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## FURTHER DISCOVERIES AT HEYDON HALL, SAXLINGHAM

by Edwin J. Rose

A description of the ruins of Heydon Hall or Saxlingham Place, in the village of Saxlingham near Holt (county sites and monuments record number 3167) was given by the present writer in *Norfolk Archaeology* XXXVIII, 336, together with the findings from trial excavations in advance of a proposed restoration (later abandoned) in 1980.

Subsequently the ruins were left untended, and large portions of what was termed the New Wing in the description collapsed under the influence of both the weather and human agency. A planning application to build a new house in the courtyard and to preserve the ruins as a monument was rejected by the North Norfolk District Council. Following further deterioration a second application to construct a new house within the ruins of the Old Wing, and to demolish the New Wing, was approved. The opportunity was therefore taken to record features of the building newly brought to light, and to excavate certain areas in a more complete manner.



the upper part of the porch. Other sections of stonework, notably large colonette sections, were discovered in the heaps of rubble around the porch. These latter pieces appear to be of 12th century type, whereas the other carved pieces are more in the style of the 13th-14th centuries. They are all however composed of bedded fossiliferous limestone identical to that used in the door and window surrounds of the Old Wing. The writer commented in the earlier report on the unusually retarded style of the porch entrance arch for a date in the mid 16th century. It now seems very possible that this arch has been reused in its entirety from elsewhere.

By contrast, reused stone found in the heaps of rubble derived from the collapse of the New Wing is a different material, possibly Barnack stone burnt red by the fire that destroyed this wing in 1900. A large number of these fragments are window jambs of large size, but identical in form if not in size and material with those still in place in the Old Wing. The carvings of the Instruments of the Passion mentioned in the report of the 1980 investigations (now seen by the writer for the first time) is in fact carved on the reverse of such a jamb, on the opposite side to a groove to hold glazing. It can never have been visible in such a position and therefore must represent a reuse even before it was incorporated into this building; the carving (which is of very fine quality) is stated to have been covered by two different layers of mortar when first found. The suggestion by its finder, Mr. J. Denny, that this fragment was brought from the parish church in comparatively recent times, does not now seem probable in view of the number of similar window jambs built into the fabric of the wing.

Also from rubble in the building were retrieved a number of fragments of tracery of an unusual form (Plate I), unparalleled in the writer's experience. It is possible that these may be of very late date.

A number of constructional details are now visible for the first time in recent years. The apparent opening to a room over the porch has already been mentioned. In addition the traces in the side walls of the porch ground floor, previously described as blank arches, can now be seen to have contained windows, and their flat wooden lintels may well be original. In the interior face of the north wall east of the porch, between the two hall windows, a brick-edged recess may be part of a hall stack projecting inwardly. At the west end of this wing, in the area of the service rooms, sections of the joists of an upper floor have been revealed projecting from the north wall, above putlog holes surrounded by later brickwork. These are different from original putlogs adjacent and may represent a staircase of later date.

The standing south-west corner of the New Wing, when stripped of ivy, was seen to have quoins of reused stone. A date plaque inscribed 1881 with an obliterated inscription apparently relates only to the purchase of the property by the White family and not necessarily to any alterations, to judge by other examples in the locality. The inscription would have consisted of a set of initials which it was the custom to erase again when the property was sold.

The range of outbuildings extending westwards from the Old Wing may be basically older than was formerly suggested; the eastern of the partition walls is not tied in to the side walls. The range still however appears to be later than the rest of the building. To the east of the Old Wing a set of 'fossil' quoins of reused stone have been uncovered in the wall of the yard; but the walling around them is much patched and their significance is obscure. There may perhaps have been a gateway here.



