

## THE FIELD ARCHAEOLOGY OF THE MANNINGTON AND WOLTERTON ESTATES

by Alan Davison

### SUMMARY

*An archaeological and documentary survey of this area of North-East Norfolk, carried out between 1990 and 1992, revealed a sequence of occupation or activity from Late Neolithic times onwards. Eleven Romano-British sites were identified and light was thrown on the evolution of the post-Roman settlement pattern and the development of a variety of village forms.*

### Introduction

The Mannington and Wolterton estates lie about 6km north-west of Aylsham in the area known as the Loam or Wensum-Bure Region. The surface of the estates is comparatively low-lying, its highest point being only 53m, and slopes gently southwards to the flat-bottomed, marshy valley of the Bure. Small streams drain into the Bure; the Scarrow Beck is the largest, but other rivulets feed the stream which supplies the moat of Mannington Hall. 18th-century landscaping modified the drainage pattern to create Wolterton Lake; its outflow follows a natural channel to the Bure. Dry valleys linked with existing streams suggest that surface drainage was more extensive in the past.

The area has light to medium soils developed on glacial deposits which, in the main, overlie the Crag. They are classified as brown earths and described as coarse loamy soils over sandy or loamy bases. To the fieldwalker they vary visibly from adhesive loams to quite coarse gravelly soils. At the eastern end of Little Barningham parish chalk is just below the surface and has been quarried; here the soil is clay. The valley floors have peaty loam soils and are almost entirely under grass or damp woodland.

The area surveyed includes parts of six medieval parishes; Wolterton, Mannington, Itteringham, Little Barningham, Wickmere and Calthorpe. The tiny parish of Mannington amalgamated with Itteringham, while the former parish of Wolterton has been united with Wickmere, a large part of which is within the estates. Almost all Calthorpe, now united with Erpingham, forms part of the estates, but only the south-eastern corner of Little Barningham is included (Fig.1).

### The Survey

The survey was carried out between Autumn 1990 and Spring 1992, following a short pilot survey of parts of Wolterton Park which, previously arable, were being returned to grass. During the main survey each arable field was walked in parallel transects 30 m apart. When a site was discovered a close inspection at intervals of about 3m was carried out. A few of the more significant sites were re-examined later. A similar method was employed in the pilot study with two exceptions: the transects were at intervals of 20m, and a detailed 50m-squared search of the site of Wolterton village was made. The fieldwork was accompanied by documentary research.

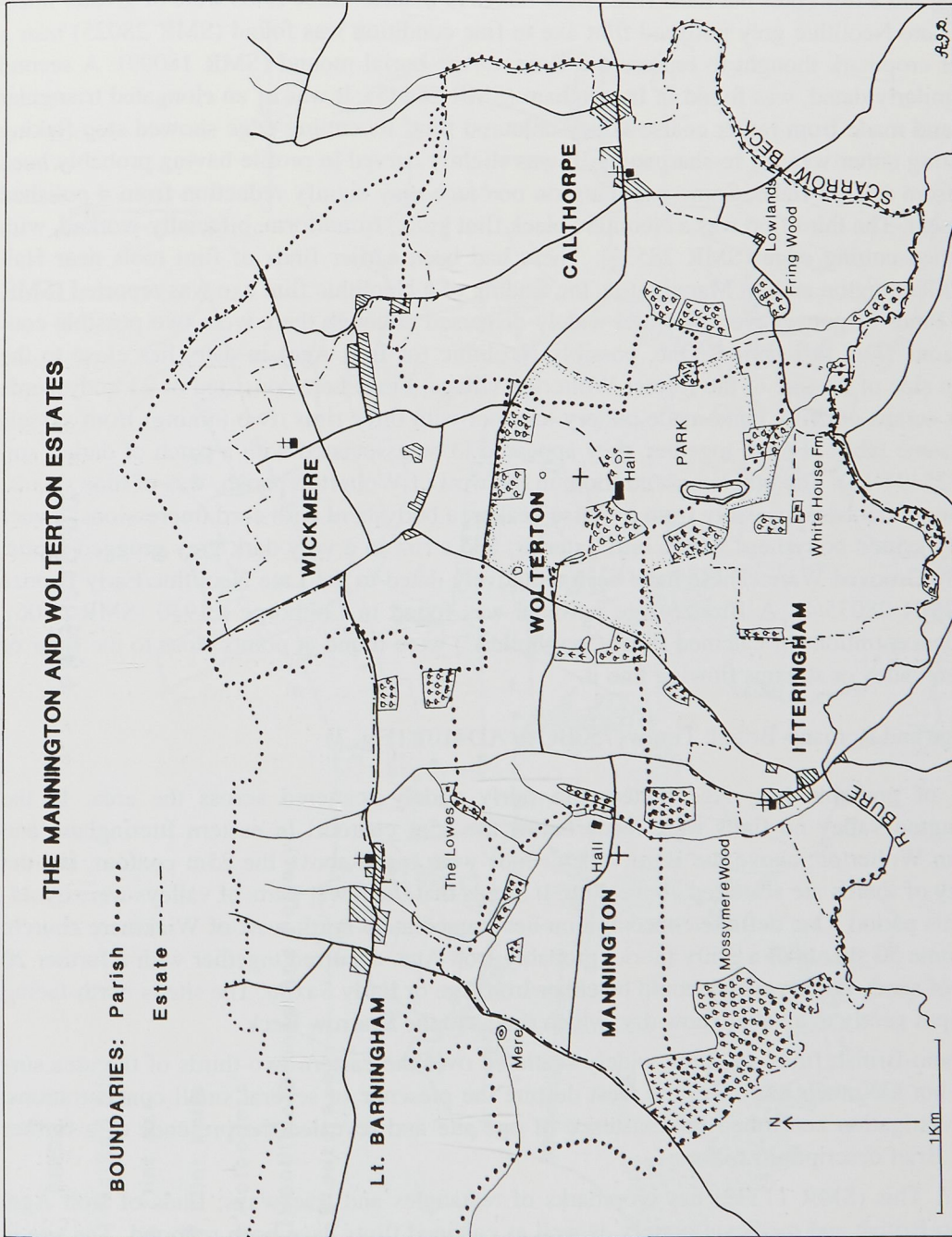


Fig. 1

## The Field Evidence

### The Prehistoric Period to 750BC. (Fig. 2)

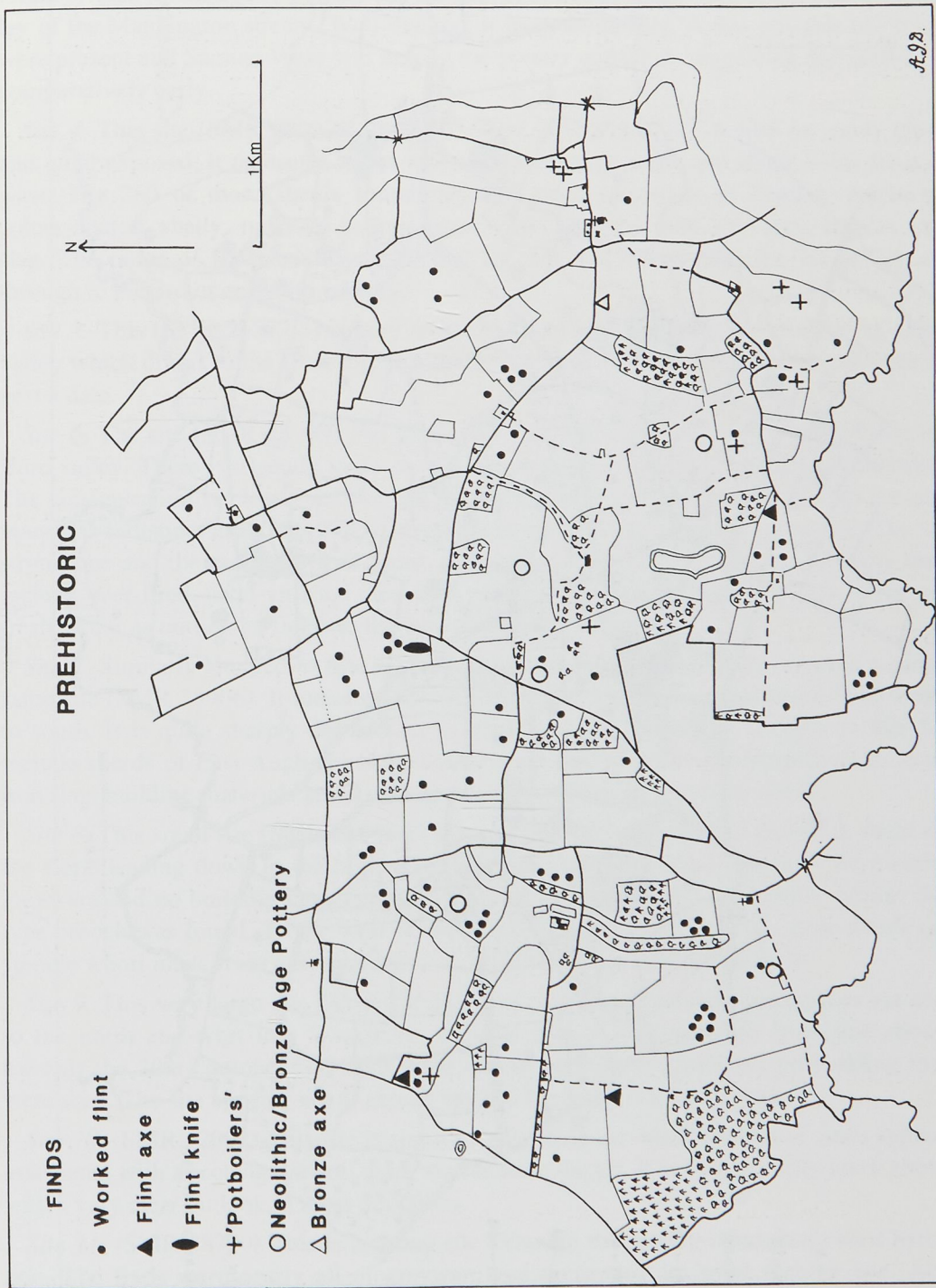
Finds of worked flints were widespread but not particularly numerous. There were over 20 scrapers and a few cores but most finds were flakes or blades. Three finds were of greater interest. A Late Neolithic grey polished flint axe in fine condition was found (SMR 28025) near a circular cropmark thought to represent a Bronze Age burial mound (SMR 18099). A second axe, similarly dated, was found in Itteringham (SMR 28945). It was of an elongated triangular shape and made from rather coarse honey-coloured flint. Its cutting edge showed step-flaking suggesting either wear or re-sharpening. It was slightly curved in profile having probably been made from a large flake. Some polishing on one face may signify reduction from a polished implement. The third find was a Neolithic black flint knife, frondiform, bifacially-worked, with a polished cutting edge (SMR 28535). There had been earlier finds of flint tools near Hall Farm, Mannington and, in Mannington, the finding of a Neolithic flint axe was reported (SMR 6662). Finds of pottery were few and widely-dispersed although there were two possible concentrations from this period. One, possibly Neolithic (or Iron Age) in date, lies close to the western side of the site of the former Wolterton village. Finds here consisted of 23 bodysherds and six scraps of gritty hand-made pottery together with three rims (two joining) from vessels of the same fabric. Found together, they appeared to be associated with a patch of darker soil (SMR 25494-14). The other concentration, in the west of Wolterton parish, was of nine sherds, including a flat base, possibly from a coarse beaker; a bodysherd with cord impressions; a very coarsely-gritted bodysherd with a buff exterior; and a rim in a very dark grey grogged fabric, possibly Grooved Ware. These have been tentatively dated to the Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age (SMR 28035/4). A Bronze Age palstave was found in Calthorpe c.1940 (SMR 6706). Eight concentrations of calcined flints ('pot-boilers') were found at points close to the floor of the Bure valley or streams flowing into it.

