wearing better armour, could well have suffered many hundreds of wounded from the rebel archers without them all becoming fatalities — a fact not recorded at the time — while lightly-armoured rebels hit with three-quarter-inch lead ball would invariably suffer much higher fatalities. Recent studies have suggested that the shock and internal trauma caused by musket ball impacts caused a far higher fatality rate from wounds than the 'cleaner' arrow wounds. Although the numbers of dead on each side are recorded the numbers of wounded are not.

10. Malatesta Baglion led the Italian mercenaries employed by the Crown for the forthcoming campaign against Scotland. Due to the outbreaks of domestic troubles in England, however, all the mercenaries employed by the Crown were transferred to the various Royal armies to help end the violence in the English countryside. At the time this change of proposed enemy was the subject of some concern to the mercenary captains, most notably one 'Hacfort', commander of a company of Germans. On the 7 August Van der Delft, the Imperial ambassador, wrote to the Emperor expressing this concern. 'Hacfort, Sire, asked me what he should do and it seemed to me that if he were asked to go he might say he had come with your majesties permission to serve the King of England against the King's Scottish enemies, but not in anything touching religion ... Sire, things are going very badly, and we hear nothing but that if foreigners begin killing Englishmen, Englishmen will not leave one foreigner alive here' (Spanish State Papers). Malatesta and the other mercenary captains, despite worries about using foreign Catholic troops against Englishmen, advanced against Norwich with the army of the Earl of Warwick and his troops were instrumental in the victory at Dussindale.

11. Ambrose Dudley's claim that his own horse received two or three wounds from rebel arrows, and that his father Warwick had his horse shot from under him, goes some way towards indicating the true ferocity of the battle at Dussindale. While Smythe's account is admittedly strongly favourable to the longbow, Ambrose's eyewitness status must be accepted.

MIDDLETON MOUNT
EXCAVATIONS IN AND AROUND THE EASTERN BAILEY OF MIDDLETON CASTLE BY ANDREW ROGERSON, 1987

by Trevor Ashwin

SUMMARY

Trial excavation in the area immediately to the east of Middleton Mount in 1987 examined a small ditched bailey. This feature had long been levelled; pottery from the fills of its encircling ditch may date it to the 12th century. Excavation within the bailey was very limited, but a fragment of a post-in-trench structure was recorded within its northern part. Trenching also examined a large double-ditched crop-mark boundary feature, apparently sealed by the northern edge of the motte, but failed to clarify its date or function.

Introduction

General

The tall conical earthwork known as Middleton Mount (SMR Site 3394) is all that remains of a former castle, situated *c.* 0.5km to the north of the centre of the village of Middleton (Fig. 1). Middleton, which lies 5km south-east of King's Lynn, has seen a great increase in population and much housing development in recent decades, and housing estates have been constructed in the vicinity of the Mount from the 1970s onward. While the Mount itself is a Scheduled Ancient Monument (Norfolk No.184), the schedule has never been extended to cover its surrounding area.

Fig. 1 Middleton (built-up areas toned), showing location of Middleton Mount. Scale 1:10,000

A proposal to erect new housing throughout the area immediately to the east of the motte impinged upon two crop-mark features recorded by air photography (Fig. 2; Plate 1). One of these resembled a ditch surrounding a small bailey situated on the mound's east side, while the other represented part of a large rectilinear ditched enclosure of uncertain date. In September and October 1987 the Norfolk Archaeological Unit (NAU) excavated a series of trial trenches in the threatened area in order to characterise and date these crop-mark features. This work, directed by Andrew Rogerson, was funded with the aid of a grant from Kings Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council (the owners of the land at the time). NAU staff were assisted by workers from a Manpower Services Commission Community Programme.

