. Catherine, Thorpe next Norwich'. He only meant to indicate the civil parish in which the site lay (Thorpe next Norwich being the former name for Thorpe St. Andrew civil parish); but the term 'St. Catherine's Thorpe' and even 'Thorpe St. Catherine' has come into use, as if it were a complementary parish to Thorpe St. Andrew.

When documentary references to the excavated site are considered, we find (as Clarke noted) that the land was known to be the site of a churchyard well into the 19th century. The 1842 Tithe Award map calls it Churchyard Piece, and an estate map of Thomas Butley, Churchyard Close.¹ Some surveyors' notes² describing glebe land in Thorpe mention both the present churchyard and 'Old Churchyard'. A parish account book for the years 1753-94³ has a sketch map of 1786 which shows the position of the old church yard. An entry for 1755 recording glebelands included the old church yard which was rented out. An account book for 1700-31⁴ has entries for 'Old Church Yarde' in 1701 and 1702 as well as a sketch map showing 'Old Thorp Churchyard'. The two maps confirm that it is the excavated site that is concerned, bordering on the Old Yarmouth Road which at that time ran north of the village. Another map of c. 1600⁵ shows this road but no building on the site in question, though the present church is shown. A map of 1589 of Mousehold Heath⁶ does not mark the old churchyard, but names a footpath crossing the Old Yarmouth Road as 'The Olde Church Pathe'.

The earliest written reference discovered is in the Thorpe Glebe Terrier for 1627 — 'item one acre commonlie called the olde churchyard'. However, a title deed of 25 November 1302⁷ describes a plot of land in the Field of Thorpe, of which one head abutted on to the royal way which led from Norwich to the church of Thorpe to the south, and the other head upon the heath to the north. As this royal road must be the former Yarmouth road north of the village, and not the present riverside road which was not established at that date, the 'church of Thorpe' must be the excavated site.

The common factor in all these references is that none ascribe the site to St. Catherine or any other saint or church other than Thorpe — 'the old churchyard', 'Old Thorpe Churchyard' and 'the church of Thorpe' are the terms used.

A survey of fourteen Consistory Court and seven Archdeaconry Court wills ranging from 1426 to 1538 has produced no evidence of a church in the parish other than St. Andrew's, to which several bequests were made; some other bequests were simply to 'the church of Thorpe'.

Clarke's statement that the parish of Pockthorpe was extended to Gas Hill is not really relevant. The excavated site is one and a half miles east of the crest of what is now known as Gas Hill, and on the further side of the village of Thorpe St. Andrew. The hamlet of Pockthorpe has always been contained in the area west of the hill.

One of the present writers (E. J. R.) discussed the question of Clarke's identification with the late Arthur Whittingham. The conclusion that was reached was that the ascription of the church to St. Catherine was due to the belief prevailing in certain quarters at the time that all Saxon and early Norman churches had some sort of documentary record; consequently, if an unrecorded church was discovered, it must be a known church wrongly located in the past. This view is no longer tenable (if it ever was), as for example was shown by the excavation on the Anglia Television site in Norwich in 1979 (Ayers 1985) which revealed the remains of a previously unknown Saxon church. It is quite possible that the building excavated at Thorpe was an unrecorded church serving an area of heath-edge settlement.

However, there is an alternative explanation. The present church of St. Andrew at Thorpe dates from 1882. In front of it stand the ruins of its predecessor, demolished at that date, comprising the porch tower and the south and west nave walls. The walling contains large quantities of early post-medieval brickwork; the one remaining window is in Perpendicular style, and old prints show the other windows to have been similar. The tower has Y-tracery brick bell openings typical of the 16th-17th centuries; although its basal quoins are of stone and its upper quoins are of brick, suggesting two periods of construction, the walling at the base contains the same type and amount of brickwork as the upper stages in the inner faces. In short there is nothing in the ruins to indicate a date earlier than the 16th century. According to Clarke's handwritten notes, the excavated church was dismantled at that date. It would seem a valid theory that the church of St. Andrew was removed from its ancient site on the hill to its present position near the river — a transfer perhaps connected with the then new road to Yarmouth superceding the old route over the heathland to the north. It is quite possible that some materials, such as the stone quoins, might have been reused. A similar case occurred at East Poringland five centuries earlier, when the church was moved northwards half a mile from its original position as described by Blomefield (1805, V. 443). This was confirmed by the discovery of the original graveyard during gravel extraction in 1960.

Whatever the truth of this theory, the authors believe they have demonstrated that there is really no evidence on which to base the identification of the church excavated in 1951 as St. Catherine's Pockthorpe. What is absolutely certain is that there has never been a 'St. Catherine's Thorpe'. That dedication is a myth which should now be laid to rest.

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1. NRO DS340 (182).
2. NRO BR90/3/5.
3. NRO PD228/52.
4. NRO PD228/51(W).
5. NRO MS4460 CAB II.
6. NRO MS4547, reproduced in the relevant part in *The Barrows of East Anglia* East Anglian Archaeol. 12 (1981), plate VII.
7. NRO DCN44/114.

THE EARLIEST YARMOUTH BAILIFFS

by Paul Rutledge

Henry Swinden's *History and Antiquities of Great Yarmouth* published in 1772 lists the annually-chosen bailiffs or ruling officials of the borough from the 53rd year of Henry III (1268-69) onwards.¹ Down to 1285-6 these names are taken from the Assize Roll of 1286, where they are recorded from the time of the previous assize, though Swinden seems to have used a slightly inaccurate later copy.² Subsequent names probably came mostly from the main headings and