### Iron Age and Romano-British Times (750BC to AD410). (Fig. 3)

Sherds of probable Iron Age pottery are fairly widely scattered across the area. In the Mannington valley no finds were made below the 35m contour. In eastern Itteringham and southern Wolterton, above the Bure valley, finds were made above the 25m contour, but the majority of sherds are scattered above 40m. It seems that the lower parts of valleys were avoided in this period. One definite concentration lies immediately north-west of Wickmere church. Here some 50 sherds of a gritty fabric, probably Iron Age, occurred together with a further 20 sherds of sandy pottery which could be either Iron Age or Early Saxon. The site is north-facing and slopes gently to a valley, now dry, which drains to the Scarrow Beck.

Romano-British finds are quite widely scattered over the eastern two-thirds of the area surveyed, but are much less so in the west despite the presence of several small concentrations. The investigation confirmed the existence of one site and revealed the presence of a further eleven. Brief descriptions follow:-

*Site 1.* This (SMR 11339) has cropmarks of rectangles and trackways; finds of Iron Age, Romano-British and medieval pottery as well as calcined flints have been reported. The site is at about 40m and appears to be focused on the Mere. Finds made on this occasion (from the portion within the estate) were limited to a small quantity of pottery, some building materials including a tegula and some iron slag. Later finds of metalwork suggest activity extending from the 1st to 3rd centuries.



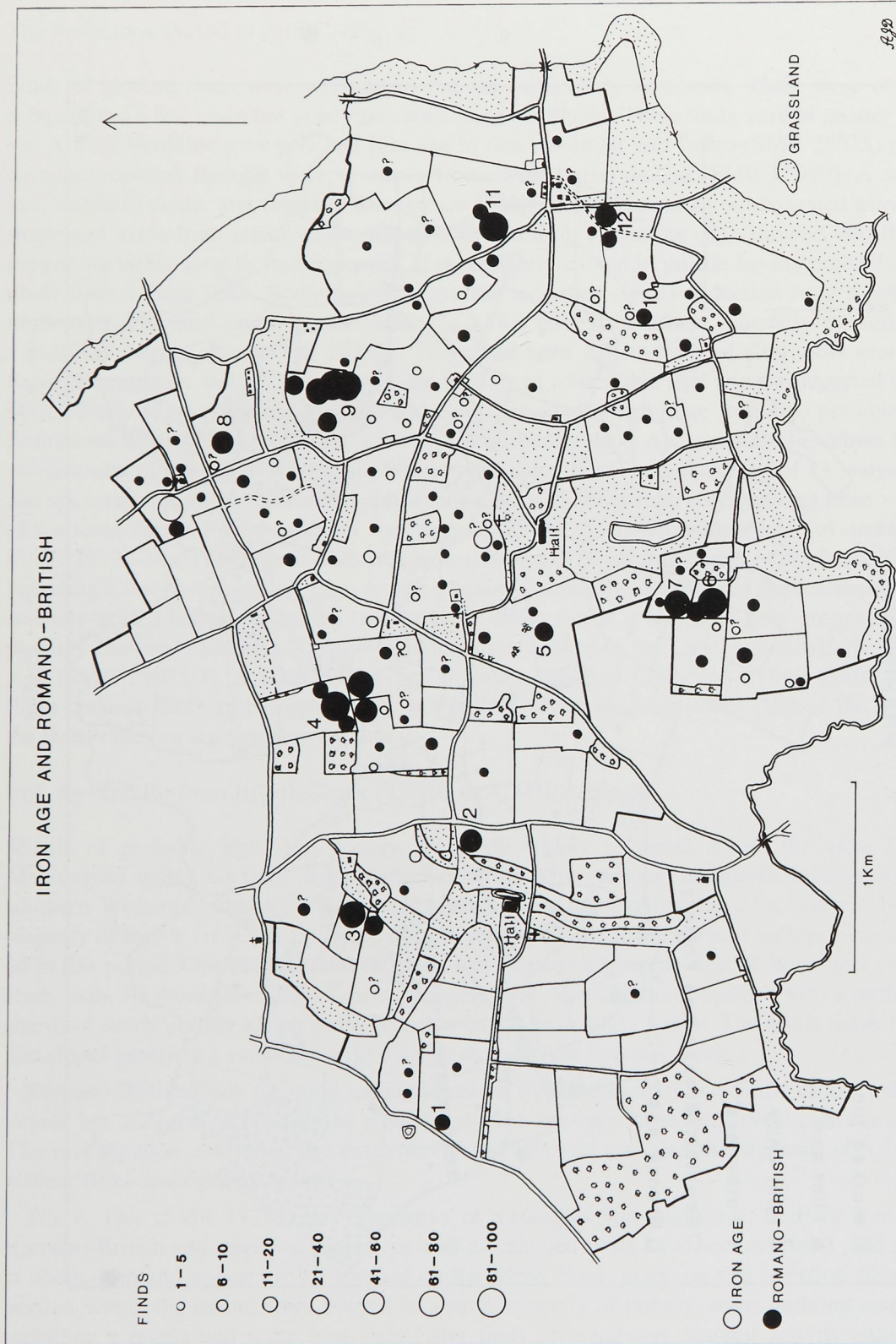


Fig. 3

*Site 2.* The site (SMR 28027) is at 35-40m on the well-drained, north-facing slope of a dry valley. On the crest are the remnants of a shallow sandpit. Finds were solely of greyware and there were no building materials.

*Site 3.* This (SMR 28041 and 28042) lies just above 35m on the side of a minor tributary valley of the Mannington stream. Well-drained, it faces south-east. A few possible tile fragments were present and Samian Ware was among the pottery collected, suggesting that activity began comparatively early.

*Site 4.* This site (SMR 28037/1,2; 28532/1 and 28534/1) is above 45m on sandy clay-loam and quite exposed. It measures about 120m from north to south and about 100m from east to west. The 260 or more sherds found included small quantities of Samian, calcite-gritted, colour-coated, shelly, oxidised and grogged wares together with imbreces, tegulae and iron slag. The range of finds made suggest that the site was active from the 1st or 2nd century through to the 3rd or early 4th century.

*Site 5.* This (SMR 25877/3) is very small and is at about 35m on the east-facing slope of a valley which drains to the Bure through Wolterton Lake. There is insufficient evidence to suggest a date.

*Site 6.* The site (SMR 28905) lies just below the 35m contour on a spur projecting into the Bure valley. There is a gentle slope northwards to a small valley draining to Wolterton Lake. The concentration is clearly defined on three sides of a 96 x 50m rectangle but the northern margin is indistinct and finds extend northwards intensifying as Site 7 is reached. The site is a strong one and the range of finds points to a protracted period of activity. Building materials include over-fired, semi-vitrified tiles with parts of two fused together. Sherds, some of them fresh, occur as outliers in fields to the west south-west and south.

*Site 7.* Similarly situated to Site 6 it may be closely associated with it or even a part of the same site (SMR 28906). It measures about 100m from east to west and about 75m from north to south. It is quite sharply defined on its northern side. Of similar strength to Site 6, finds include sherds of East Anglian colour-coated ware and probable red-slipped ware, as well as iron slag, building materials and a spindle whorl made from a greyware sherd.

*Site 8.* This small site (SMR 28044/1) lies to the south of Wickmere church at about 40m on the slope leading down to the hollow in which the village stands. The finds were entirely of greyware and no building materials were noticed. Subsequently a 1st century bronze dolphin-type brooch was found. To the west of the church, among later material, some sherds occur; a spindle whorl made from a Romano-British basal sherd was also found there.

*Site 9.* This very large site (SMR 28524/4-7) lies within Calthorpe but outliers are scattered to the north and west into Wickmere. It is on ground sloping north from just above 35m towards the 30m contour. The finds were almost entirely of greyware; no building materials were seen. The site appears not to extend beyond the hedgerow to the east.

*Site 10.* (SMR 12992) This site is significant because the small number of finds appear to be associated with a rectangular soil mark visible from the air. It is on a gravelly knoll above 40m with a very clear outlook in most directions.

*Site 11.* (SMR 28700) This is a strong site although the pottery is much abraded by cultivation. The finds were nearly all of greyware and apparently included nothing late. Although small fragments of tile were present only one which might have been Romano-British was collected. The site lies across the 35m contour on an eastward-facing slope of the valley of the Scarrow Beck and fades out down-slope. Some outliers occur to the west beyond the road.