The site

The castle at Middleton is one of at least fifteen known in Norfolk (Rogerson 1993). Its site lies close to the Norfolk Fen edge and just above the 30m contour, on the northern side of the

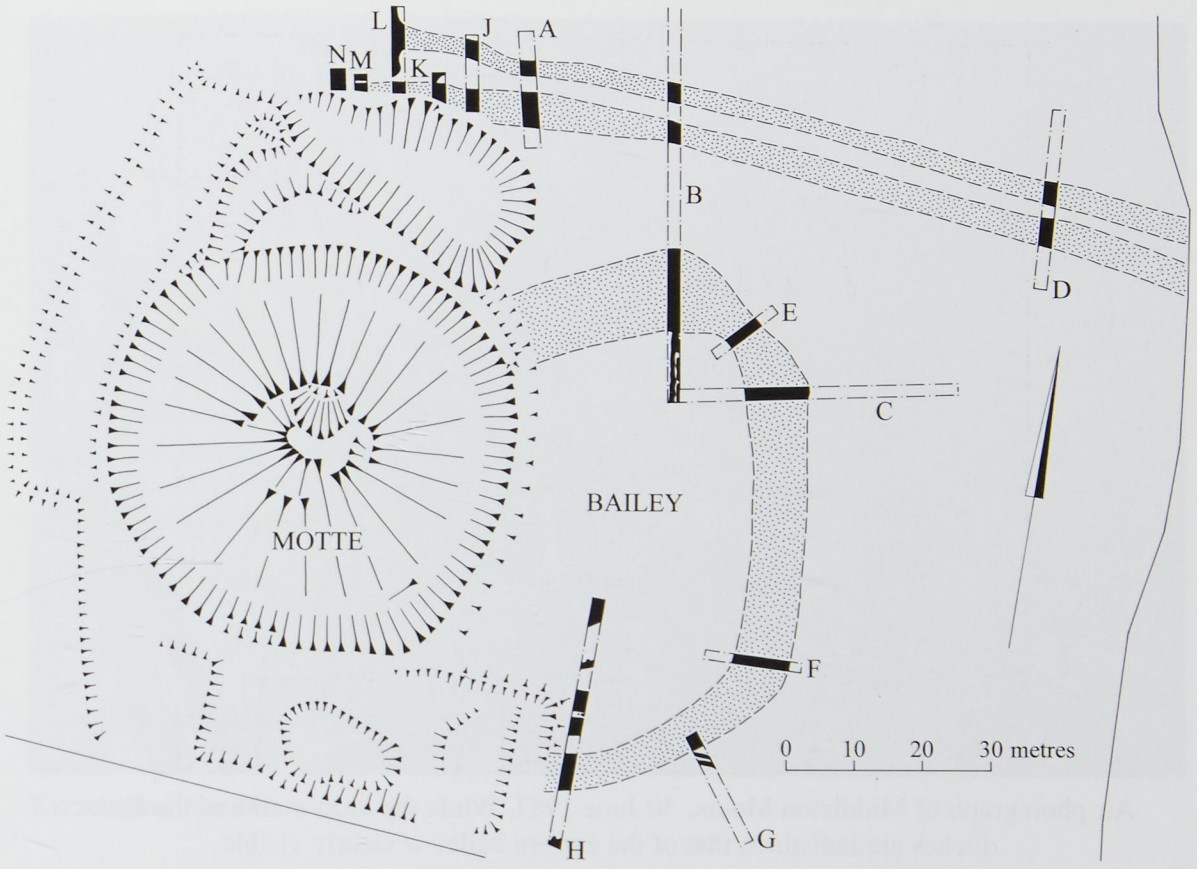
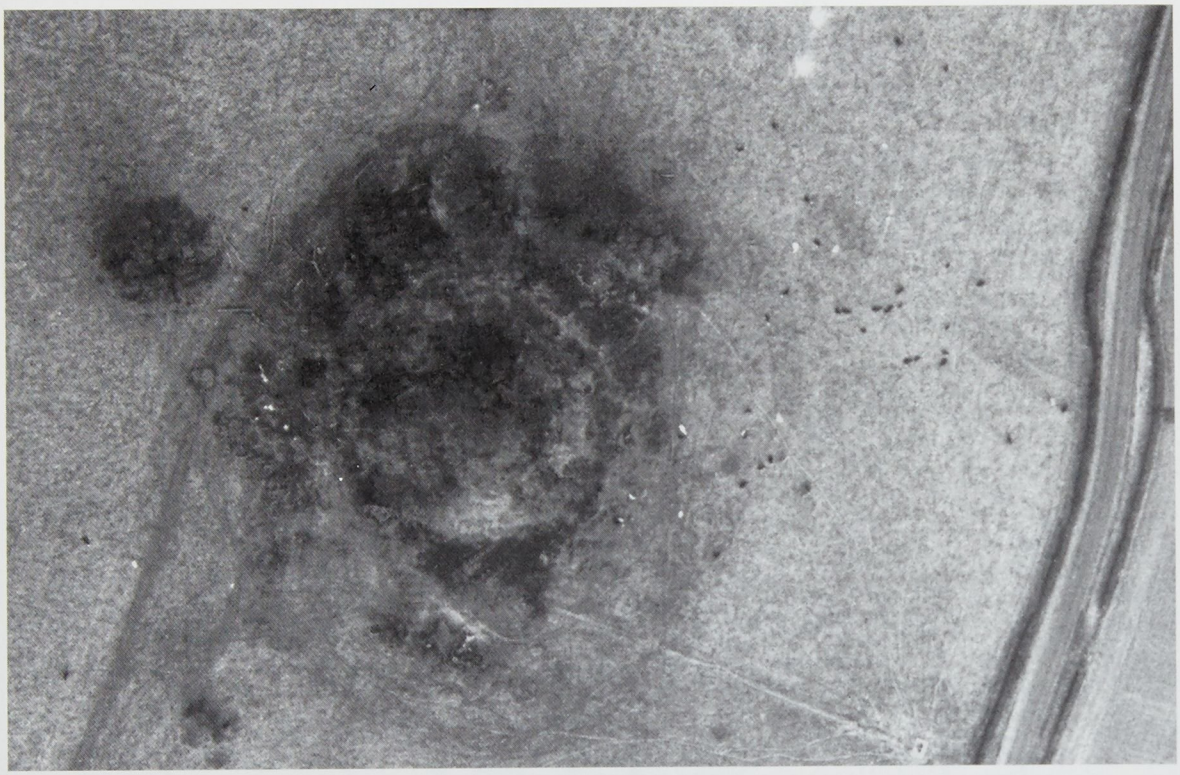