Plate I

Fragment of tracery found in collapsed rubble. *Photograph by E. Rose*



Plate II

The screens pavement after excavation looking south. Scale in 50cm divisions.  
*Photograph by Graham Pooley.*



Plate III

Reused stone moulding at the angle of the two wings, formerly wrongly identified as part of a service doorway. *Photograph by E. Rose.*



Plate IV

Stone block with groove, above sections of reused stonework, by the north doorway. *Photograph by E. Rose.*

### **The Screens Passage and its Pavement (Fig. 1 and Plate II)**

In this section of the building the previously published account needs substantial alteration. It was suggested that a fragment of a service doorway remained in the core of the section of the east wall of the New Wing that impinged into the area of the Old Wing, covered by 19th century refacing. When this wall was demolished it was clear that this was not the case. Rather than an archway the stone-work consisted of an upright jamb set on a block at a height of 1.75 metres above the level of the tiled pavement, forming an angle in a wall of red brick at the junction of the two wings (Plate III). The brickwork was of 17th/18th century type, very different from some original bricks in the surround to the south doorway of the screens passage. It would therefore appear to be a reuse of stonework at the time when the New Wing was added and part of the wall of the older building demolished.

The south face of the north wall of the Old Wing was found to bear no scar where a masonry wall backing the screens passage might have been attached; but a narrow vertical groove remained in the flintwork at the base, and directly above at a height of 2 metres a block of reused stone has a groove on the same alignment (Plate IV). The indications are therefore that the partition wall between passage and service rooms was timber framed, but standing on a masonry plinth.

Following the demolition of the towering north wall of the New Wing and the subsequent clearance of the area, it became possible to re-expose the tiled pavement and to excavate those sections not accessible before. The results necessitated a revision of the published plan (see Fig. 1). Further traces of coloured glaze, mostly worn away, were located and some glazed tiles were found in the second row from the west, whereas it had before appeared that they were confined to the outer rows. The eleventh row of tiles from the north, level with the slits for the southern doorway in the screen, was found to have been laid out of alignment; a half-tile had been added to compensate. The next three rows south are on the original alignment, but the southernmost six rows are offset. This faulty layout seems partly to be due to the fact that the north and south doorways are not exactly opposite each other; but as well the wall base to the west is slightly thicker at the southern end, the corner of the expansion being chamfered off. It is possible that this may indicate a staircase in this position.

The southernmost row of the pavement contains only three tiles and is set at the base of a short flight of steps, formed of rammed clay, leading up to the south door. The threshold was found to be 0.5 metres below the exterior ground level at the time of excavation. An original iron hinge staple remained in the doorway's east jamb.

The remainder of the base of the partition wall to the west, north of the projection described, was cleared of overburden and found to consist of reused stone blocks, with doorways in line with the apparent doorways in the screen. It is noteworthy that these blocks are of the type of stone found in the New Wing, not that in the Old. The southern of the two doorways had its north jamb formed of a rebated section of window jamb, clearly a later insertion in a haphazard manner; a step of 18th or 19th century bricks led up from this door to the west.

### **The Remainder of the Excavations**

The majority of the area of the hall in the Old Wing between the screens passage and the brick platform discovered in 1980, was cleared down to the mortar floor. Along the

interior of the south wall a path of 19th century red bricks was uncovered, changing to a herringbone pavement at the east end. Apart from this no finds or features appeared and a controlled metal detector survey located only (apart from recent items) some amorphous lumps of rusted iron. In the section east of the brick platform, the concrete floor recorded in 1980 proved to be one of a number of similar floors at different levels, with remains of dwarf walls or footings formed from a single thickness of very late brickwork and cement, all situated above the level at which the original mortar floor occurred. Because of restrictions on time and manpower these late features were not plotted in detail. In the centre of the building and cut down through the mortar floor into the subsoil was a circular feature of about 30cm diameter containing a lead 'dish' with upturned rim, within which were set bricks held together by clay rather than mortar. The feature contained black peaty silt. There were suggestions of a collapsed brick superstructure, but the area had been much disturbed. As the lead dish had no outlet or drain, it appeared to have been intended to hold water.

The metal detector survey was extended over areas of the courtyard, but apart from objects of recent date the only find was a late 15th or 16th century bronze hooked tag decorated with a rosette, a common find in Norfolk. It was discovered in disturbed soil and was not in its original context.