*Site 12.* (SMR 12992/4 and 28903). One part of this site has cropmarks of rectangular enclosures (SMR 12992). Under one-third of the finds came from the cropmarked area. The presence of a beaded flanged rimsherd and colour-coated sherds suggests a later date, perhaps succeeding Site 11. Some iron slag was found.

#### Saxon Times (Fig. 4)

*Early Saxon (c.AD 450 to c.AD 650).* Evidence of activity is very slight, despite earlier records. Finds of pottery are problematic as identification is often uncertain. The most definite discovery was made just over the former boundary between Mannington and Itteringham (SMR 28533/2) where eight sherds and two small fragments of organic- or sand-tempered pottery were found with a further sherd outlying to the south. To the south-west of Mannington church (SMR 28022/2-3) a few sherds of possible early date occur with similar quantities of Ipswich-type Ware. The most notable was a sherd of gritty, sandy fabric, handmade, with part of a stamp, probably sub-circular, of short deep impressions radiating from an open centre. It is probably Early Saxon but could be Middle Saxon. Two other organically-tempered sherds could be of either date.

A second possible focus of activity lies immediately north-west of Wickmere church (SMR 28526) where seven sandy sherds could be either Iron Age or Early Saxon, thirteen sandy, gritty sherds could be Iron Age, Early or Middle Saxon, and a further four sherds of organically-tempered pottery might be Early or Middle Saxon. As both Iron Age and Saxon pottery are present the problem is obvious.

There are reports of two Early Saxon cemeteries but precise locations are uncertain. Over seventy years ago an account of discoveries of 'cinerary urns' of c. 6th-century date made in a gravel pit on the summit of a low hill near Mannington Hall was published<sup>1</sup>. They were considered, on the strength of S-shaped stamping, to be comparable to others found at Wilbraham in Cambridgeshire. The most likely site (SMR 6658) is no longer accessible for fieldwalking. It is called 'No Man's Friend'; examination some years ago found nothing (inf. Lord Walpole). The field to the south (SMR 1367) has a sandpit on its summit but no Early Saxon finds were made there or on its southern margin (SMR 6659), also reported as a findspot of Saxon urns, despite thorough search.

*Middle Saxon (c.AD 650 to c.AD 850).* The strongest site was found to the north-west of Wickmere church where 21 sherds of Ipswich-type Ware, some 'pimply', some sandy, were collected on a gentle north-facing slope. One sherd had a circular stamped motif. Another centre of activity seems to have lain in Mannington; three sherds of Ipswich-type were found, together with the material already noted, south-west of the church. Two further sherds, one of them fresh, were found on a field some distance to the west of the Hall (SMR 28539). A third possible centre was at Calthorpe where a single sherd of Ipswich-type was found north of the street on a low ridge on the northern side of a small valley draining to the Scarrow Beck.

*Late Saxon and Early Medieval (c.AD 850 to AD 1100+).* This period saw some intensification of activity at each of the three probable earlier centres. At Mannington Thetford-type and Early Medieval Wares occur just to the west and south west of the church, though the quantities are relatively small (28 and two sherds respectively). In the field to the west of Wickmere church (SMR 28526) the evidence is much more impressive. Over 60 sherds including jar rims, flat bases and rouletted pieces were found. Only two were of Early Medieval Ware and one jar rim was of late Thetford-type in a medieval fabric; the rest were all of Thetford-type. In addition a high proportion of a further 131 undifferentiated sherds was of Thetford-type rather than

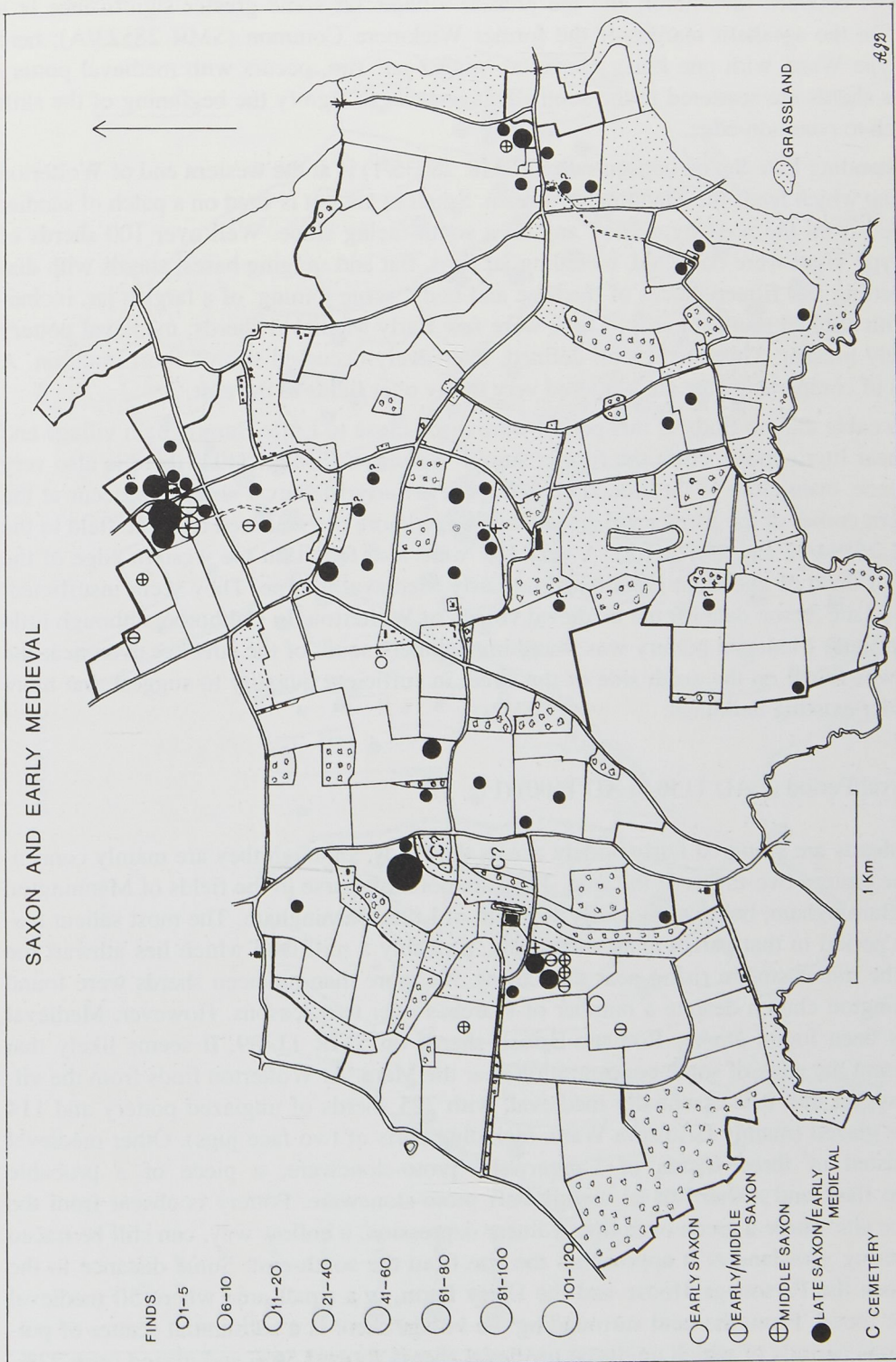


Fig. 4



medieval. To the north of the churchyard (SMR 28531/1) there is a small area from which over 30 sherds of Thetford-type were collected. A few sherds, some of them later form, occur in field scatters between the church and the present village. Of some greater significance is a small site on the southern margin of the former Wickmere Common (SMR 28523/A); here Thetford-type Ware, with one Early Medieval 'ginger-jar' rim, occurs with medieval pottery and further sherds are scattered to the south. This appears to signify the beginning of the shift from church to common-edge.

The outstanding Late Saxon concentration (SMR 28035/1) is at the western end of Wolterton near a spring which feeds the Mannington stream. Small in area, it is sited on a patch of sandier soil shielded from the west by a knoll and on a south-facing slope. Well over 100 sherds of Thetford-type Ware were collected, including jar rims, flat and sagging bases, sherds with diamond rouletting and fifteen pieces of the base and body, some joining, of a largish jar, including two with applied thumbed strip. There were few Early Medieval sherds; medieval pottery was scarcely present. This was a well-defined, intensively-occupied site of short duration. A few sherds of comparable date are scattered very thinly over fields to the east.

It is noticeable that no finds of this period were made close to Little Barningham village and very few near Itteringham. From the former site of Wolterton (SMR 25494) there is also very little evidence, even close to the ruined church. A few Early Medieval sherds do occur at the north-eastern corner of the former village site and a few more are scattered over the field to the east (SMR 25494/22 and 25874/1,2). A very few were also found on the western edge of the site, some of them of uncertain identity, some Early Medieval in type. They seem insufficient to support a Late Saxon date for the medieval village of Wolterton. In Calthorpe, although little Late Saxon/Early Medieval pottery was found immediately south of the street or even near the church, it was found on the north side of the street in sufficient quantity to suggest that more may lie under existing buildings.