Fig. 2 Middleton Mount, plan showing earthwork features (hachured); crop-marks (stippled), excavated trenches and recorded featured (black). Hachures from Norfolk Earthworks Survey Plan by Brian Cushion (1993). Scale 1:1000

mouth of the Nar Valley, and occupies a slight promontory projecting into an area of lower-lying marshy ground. Its location resembles those of the nearby Fen-edge castles at Wormegay and Castle Rising, being well-situated both for controlling east-to-west routes and for overseeing the surrounding territory.

The mound itself supports several mature trees and was heavily overgrown until recently, but is well-preserved. Apparently built of clay, it is conical and steep-sided and survives to a height of nearly 20m. Its significance has not always been clear to past students and antiquarians. Although Blomefield (1805-10, ix, 30) remarked on the earthwork he clearly knew nothing about its date or function. While it appeared as a tumulus on early Ordnance Survey mapping, by the 1930s it had been identified as a castle. Rainbird Clarke described it as a well-preserved motte. He recorded traces of a 'bailey bank' on an area immediately to the south but this was built upon during the 1970s.

The housing development which followed the 1987 excavation eventually left the area of the eastern bailey untouched. After discussions involving English Heritage and King's Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council, the entire site was handed over to the local authority by builders Hey and Croft in April 1992. It is now managed and maintained as a public amenity by the Borough Council and English Heritage.



Air photograph of Middleton Mount, 30 June 1987. While the crop-marks of the linear ditches are indistinct, that of the eastern bailey is clearly visible.
Cambridge University Collection of Air Photographs: copyright reserved

Historical background

Domesday Book suggests that Middleton was relatively prosperous in 1086. In addition to 14 plough-teams it had two mills, three fisheries and 16 salt-pans; a priest is recorded, suggesting that there was a church as well. A castle here may have been as valuable for overseeing and defending these assets as for controlling or harassing travellers on the major east-to-west route which passed nearby. Although possibly built in the post-Conquest decades it might instead have originated during the anarchy of Stephen's reign (1136-54), a period that saw the erection of over a thousand unlicensed castles across the realm. The best-dated fortification of this kind in Norfolk is the so-called Red Castle at Thetford (Andrews 1995), but it is possible that many of the other small motte-and-bailey castles in the county — like Middleton — also date to this era (Rogerson 1993).