### CONCLUSIONS

The basic conclusions arrived at in 1980 do not need to be greatly altered. But the amount of reused masonry deserves comment. That in the Old Wing dates from the 12th to the 14th centuries and is clearly from an ecclesiastical source, and one of large extent. The construction date of 1550 would fit with the use of Dissolution material. The nearest candidate for its origin is Binham Priory, but that house was granted to the Pastons, a family not noted for friendship with the Heydons. Walsingham is not at a great distance but there seems no record of Heydon possession there. However Sir Christopher Heydon held Field Dalling manor by lease of the Dean and Chapter of Norwich, and whereas it is improbable that building material was brought from as far afield as Norwich such a connection may have helped him to acquire suitable sources nearer to hand. The stonework in the New Wing, as well as being geologically different, seems to be somewhat later in its date range though most pieces are not closely dateable. It may well be that a different source was used when this wing was added in the 17th century; but again, apparently an ecclesiastical building to judge by the carved panel. The fact that blocks of the same material form the base of the partition in the Old Wing is a drawback to such a straightforward interpretation however. Either one must suggest that the partition was rebuilt at a date subsequent to the building's original construction, or that stone from two separate sources was used from the first and pieces of one type only were reused a second time in the New Wing.

The original building certainly had an upper floor above the service rooms. There may have been a staircase at the south end of the screens passage, and a later stair inserted in the northwest corner of the building. The apparent opening to an upper room of the porch, if correctly interpreted, may suggest an upper floor above the hall as well, but the remains of the walls do not stand high enough for there to be any certainty about this. There was quite possibly a fireplace and stack against the north wall between the windows. The partition between screens passage and service rooms was timber framed on a stone base, though as discussed above the latter may be a later alteration. The layout of

the pavement, with some rows misaligned, inner sets of glazed tiles not quite in line with the service doors, and apparently faulty bedding causing the tiles to sink, suggests the use of a workforce not accustomed to such tasks.

It is now confirmed that the New Wing is an addition of the 17th century, removing a section of the south wall of the Old Wing, and that its apparent intrusion into the Old Wing is due to a recasing of what were formerly internal partitions as exterior walls in the 19th century. This latter work must be subsequent to alterations to one of the service doorways which provided a step of late brickwork, for the 1880 first edition of the twenty-five inch Ordnance Survey map shows, as previously deduced, that the Old Wing was roofless at that date — with the exception, strangely enough, of the porch. The brick paths and concrete walls within the Old Wing would now seem to represent garden features rather than farm buildings as formerly suggested. The lack of finds of a pre 19th century date indicate a clearance of the interior, followed by the insertion of various levels of floors and walks above the original floor. The lead 'dish' may well have been the base of a fountain and it is not impossible that some of the footings may represent the bases of glass frames.

The reconstruction of Heydon Hall to form a dwelling once more has involved the rebuilding of the western end of the Old Wing, utilising the existing walls where they remain and incorporating stone blocks for yet another reuse as quoins in the new walls. It may be possible at a later date to extend the building as far as the original east wall. The New Wing has been demolished except for its south wall, which remains as a memorial to that stage of the hall's existence.

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### **NORFOLK APOTHECARIES' TOKENS AND THEIR ISSUERS**

*by T. Douglas Whittet*

Tradesmen's tokens formed an illegal but tolerated money of necessity privately issued by merchants between 1648 and 1679 when regal small change was scarce or non-existent. The standard work on the subject is *Tokens issued in the seventeenth century*, originally published by William Boyne<sup>1</sup> in 1858, revised by George C. Williamson<sup>2</sup> in two volumes, 1889-91 and reprinted in three volumes by B. A. Seaby Ltd. in 1967.<sup>3</sup> This work is now popularly called 'Williamson' and will be referred to as such in this paper.

Williamson<sup>3</sup> included three Norfolk tokens bearing the arms of the Society of Apothecaries of London, those of Edward Billinges, Robert Fraunces and Robert