#### The Medieval Period (c.AD 1150 to AD 1400) (Fig. 5)

Medieval sherds are scattered fairly widely across the fields, although they are mainly concentrated in the eastern two-thirds of the area. They are notably sparse in the fields of Mannington and Little Barningham, being particularly so south of Little Barningham. The most salient feature of the period in that parish is an earth bank, probably a mill dam which lies athwart the course of the minor stream rising near the Lowes. No more than nineteen sherds were found near Mannington church despite a number of searches over two seasons. However, Medieval pottery has been found among Romano-British sherds on SMR 11339. It seems likely that these represent the edge of some concentration near the Mere. At Wolterton finds from the village site suggest that it is essentially medieval, with 225 sherds of unglazed pottery and 114 which were glazed (mainly Grimston Ware, including parts of two face jugs). Other medieval finds consisted of three sherds of Langerwehe proto-stoneware, a piece of a probable Martincamp flask and a sherd of an orange-buff proto-stoneware. Pottery is absent from the centre of the site where a green once lay. A linear depression, a hollow way, can still be traced in neighbouring grassland as it approaches the site from the south-east. Some distance to the west, between the Parsonage House and the Dairy Farm, is a small area where 50 medieval sherds were found. From the land surrounding the village there is a substantial scatter of pottery of various periods of which unglazed medieval sherds formed 56% and glazed ones 22%. With distance, the density falls although the incidence does increase in the south-east corner of the Park against the boundary with Calthorpe. A second increase is detectable around the mar-

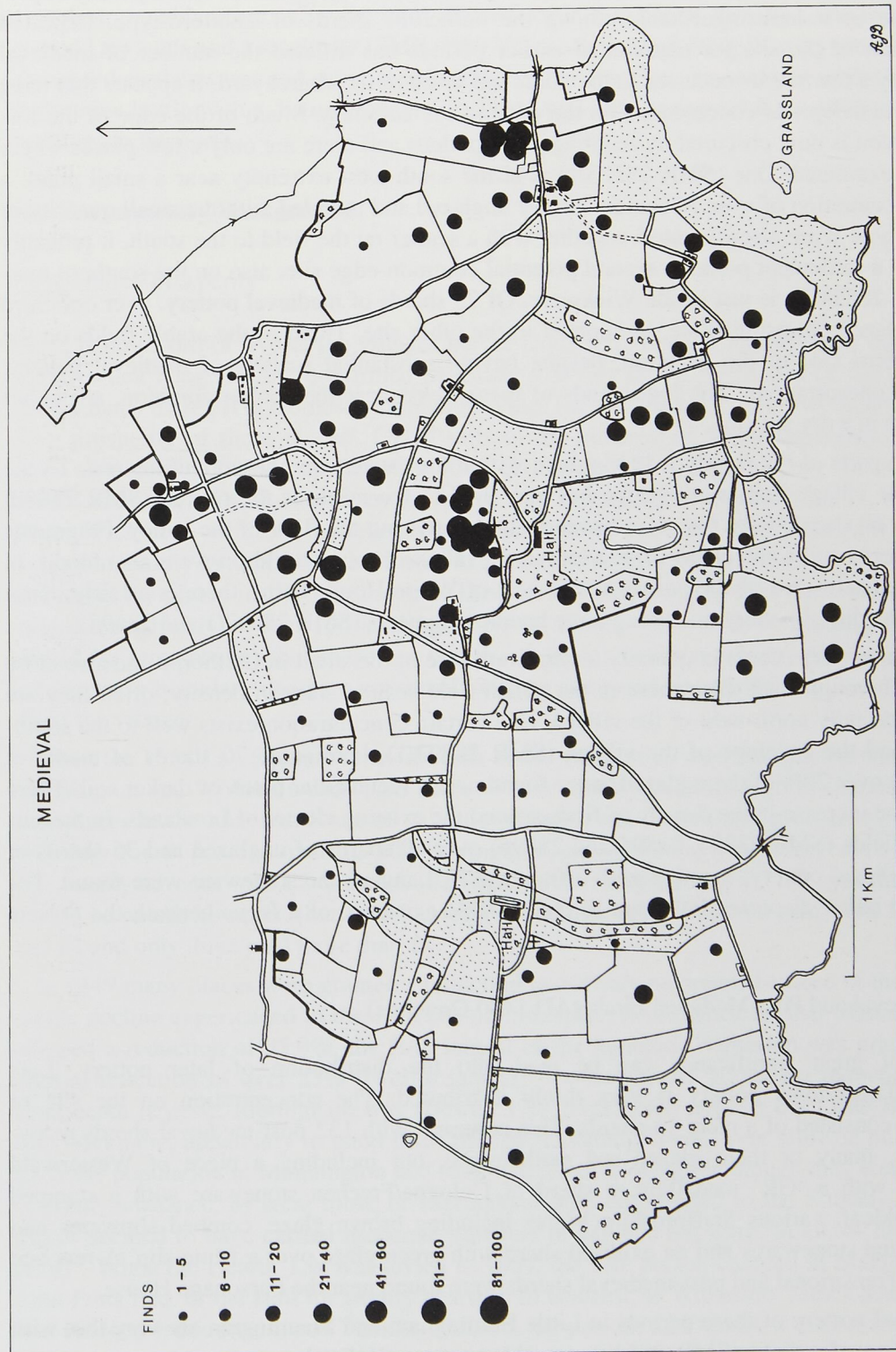


Fig. 5

gins of a pond to the south-west of the Hall.

The site near Wickmere church seems to have declined though some medieval pottery is present, some of it indistinguishable among the numerous sherds of Thetford-type. Repeated examination of the site for material of earlier periods has inflated the number of medieval finds. Only a few sherds occurred to the north and south of the churchyard. It appears that most medieval activity was concentrated on the edge of the common. Much of the edge of the former common is now obscured by buildings and gardens and there are only a few places where it can be examined. One (SMR 28523/1) is at the south-west extremity near a small pond; a small concentration of over 70 sherds, mostly unglazed and mingled with the small quantity of Thetford-type Ware already noted, together with a scatter on the field to the south, it probably represents a settlement point. A second potential common-edge site, also on the southern margin (SMR 28524/7), is just inside Wickmere. Of 75 sherds of medieval pottery, over one-third were of glazed Grimston Ware, in contrast to the other site. Three of the arable fields on the north-western side of the common, despite having substantial scatters of medieval pottery, show no concentrations. The lower ends of these fields near the former common, are rather damp even in a dry season.

The two parts of the parish of Itteringham within the estates are not without interest. To the west of the village finds were scarce but in a field to the north of the church (SMR 28030) more than 60 sherds were found on lower ground bordering the floor of the valley. Fragments of lava querns and a rim sherd from a late medieval cast bronze cauldron were also found. In the north-eastern area of the parish, south-west of White House Farm, there is a fairly dense scatter of medieval pottery, including large handle fragments (SMR 28697/1 and 28698).

Medieval pottery occurs in quantity on the north side of the street in Calthorpe and also close to the Aldborough road. Elsewhere in the parish field scatters vary in density; often they are scanty, especially north-west of the village. One certain concentration exists well to the south-west beyond the envelope of the village (SMR 28893/1); here some 70 sherds of medieval wares, just over 20% of them glazed, were found near a rectangular patch of darker soil. There is also some increase in the density of finds around the existing cluster of Lowlands. In the surrounding fields (SMR 28894, 28895 and 28896) over 60 sherds of unglazed and 35 sherds of glazed medieval pottery, together with a fragment of Langerwehe stoneware were found. The finds were rather dispersed but point to the possible existence of a focus beneath the present houses.

#### Late Medieval and Post-Medieval Finds (AD 1400 Onwards)

Nothing of great significance can be read into the distribution of later pottery. Late Medieval/Transitional pottery is very thinly distributed. The concentration on the site of Wolterton consisted of a mere 14 sherds. This contrasts with 132 post-medieval sherds recovered there, many of them glazed red earthenware, but including a piece of Westerwald stoneware with a 'GR' medallion, a sherd of Cologne/Frechen stoneware with a stamped applied oakleaf, various Staffordshire Wares including brown glaze, combed slipwares and brown glazed stonewares and an oxidised sherd with green glaze over a white slip. A few late Medieval/Transitional and post-medieval sherds were found near the Parsonage House.

Scatters of pottery of these periods in Little Barningham and Mannington are very thin with the exception of a field (SMR 28539) near Mannington Hall where some stonewares were found. In Wickmere post-medieval pottery with much rubble and domestic rubbish occurs next to the site of the former Hall. The two sites on the edge of Wickmere Common showed virtual-

ly no sign of post-medieval activity. The medieval sites to the north of the street in Calthorpe carry only insignificant quantities of sherds from later periods and these could easily be out-casts from neighbouring surviving sites. Elsewhere in that parish there is some concentration around Lowlands and a small site (SMR 28897/1) south-west of Fring Wood yielded a range of glazed red earthenwares and stonewares, including the complete rim and part of the handle of a Bellarmine bottle with a distinct face mask. There was also an appreciable scatter around farm buildings to the north.

### The Documentary Background

#### Comparative Prosperity

There is no record of five of the villages before Domesday Book. Calthorpe was mentioned in c.1047 when King Edward confirmed St. Benet's Abbey in the possession of the church and certain lands there<sup>2</sup>. It is Domesday which provides the earliest basic information about the relative prosperity of these places<sup>3</sup>. Of 37 vills in the hundred of South Erpingham, placed in order of size of recorded population in 1086, five of the six villages occupy quite high positions. Calthorpe, with 34, shared seventh place with Buxton; Barningham, with 31, was in tenth place; Wickmere, with 30, in eleventh, and Itteringham, with 26, shared fifteenth place with Erpingham. Only Wolterton with 12 was in a lowly (twenty-seventh) position. Other information about the places in 1086 is shown in Table 1. It is surprising to find that Mannington was valued most highly at over 105 shillings in 1086, having risen from 60 shillings in 1066. It should be remembered that these are details of feudal holdings which often strayed freely across parish boundaries and are not therefore to be compared rigorously with later information about the villages.

When the 1334 Lay Subsidy (one-fifteenth of the value of all movable goods) was collected, Mannington and Wolterton each paid £1-6s, a sum which was thirty-fifth in size out of thirty-nine places in the hundred. None of the other villages was particularly prosperous: Calthorpe, in twenty-fourth position, paid £2-10s, Itteringham, paying £2-7s, was twenty-sixth, Wickmere was twenty-seventh with £2-6s and Little Barningham, contributing £1-15s, was thirty-first. It should be noted, however, that only fourteen settlements in the hundred paid sums between £3 and £4 and only three paid more than £4.

In 1449 many places were granted a reduction in Subsidy payments because of the long economic decline experienced in the 14th century and after. It is significant that Mannington was allowed a reduction of 35.9%, the fifth largest in the hundred. Wolterton was granted a substantial reduction of over 23% (twelfth largest); Calthorpe was allowed a reduction of 20% (fourteenth largest); Itteringham was allowed 17% (eighteenth largest) but Little Barningham and Wickmere, apparently in good heart though remaining small, were allowed no relief<sup>4</sup>. By 1525 the population of Mannington had sunk to a handful of people though they were probably of some substance, as were those of Itteringham who contributed to the Subsidy. The other places seemed to have carried moderate numbers of persons but were, in all, of modest prosperity<sup>5</sup>. When the Hearth Tax was levied in 1664, the sole person charged in Mannington was John Potts Esq. of the Hall for twenty hearths<sup>6</sup>. In contrast, at Wolterton, James Scambler Esq. was charged for fourteen, and Thomas Jackson, the parson, and Matthew Bacon for five each. In Wickmere John Ramsey Esq. was charged for twenty-two hearths; charges for a further sixty hearths there were paid by thirty-nine people. In Calthorpe, out of nineteen people charged, the parson, with eight, had the largest number out of a total of forty-one. In Little

TABLE 1: The Six Villages in Domesday Book, 1086.

Vill	Lord in 1066	Lord in 1086	Held in 1086 by:	Recorded Population in 1086	Valuation	Carucates/Acres	Plough Teams	Church	Mills
Mannington	Godwin	Godric (for the King)	Godric	15	100s 16d	2 Car	3		2
			Five Sokemen	5		24a	1		
	Ralph	de Warenne	Two Freemen	2	5s	17a	1		
Lt. Barningham	Ralph	Godric (for the King)	Sokeman	4	In Aylsham	16a	1 1/2		
	Harold	de Warenne	Two Freemen	7	13s 4d	30a	2	1	1/2
	Harold	Bp. William		14	22s	1 Car 50a	2 1/2		1
		Robert s. of Corbucion	Brant	6	10s	82a	1 1/2		
Itteringham	Gyrth	Godric (for the King)	Freeman	6	In Aylsham	1 Car	2		
	Harold	de Warenne	Freeman	4	3s	15a			1/2
	Harold	Bp. William	Two Sokemen	16	25s	60a	1 1/2		2/3, 7/8
Wolterton		de Warenne	Thorold	4		16a	1/2		
	Abb. of Holme	Abb. of Holme		4	20s	1 Car 4a	1 1/2		1/2
	Thorold	Ralph de Beaufour		3	10s	30a	1		

TABLE 1: (continued)

Vill	Lord in 1066	Lord in 1086	Held in 1086 by:	Recorded Population in 1086	Valuation	Carucates/ Acres	Plough Teams	Church	Mills
Wickmere	Harold	King	Freeman	1	20s	30a	1/2		
	Stigand	Odo	Tihel of Hellean	5	4s	30a	1/2		
	Harold	de Warenne	Freewoman	4	5s	24a	1		
	Harold	Bigot	Robert de Courson	16	30s	1Car	2		
	Harold/Bp. Aelmer	Bigot	Robert de Courson	4	12s	30a	1/2		3/4
	Abb. of Holme	Abb. of Holme			16d	12a			
Calthorpe	Godwin of Scottow	Bigot	?	1	In Hanworth	?			
	Abb. of Holme	Abb. of Holme		10		1 1/2 Car	4		1, 1/3
	Abb. of Holme	Abb. of Holme	Three Sokemen	3	30s	20a	1		
	Leafstan?	Tihel le Breton	Guerri and Osbert	7	15s	1 Car	1 1/2	1	1/3
				11	30s	1 Car	2 1/2		1/3

Barningham fifteen people were charged for a total of twenty-eight hearths. In Itteringham seventeen people were charged for a total of forty-four hearths; two households there had five and one had six. Although a crude indicator this does seem to represent the contrasts in status of the six villages in post-medieval times.

### Manorial History

The manorial history of the six places is complicated by the small manors whose holdings appear to have interlocked to a disconcerting degree. This seems to be apparent in the Domesday entries (see Table 1) where besides the major lords there were several minor holders of lands. A subsequent source of confusion was the changing of names of manors brought about by the appearance of new lords<sup>7</sup>.

Mannington manor was held by the Crown until it was granted to the Earls of Pembroke. From them it passed to the Tirrels of Mannington and Itteringham. The Tirrel heiress married William de Fewelle who was shown as holding land there in 1316. By the marriage of a Fewelle heiress, the manor came to the Lumner family. The last Lumner, Edmund, surrendered his right to a member of his mother's family (Dodge) by her second marriage. The Potts family gained the lordship by marriage with a Dodge heiress. With the death of the last male member of this family the manor was conveyed c.1736 to Horatio Walpole. The manor of Mannington extended into Itteringham as the Domesday holding of the King there was subsequently conveyed to the lords of Mannington. The manor of Wolterton also extended into Itteringham as the small Warrene holding of 1086 together with one-third of the advowson was given to the lords of Wolterton and subsequently passed with that lordship. The Bishop's lands in Itteringham were detached in medieval times from Blickling and became the manor of Nowers after the family of that name. This manor, with its chapel of St. Nicholas, could be the church and possible manor house detected by aerial photography in 1986. By the 18th century it was in the hands of the Robins family. According to Blomefield a fourth manor, probably Bintre, was constituted out of parts of others; it too was held by Robins in the 18th century.

In Wolterton the manor held by the Abbey of St. Benet was enfeoffed to a family who took the name 'de Wulterton' and who acquired the two other parts, one of them the Warrene holding, becoming sole lords and patrons. Eventually, in the mid-15th century, the de Wulterton lands were divided between two heiresses, their husbands being John de Briston and Edmund Moore, so creating separate manors and a shared advowson. Briston's manor passed through various hands and was identified by Blomefield with Coldham's manor in Wolterton. In the late 16th century it was held by the Houghtons and then the Scamlers; having passed in the female line to the Grays it was sold to Horatio Walpole. Moore's manor was sold to the Windhams in 1486. They sold, in 1542, to Edward Lumner of Mannington and so it was eventually purchased, with Mannington, by H. Walpole. Blomefield's account of the manor of Barningham Stafford or Goodale is confusing since he incorporated information concerning Barningham in Suffolk where the manorial family also took the name 'de Barningham'. By the 13th century the Norfolk manor was held by a 'de Barningham' family who obtained a grant of a fair and market and also of free warren in 1303-04. From them it passed, by 1346, to the Clare Earls of Gloucester and Hertford and then, by marriage, to the Earls of Stafford. After the attainder of the Stafford Duke of Buckingham in 1522 Henry VIII granted the manor to the Dukes of Norfolk who, after various vicissitudes, conveyed it to John Dix (or Ramsey) of Wickmere. Portions of Coldham's manor lay in this parish as surviving court books of Barningham Coldhams show.

The large Abbey of St. Benet holding in Calthorpe (Uphall) was held from them by a family who took, among others (Suffield, Hales and Hobbis) the name 'de Calthorpe'. They were a numerous family with many connections. Eventually, a Calthorpe heiress married Sir Henry Parker. The Parkers held this manor until it came to the Fromantels who sold to Horatio Walpole. A second manor, variously called 'Hook Hall' or 'Dame Kate's', was formed, by 1302, from this holding and held by a younger Calthorpe line. One of them had a wife called Catherine who, by 1346, seems to have brought land in Wickmere and so gave the manor its alternative name. Her son had a daughter, sole heiress, who married a Harsyke of South Acre. By heiresses of this family it was conveyed to the Bullens of Blickling and, by various hands, it passed to Dix of Wickmere. Another small part of Uphall was separated and was held by the Great Hospital of Norwich; the New Mill in Calthorpe was theirs. Tihel's Domesday holding became Kybald's manor; a Calthorpe joined it to Uphall in the 13th century, making Kibald Hall the capital manor house.

In Wickmere lands held by the King were added to those of Warenne and held by the de Wickmeres who seem to have enlarged the extent of their manor. Eventually it came to Walter de Barningham who passed it to the Clares and so, as with Little Barningham, it was purchased by the Dixes. The manor, after a time, was held by the Spelmans. The Bigot holding, in the hands of the Botilers in the late 12th century, became known as Butler's manor. After many changes the lordship seems to have passed, at one time, to the de Bodhams, hence references to Bodham's manor. Subsequently, by 1346, it was in the hands of Robert Hereward and became known as Herewards. Later it was joined to the other manors, including Dame Kate's and thus came to the Dixes and Spelmans. The Spelman lands were added to the Walpole estate in the 18th century.

It is not surprising that attempts to piece together the medieval topography of the area meet with limited success. Such information as exists is fragmentary and this adds to the limitations already imposed by the interwoven nature of these small manors.

### Topographical History

It seems, given the circumstances, most convenient to deal with information on a parish basis.

#### *Mannington*

A western part of the former parish is outside the estate; it includes the area surrounding the Mere. It is clear from the Lay Subsidy figures that the settlement was in decline by the later Middle Ages. The most significant event at that time may well have been the construction of Mannington Hall. Licence to crenellate is said to have been obtained in 1451 and in a letter to John Paston in 1460 William Lomner of Mannington said 'I am yn bildyng of a pore hous . . . . And I durste be soo bolde on your maystership to aske of yow xii copill of oken spariss . . . . at a yard of yourz yn Saxthorpe called Barkerz'<sup>8</sup>. This suggests that the hall was well under construction as Paston was invited to seek lodging there when his affairs led him to the area. The only other building recorded in late medieval times was the church. The 1368 Inventory of Church Goods shows that it was well-furnished and, as it had a pyx, still had a parochial function<sup>9</sup>. Margaret Paston's will of 1504<sup>10</sup> asked for her body to be buried in the church of Itringham but did leave 10s. for the repair of Mannington church. The will also mentions furnishings in various rooms in Mannington 'manor place' – the grey chamber over the parlour, the hall, the red chamber over the pantry and buttery. Among the bequests was a flock of 100 sheep and 23 cattle.



A map of c.1565<sup>11</sup> shows that by that time there was no longer a village; apart from the Hall and 'the Chapel' only some buildings at the Mere remained within 'The meer parke'. Much of the parish was divided into closes; the largest being the Sheep's Close while others were Home Close, Moore Close, The Grove Closes and the Fifty Acres. In the south-western margin was Mannington Heath. The parish was crossed by 'Hoult Way' which left Itteringham in a north-westerly direction and after crossing the Mannington stream continued across the Sheep's Close to join the road from Saxthorpe to Barningham north-east of the Mere Park. A small but prominent bank is all that survives of this road. It seems likely that arable farming was carried on in those parts of the manor which lay to the east in the fields of Wolterton and Itteringham. The major activity on the lands within the parish, with the possible exception of the area around the Mere, must have been pastoral. A court roll entry lends some support to this. In 1539 a shepherd from Saxthorpe was fined for pasturing his sheep on Fifty Acre Close having broken the surrounding bank<sup>12</sup>. A map of 1742<sup>11</sup> shows that, by then, revision of field boundaries had taken place, together with some park-like development around the Hall, including the introduction of the western straight approach road. Gravel Pit Close to the north of the chapel explains the large depression existing in the grassland there.

#### *Little Barningham*

Evidence for the part of the parish which was surveyed is almost entirely post-medieval. The Mannington map of 1565 shows much of the area south of the village as being taken up by 'Greate furre hill', 'Broome hill' and 'Heckham Heath'. The last is inscribed 'The Ld of Couldham hath fifteen acres here'. 'The Scite of the Manor of Couldhams' is shown in the place now occupied by Lowes Cottage and Carr just inside the parish. A road called 'Pottersgate' is shown leaving Barningham between Fir Hill and Broom Hill to join Holt Way. Pottergate Way continued to be mentioned throughout the 17th century. A map of 1777<sup>13</sup> shows the area just to the west of the Lowes divided into enclosures, the southernmost of which was 'Hecomb'. These divisions had probably been in existence for over a century as 'Heckham Close' was mentioned in 1655 as was a 'Furr Close'. In 1777 an area to the north-east of the Lowes was named 'Coneyfer'. This can be traced back to 1728 ('Coningfer Sladd'), to 1655 ('Coniferslad') and to 1647 ('Coningerslade'). In 1777 a road, now vanished, led east to Wickmere by way of Thoroughfare Six Acres from a point near the Lowes; it passed Marl Pit Eleven Acres. In 1629 there was Marlepitt furlong alias Oldmarle. Kiln Close, shown in 1777, indicates that chalk-working had extended north of the present road to Wickmere by then. If Blomefield's identification of Coldhams in Wolterton as that held by by the Bristons is correct then the manorial house lay within Little Barningham. By the 17th century it seems to have been firmly counted as being of that parish, witness the manorial names 'Couldhams alias Barningham Parva' and 'Barningham Parva nuper Couldhams'. 'The Manor of Colby alias Couldhams Hall' is a further variant of 1607<sup>14</sup>.

#### *Itteringham*

The first substantial topographical information is provided by the Mannington map of 1565 showing that that manor extended well into this parish. To the north-west of Itteringham church Itteringham West Field is shown divided into large closes – North and South Diers and The Furr Close. Further to the west lay the large areas of East and West Mosimeer, shown as woodland in part at least. The valley of the Mannington stream was also wooded, probably in the form of carr. To the north of the church, apart from the lost Hoult Way, the existing road, which in its slightly intrenched sinuous form suggests an early origin, is shown as 'Seagate Way'. The road leading to Wickmere, of similar form, was also in existence. The lands within

the area surveyed had been divided into large closes, one of which, Itteringham New Close, had Seagate Way crossing it and was wooded in part. An area which is wooded today was wooded then and named 'Bently Hill'. In 1565 the land on either side of the road to Wickmere was still open, being farmed in strips. Much of the area south of the present Wolterton Park lying within this parish is not shown in detail but is described as being of the manor of Nowers. The suggested site of Nowers manor is outside the surveyed area<sup>15</sup>. If Blomefield was correct in stating that this manor was in the hands of the Robins family, it seems possible that the buildings shown on a map in 1748<sup>16</sup> as being on the estate of William Robins were a replacement site for this manor house. This map shows the building to be on the site of the present Itteringham House (White House Farm); they included a Dove house and there were two fish ponds, still visible.

### *Wolterton*

There is more evidence for the topography of Wolterton, though it is still rather fragmentary. The scanty medieval sources give a few untraceable names. Those of two fields, Estefeld and Calwoode field, survive from the 16th century<sup>17</sup>. The most useful document is one dealing with the partition of the manor between Edmund Lumner and John Moore in 1541<sup>18</sup>. It mentions, in the attached schedule, Church Close, containing 20 acres, bounded by a common way to the north and a ditch or moat (fossatum) of the manor of Wolterton assigned to Moore and Lumner's land to the west. The site of the manor with its orchards, gardens, small groves, pastures and enclosures is also described. It lay between the King's highway from Wolterton to Itteringham on the east, a twenty-acre close, part of Lumner's portion, to the west, a common stream and part of a wood belonging to Lumner to the south-west and Moore's nine-acre close to the north-west. This nine-acre close was further described as having Lumner's land to the west and a common way called Grymes Lane to the east, the site of the manor to the south and Wolterton churchyard and a common way to the north. The Mannington map of 1565 throws light on this. It shows 'Wolterton Church Close' lying to the south of a way from Itteringham to Wolterton. Slightly to the south-east of it is shown the seat of Mr. Houghton and to the south-west of that is 'Wolterton Woode' Blomefield's apparent suggestion that Briston's manor could be identified with Coldham's before it came to Houghton and that Moore's manor was something different cannot be easily reconciled with this map. What is fairly certain is that the description of the manor in 1541 is that of a forerunner of the present Wolterton Hall. Of the other landmarks mentioned in 1541, Parsonage Close, Churchgate, and Abbots Groves, the latter is still a feature of the modern map, though the existing woods of that name do not appear to be of any antiquity. Wolterton Green is mentioned in an entry of 1658<sup>19</sup> in the Court Book of Coldhams where a property, described as a purpresture, is said to lie west ('next to' in 1674) of the common of Wolterton called Wolterton Green and to the south of a messuage there.

A map of 1732 by James Corbridge shows Wolterton Green as a focus of roads<sup>20</sup>. One leaving the south-east corner of the Green appears to be identifiable as Grymes Lane and it is this which is still partly visible as a hollow way. A second leaving the south-west corner just to the north of the church (still standing at that time) was the common way to the north of the nine-acre close and is still in existence modified by the addition of a ha-ha. Another road from the Green passed the Parsonage, shown with other buildings, well to the west. Around the Green, buildings were unevenly distributed, mainly on the western side and at the north-eastern corner. Roads left the Green from each of the two northern corners. The southern part of the parish of Wolterton, by 1732, had already been extensively landscaped and this process was to be extended to the limits shown by Faden in 1797<sup>21</sup>. It seems that some landscaping may have been undertaken before the purchase of the estate by Horatio Walpole. In 1722 Mr. Britiffe

reported in a letter to Walpole that he had taken a view of the estate and recounted that 'Mr. Newman told me that some years since he put 300 store (?) tench into a new pond'<sup>22</sup>. The old house was destroyed by fire on 11th November 1724. A letter from Thomas Ripley in December 1724 stated 'I am very sorry for your loss . . . I think you should put an entire stop to all your works at Wolterton . . . I believe you will find a more convenient place to set your House in than were it now is and to answer your present Gardens'. By 1732, when Corbridge made his map, a new house had been built, grounds laid out, and the lake constructed. It seems most probable that the earlier house was to the east of the new one. All details of the removal of the village, still present in 1732, have not been determined but, between 1742 and 1746, there was some purchasing-in of properties, including one to the north of the Green<sup>23</sup>. A letter of 1749 describes roads in the park leading to Wolterton Green, including one from the vicinity of the Parsonage House, but gives no indication that the houses shown there in 1732 were still intact<sup>24</sup>. The Wolterton parish register suggests that baptisms in the church continued until 1765 at least. The last marriage service was recorded in 1740 and there were other marriages, one in each year, in 1724, 1738 and 1733. The last two burials were in 1747: the funerals were those of men from Hanworth and Wickmere, possible exiles from the abandoned village<sup>25</sup>.

The land between Wolterton and Mannington was still largely open field in 1565 although one small wood was shown and there was also a large 'Sweten Tre Close'. During the 17th century it appears that further enclosure took place. By 1698 there were closes grouped around two named 'Old' and 'New Woolgrove'<sup>26</sup>; the present Woolgrove Plantations obviously mark the approximate position of these.

### *Wickmere*

The earliest overall impression of the topography of the parish is given by Corbridge's map (1732). This shows the houses of the village scattered around the edges of a common. Most were on its northern side, but Wickmere Hall, with three fishponds, lay on the southern side of a linear western extension. Much of the land around the common was enclosed. The northern part of the parish, the North Field, still had substantial areas of open field strips, including a number to the south of the church. The church, though isolated, still seemed to be at something of a focus of roadways, a situation which was to some extent altered in 1828<sup>27</sup>. Wickmere Hall is still shown on Faden's map (1797) but there was no reference to it in White's Directory (1845). Corbridge shows a number of buildings at Lower Street, but no rectory house near the church; the 'Old Rectory' was built in the 19th century; it was not shown on the O.S. 1st. Edition map. Of the few field names recorded by Corbridge, two, 'Upper' and 'Lower Dame Cates' refer to Dame Cate's Manor; Dame Cates Close and its neighbour Walnut Tree Close were mentioned in 1693. North Field was mentioned in 1658 and the Church Field within it in 1665. Wickmere Common was referred to as 'fen or turbary' in 1655; this may describe the eastern extension downstream from the village but it does underline the wet nature of this low common which was not enclosed until 1818<sup>28</sup>.

Sadly, medieval evidence for Wickmere is scarce. However, an agreement of 1571 between Clement Harward of Aldborough and Christopher Langdon of Wolterton concerned 'all that his several shepes pasture of hethes commonly callyd Bodham Hall Heth' and other adjoining lands in Wickmere, Little Barningham and Matlaske which were 'layde and fedd in somertyme' and Harwards sheep which were pastured 'and going' on the two heaths and a 'parre' called 'Middell Parre' one of the bounds of which was 'a way leding from Wickmer chyrche to Little Barningham'. Further description was of land ploughed for some twelve years which lay to the east of a dyke dividing the lands from Bodham Hall Heath<sup>29</sup>. A charter dated 1411 refers

to a Clement Herward and his wife Cecily, 'now the wife of Robert Randys' and confirms to Cecily and Robert 'the manor of Wykemere called Boddam halle'<sup>30</sup>. The location of the manorial site (or sites) in Wickmere, other than the late Wickmere Hall of 1732 is not known, but description of 1630 suggests that Bodham Hall may have been an alternative name for this. It states that the manor house of 'Bodham Hall' was in Wickmere with homestall, pightles and closes adjacent. This is reinforced by the court book of Bodham Hall in Wickmere dated 1728-67, which also refers to Brimley Heath<sup>31</sup>.

### *Calthorpe*

Fragmentary medieval and early post-medieval evidence is all that exists, although the western part of the parish appears on Corbridge's map (1732). Several woods must have existed for some part of the medieval period. In the late 13th century there were Brimwode<sup>32</sup> and Bloswode. Bloswode<sup>33</sup> and Hokwode were named in 1367. Their locations are unknown and Bloswode was, in 1367, described as meadow. The case of Brochhole Wood differs; in 1261 George and Maud Bakun demised a tenement in Calthorpe and Erpingham to Walter de Caletorp with certain exclusions, one of which was Brochhole Wood. Walter might take what he needed from the wood to maintain houses on the tenement<sup>34</sup>. The name appears in later documents: Brockhalle Woode (1604), Brokhal and Brookehall gate (1594-5), Brooke Hall Wood (1654)<sup>35</sup> and, in 1732, Corbridge showed two closes, called Brockolds, with two Wood Closes adjacent. It is clear that 'Brock Holt' (Badger Wood) must have lain north-west of the village, to the west of the road from Calthorpe to Wickmere. Fring Wood was recorded in 1594-5 as a close of three acres was said to lie on its eastern side, to the north of the common way leading from Blickling Mill, thus affirming the age of the wood and of the winding road which passes it to lead on to the former street to the south of Calthorpe church. Also recorded is a common path from Brookehall to Long Water (the course of the Bure); a footpath to the east of Calthorpe Hill Plantation may represent this path. Also in 1594-5 there was a reference to Williams Wood; its position is unknown. In 1694<sup>36</sup> references to a 'Queen's highway leading to Blickling' appear, from abutments, to refer to a road which led south from Calthorpe church to the river by way of modern Lowlands and is still marked by farm tracks and, on the modern O.S. map at least, shown in its southern section as a footpath. It led across the Bure to Blickling.

It is clear that much of the landscape of Calthorpe had been enclosed by the 17th century. There are references to Brome Close (1654), Shepes Close of 26 acres (1654), Hospitall Close (1654), West Close (1654), Wood Close (1594-5), Hall Close (1594-5) and, in 1555, the 'Newclose' of 10 acres. In 1517<sup>37</sup> it was reported that enclosure of land, once arable, for pasture had been carried out by three people, Thomas Drake (20 acres), Robert Kytty's (a tenement with 24 acres, the tenement having been taken down) and Sir William Bolen (26 acres). Some land remained open in 1692; four acres were said to be intermixed with Town and Glebe lands while, although some land was enclosed in the North Field, other parts seem to have remained open. Two acres called the Runaway lands lay in the South Field in 1711<sup>38</sup>, so it would appear that the lands were originally in two open fields. There is a reference to Church Croft which seems to have concerned land in the area immediately to the south of the churchyard, suggesting that, in 1555, it was cultivated land. There was certainly reference to land 'ad portam ecclesie de Calthorp' in the late 13th century<sup>39</sup>. There were areas of fen; Axe or Acte Fen was said to be 16 acres of meadow and pasture lying to the south of the village near Scarrow Beck while Kismer Fen was also described as meadow and pasture in 1595. The first of these may be the area referred to as Calthorpe Common in 1694. In 1555 there was a reference to a certain way

'nowe not used' which led to North Fen; this fen probably bordered the small stream joining Scarrow Beck from Wickmere Common.

A bailiff's account from 1330 gives profits from the rent of a mill as 53s.4d.; the miller's expenses totalled 14s.7 $\frac{3}{4}$ d., of which 12d. was the cost of a spindle and trendles. It is not apparent what kind of mill this was, but a mid-13th century grant mentions land between 'the old river' and the mill, suggesting a watermill. A late 13th-century extent, however, mentions a windmill<sup>40</sup>. In 1555 a mill hill was mentioned as being somewhere to the east of the way to the North Fen, while, in 1595, a mill hill was described as lying just to the west of a path from Brooke Hall (Brockold) to the River Bure. This must have been somewhere to the east of the present Calthorpe Plantation. Corbridge's map shows a further possible site for a windmill within the parish in the north-east corner of Wolterton Park. Although there are references to Calthorpe Hall and Hooke Hall in Calthorpe in documents there are no indications as to their respective locations.

### A Summary of the Evidence

Of the distribution of prehistoric finds little can be said. The rather thin scatter of worked flints exhibits no particular pattern, apart from some suggestion of concentration near the Mannington stream and its tributary valleys. Spreads of crazed or calcined flints occur much nearer stream channels. The scarcity of worked flints is notable; the incidence of natural flints in the soils appeared to be rather less than is the case in other areas of Norfolk, and this may, in part, be a reason for the rather low recovery rate. Of possible settlement sites, the only two found were both on sandy, well-drained soils at no great distance from surface water.

Iron Age finds were widely distributed on higher ground or prominent valley terraces. Especially notable is the scatter occurring on the low ridge between Wolterton and Wickmere, with a probable centre of activity just to the west of Wickmere church. It has been suggested that sea level was about 1m above present levels in Iron Age times. This would have made the floor of the Bure valley and those of its tributaries even wetter than at present, so driving settlement to higher levels where soils are sandy and well-drained. Some possible continuity into the Roman period can be detected as finds of probable Iron Age date occur near Romano-British Sites 2, 4, 6, 9 and 12.

Certainly the impressive distribution of Romano-British activity followed the Iron Age practice of avoiding lower ground. The lowest Site (3) is still on a well-marked terrace above a stream, while some of the sites, particularly Site 4, appear quite exposed by present standards. It has already been shown that the sites vary in status and, so far as can be determined from the finds, in date. On some, no building materials were found, suggesting that any buildings there were of timber and thatch. Among those which yielded bricks or tiles, one, Site 6, was most interesting as some pieces showed clear evidence of over-firing and vitrification. Four sites had iron slag and, on Sites 7 and possibly 8, on the evidence of spindle whorls, spinning may have been carried on. Three sites appear to be associated with crop or soil markings, but these may not be contemporary. Of these, Site 10, on an eminence with clear views for considerable distances, particularly towards the coast, may have had some specific purpose other than habitation. A religious significance or, most probably a function as a look-out or signal station are possibilities.

The field scatters of Romano-British material are quite general and include Samian Ware suggesting that exploitation of the area was quite widespread from the 1st century onwards. However, the absence of finds in the far south-west and in the extreme north is notable; these

areas were also curiously blank in later times. Poor soil quality may account for one of these at least. The marked contrast in density of finds from this period and those from the Bronze and Iron Ages is almost certainly an expression of the better survival rate of the relatively high-quality Romano-British pottery. The pottery of the earlier Ages was insubstantial and friable and unlikely to survive under cultivation and exposure to the elements. Activity in the earlier periods was probably far more widespread than the poor showing of finds suggests.

Fieldwalking, as is usual, uncovered few signs of Early Saxon occupation, with no evidence to confirm earlier records of cemeteries. The find of organic or sand-tempered pottery, isolated some 400m south-west of Mannington, might be regarded as some forerunner of settlement at Mannington. Some sherds, only possibly Early Saxon, found nearer Mannington church and also near Wickmere church, may be precursors of Middle Saxon settlement in each case. The absence of pottery may indicate absence of activity, a poor survival rate, or an aceramic society. Metal-detecting may yet reveal Early Saxon settlements.

A Middle Saxon presence near Mannington church seems likely despite the small number of finds. The occurrence of two sherds in a multi-period field scatter some distance to the west suggests the existence of some centre of activity, probably beneath grassland or the Hall grounds. The concentration of Middle Saxon pottery to the north-west of Wickmere church denotes a well-established settlement, with a few possible sherds forming a faint 'aura' in neighbouring fields. Apart from these, there is a marked absence of Ipswich-type Ware as a field scatter, a contrast to the situation in Loddon and Heckingham in South-east Norfolk. The absence of finds of this date from the parish of Wolterton may be indicative of a later settlement date, though grass conceals much land near the church there. The bounds of the survey did not permit a closer examination of Little Barningham so no conclusion about the origin of that place can be made. However, a find of Ipswich-type near the street of Calthorpe indicates a possibility of an earlier origin for this village than superficial study of its 'Scandinavian' name suggests.

The three possible established Middle Saxon centres developed in Late Saxon/Early Medieval times, although the surface cover permitted only limited examination at Mannington. There can be little doubt that the centre of Wickmere at that time remained close to the church (listed by the Taylors as having 'Saxo-Norman' features)<sup>41</sup>, despite the one small centre on or near the edge of the common which was probably newly-established. As churches at Little Barningham and Wolterton were recorded in 1086, it might be expected that Late Saxon/Early Medieval pottery would be found close to their sites. None was found in Little Barningham; it can only be assumed that pottery of this period lies concealed beneath standing buildings. Wolterton presents problems which offer no easy solution. Arable surfaces close to the church ruins on the north side, despite close search, showed very little sign of a Late Saxon presence on the village site. It is possible that Domesday Wolterton lies somewhere to the south of the church concealed within the grounds of the Hall. However, there is one very strong Late Saxon site in the western extremity of the parish, quite close to the site of Mannington; the absence of pottery from earlier and later times on this site suggests a strong but shortlived settlement. Was this reckoned as part of Wolterton in 1086 or did it form part of the comparatively large Domesday Mannington?

Thetford-type Ware (with Early Medieval Ware) is generally rather rare as a field scatter elsewhere in Norfolk and has also proved to be so here although stray sherds were very thinly scattered across the fields between Wolterton and Mannington.

The shape of the medieval village of Wolterton around a rectangular green of significantly regular form adds to the mystery of this site. Fieldwalking revealed that the portions of the

green edge shown vacant on Corbridge's map of 1732 were not settled in medieval times, while the buildings of 1732 were all on medieval sites. This essentially medieval foundation suggests late deliberate re-planning of some earlier settlement within the parish, and may account for the abandonment of the western site. The round tower, all that survives of the church, being dated by Batcock to the late 14th or 15th century, seems to have been of late construction for such a form and may represent a final stage in the re-planning of the village<sup>42</sup>. The existence of a small separate nucleus near the Parsonage House is a reminder that similar detached sites may be hidden in the Park and that the apparent regularity of the deserted Wolterton may be exaggerated by such concealment. Nevertheless, the shape of the nucleus of Wolterton requires explanation. Documentary sources tell nothing. The creation of a green of regular shape suggests the provision of space for a market but there is no record of any charter. It is possible that it was the intention to provide for a market but that the plan failed. The purpose of the re-organisation of Wolterton, if such it was, remains unknown.

The medieval finds in the old parish of Mannington were sparse and, like those of preceding periods, concentrated near the church. The small quantity mirrors a declining settlement. The population was small or, at least, not very prosperous by 1334; in 1332 there had been only seven contributors to the Lay Subsidy<sup>43</sup>. The church had a pyx in 1368<sup>44</sup> pointing to the continuing existence of a community but, although it had at least ten households in 1428, by 1449 decline appears to have been terminal. The building of the Hall probably marked the end of the village and the beginning of an estate. The map of 1565 shows quite clearly that there was no longer a village; the large closes shown occupy areas where medieval finds were scarcely present.

Medieval Wickmere seems to have been concentrated around the edges of its low common. Unfortunately the evidence for this is confined to two accessible sites on its southern margin. The explanation for the migration of Wickmere must remain hypothetical. It resembles similar migrations noted elsewhere in Norfolk and was probably induced by the growing need in an increasingly arable landscape for good permanent pasture for animals. Settlements developed on the edges of pastures too damp to cultivate. Superficial map evidence suggests that the change of site in Wickmere may have been matched in Thwaite and Erpingham, both nearby, where churches also stand in isolation.

Little Barningham, Calthorpe and Itteringham show little evidence of change. In each case the apparent site was already close to damp river pasture, so extensive movement would have been unnecessary. One, possibly two small outliers in Calthorpe seem to be related to the line of a vanished road to Blickling and both were close to riverine pasture. In Itteringham the numerous finds made north of the church suggest that the village may once have stretched a little further up the valley of the Mannington stream. It seems that the finds made south-west of White House Farm may be related to the proximity of the medieval Nowers manorial site.

Field scatters of medieval pottery over the whole area reveal interesting variations in density, some of which can be explained from documentary evidence. One relatively blank area in Calthorpe is the site of the medieval Brockhole Wood. Of the empty areas to the west of Mannington and of Itteringham and to the south-east of Little Barningham, the 1565 map shows that they were under sheep pastures, heaths, broom and furze and were probably seldom cultivated. The northern margin of the estate between Wickmere and Little Barningham has little medieval pottery; the reference to sheep grazing there in the 16th century probably illustrates a tradition of extensive rather than intensive exploitation and hence little scatter by manuring.

Of the windmills mentioned in documents fieldwalking brought no trace although the site

near 'Brook Hall path' may be one revealed on aerial photographs (inf. Mrs. A. Alston).

### Conclusion

The area lies in North-east Norfolk, a district from which, apart from the partial exception of Witton, the results of no extensive systematic fieldwalking have yet been published. The value of the survey lies not only in the information gained about a small part of the region but also in the useful contrast it provides with the findings of similar area surveys completed, or nearing completion, in other regions of Norfolk.

The light loam soils in this area were quite intensively exploited in Romano-British times. This compares closely with the degree of activity noticed on lighter glacial soils in South-eastern Norfolk. Given the friable quality of Iron Age pottery and its poor survival rate it is quite likely that activity in that period was quite widespread in the area also.

It has been noted recently that finds of Middle Saxon Ipswich-type Ware have been relatively few in the north-east of the county<sup>45</sup>. It was suggested that, although this might, indeed, reflect a genuine absence of activity, lack of fieldwork was probably the true reason. The identification of a Middle Saxon presence of some substance at Wickmere and evidence of activity at Mannington and Calthorpe indicates that the latter suggestion is correct and goes some way to fill the blank.

The variety of forms of medieval settlement revealed by the survey is interesting. Mannington, almost certainly originating in Middle Saxon times, was deserted in the late medieval period. Wickmere, Middle Saxon in origin, shifted from its original site to a common edge in early medieval times and Wolterton seems likely to have been a planned medieval re-siting emparked in the 18th century. Little Barningham and Calthorpe have their main centres still occupying their Domesday sites while the parish of Wolterton has a strong Late Saxon site soon abandoned and never re-occupied. Lastly, the limited evidence provided, when added to previous discoveries, points to Itteringham being a shrunken village. That this small area exhibits such variety may be sheer chance; only further exploration will show whether it is typical of the rural settlement pattern of North-east Norfolk.

January 1994.

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The survey was undertaken on behalf of the Mannington and Wolterton Estates and the Field Archaeology Division of the Norfolk Museums Service and was funded by English Heritage. The writer is grateful to the Lord and Lady Walpole and the staff of the estates for permitting access to documents and maps at Wolterton Hall and for their interest and encouragement, to Elizabeth Rutledge for advice about the Wolterton archives, to the staff of the Norfolk Record Office for making documents and maps available, to Peter Robins and John Wymer for comments on flint tools and to Andrew Rogerson for identifying and commenting upon the finds.

1. Tomes, C.S., 1914-18, 'An Ancient Interment at Mannington', *Proceedings of the Prehistoric Soc.*, 2, 152-3.
2. Hart, C.R., 1966, *The Early Charters of Eastern England*, 92. The document is probably a fabrication but may record genuine information.
3. Brown, P. (ed), 1984, *Domesday Book: Norfolk* (2 vols).
4. Hudson, W., 1895, 'The assessment of the townships of the County of Norfolk for the King's tenths and fifteenths as settled in 1334', *Norfolk Archaeology*, XII, 243-97.
5. Sheail, J., 1968, 'The Regional Distribution of Wealth in England as indicated in the 1524-25 lay subsidy return', Unpub. PhD. thesis, University of London.
6. Frankel, M.S. and Seaman, P.J. (trans) 1983, 'Norfolk Hearth Tax Assessment Michaelmas 1664', *Norfolk Genealogy*, 15.
7. The account which follows draws heavily on Francis Blomefield's *An Essay Towards a topographical history of*



- the County of Norfolk and on Feudal Aids Vol. III.
8. Gairdner, J. (ed), 1904, *The Paston Letters*, 3, 208 (reprinted 1983).
  9. Watkin, A. (ed), 1947, Inventory of Church Goods temp. Edward III, *Norfolk Record Soc.*, 19 PtI, 56.
  10. Norfolk Record Office (henceforth N.R.O.) NCC. Rix 107.
  11. Mannington Hall. See also: Purdy, R.J.W., 1901, 'Mannington Hall'. *Norfolk Archaeology*, XIV, 321-8.
  12. Wolterton Hall MS.
  13. NRO BCH 55.
  14. NRO: NRS 20863; 20860; WAL 10 268 x 4; WAL 73 296 x 2; WAL 2268 x 4.
  15. Wade-Martins, P., (ed), 1987, *Norfolk from the Air*, 54.
  16. NRO MC 310/6.
  17. Wolterton Hall Manorial No. 406.
  18. NRO WAL 608/2.
  19. NRO MS 20860.
  20. Wolterton Hall.
  21. Faden's Map of Norfolk, 1797, (reprinted 1989, Larks Press Ed.).
  22. NRO WAL 1429 290 x 2.
  23. Wolterton Hall MS.
  24. NRO WAL 524/12 275 x 3; 1524 291 x 2; 1448/8 290 x 4.
  25. NRO PD 112/7.
  26. NRO WAL 273 x 2.
  27. NRO Road Order Box 13, 9.
  28. NRO WAL 228/8 271 x 3; MS 20856 170 x 3.
  29. Calendar Ancient Deeds V, A13211, 468.
  30. Calendar Ancient Deeds V, A8719, 351.
  31. NRO: Sco 20 111 x 3; MS 20854 170 x 3.
  32. NRO Phi/520 578 x 2.
  33. Calendar Ancient Deeds, I, C816, 46; VI, C6292, 324.
  34. Calendar Ancient Deeds VI, C6293, 324.
  35. NRO WAL 198 271 x 1; WAL 196 271 x 1; WAL 1404/2 289 x 6.
  36. NRO WAL 245 271 x 4.
  37. Leadam, I., 1893, 'The Inquisition of 1517, inclosures and evictions', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* (New Series), VII, 186.
  38. NRO WAL 254 271 x 5.
  39. NRO Phi/520 578 x 2.
  40. NRO Phi 73/1; Phi 520 578 x 2.
  41. Taylor, H.M. and J., 1980, *Anglo-Saxon Architecture*, II, 662-3.
  42. Batcock, N., 1991, *The Ruined and Disused Churches of Norfolk*, East Anglian Archaeology Report No. 51, Gazetteer 109 (Fiche).
  43. Allison, K.J., 1955, 'The Lost Villages of Norfolk', *Norfolk Archaeology* XXXI, 152.
  44. Watkin, A., (ed), 1947, Inventory of Church Goods temp. Edward III, *Norfolk Record Society*, 19, PtI, 56.
  45. Andrews, P., 1992, 'Middle Saxon Norfolk: Evidence for Settlement: 650-850', *The Annual* (Norfolk Archaeological and Historical Research Group), I, 14.