There are almost no explicit references to the castle in medieval documents. Four tenants-in-chief are recorded at Middleton in 1086, but the identity of the builder is unclear. It may possibly have lain within the lordship of William de Ecouis, which came by marriage to the Honour of Clare and is traceable through the medieval period as Castle Hall Manor. Its decline and disuse are likewise unrecorded but may reflect the rising local importance of the Scales family, the builders of Middleton Towers in the 15th century, who appear to have settled on a 'new' manorial site. It is also possible, however, that the castle was one of many unlicensed Anarchy-period fortifications which had been dismantled long before.

The excavation

Trial-trenching took place over a six-week period in September and October 1987. A resistivity

survey conducted immediately prior to this produced no positive results. The site was open rough grassland at the time of the excavation. Thirteen individual trenches, each *c.* 2m wide and with a total length of nearly 300m, were opened mechanically (Fig. 2). These were focused on the two recorded crop-mark anomalies to the east of the motte: the putative bailey and the larger rectilinear double-ditched enclosure. Several of the individual trenches — particularly Trenches J-M, which targeted the larger enclosure in the area immediately to the north of the motte — were very short. Three longer trenches (Trenches B, C, G and H) traversed the area in and around the bailey as well as sectioning already-known crop-mark features.

The excavation area had clearly seen past cultivation. The underlying natural material was mostly sand, sometimes of a distinctly reddish hue. Inclusions of light-coloured marly clay were also encountered, however, and some of these were large. A sandy overburden layer 0.3m-0.4m thick was removed from each trench, using a hydraulic excavator, to expose archaeological deposits and undisturbed natural sands. All exposed features were recorded in plan but excavation was highly selective.

The project archive is held by Norfolk Museums Service. As well as the records of the 1987 excavation, it also includes a copy of the comprehensive report by Alan Davison on the documentary evidence which is held by the County Sites and Monuments Record. The present report offers an interpretative summary of the main findings. Full records concerning the excavation and the finds retrieved are held in the project archive.

Excavation results

The bailey ditch

The crop-mark feature was exposed in six places by the trenches (Fig. 3) and sample-excavation took place in three of these. The ditch had enclosed an area to the east of the motte measuring up to 60m x 40m. The ditch itself, although substantial, appears to have varied considerably in width. That part of its northern arm which was exposed in Trench B was 10m wide, but a little to the south-east (in Trench E) it seems to have narrowed to only 6m as it turned towards the south. Its southern part (Trenches F and H) was 8-10m wide. Sections were excavated across the full width of the ditch in Trenches B (excavated segment *8*) and C (segment *7*) to depths of 1.9m and 1.6m respectively below the level of the stripped surface (Fig. 4). They could not be excavated safely to its full depth so the primary deposits remained unstudied.

A series of thick upper filling deposits was dominated by brown sandy loams, sometimes with a clayey fraction also present. Much intermediate filling material had slumped, or had been introduced deliberately, from the 'inside' edge of the ditch; some of these layers (especially in segment *7*) had a higher-than-average clay content. Finds were sparse. The thick upper fills within *8* yielded a very small collection of Early Medieval Ware (EMW) and glazed and unglazed Grimston sherds; corresponding deposits within *7* produced three sherds of Grimston Thetford Ware and a single EMW sherd.

Excavations in Trench G exposed the outer part of the south-eastern arm of the ditch: the line of a modern fence made it impossible to extend the cutting across its entire width. Nonetheless, the excavations appear to have succeeded in bottoming it only 1.3m below the level of machine-stripping (segment *130*). Its basal profile, although flat in many places, was quite irregular. It was filled with thick deposits of mid-dark brown sandy loam overlying a primary sticky silt layer. More finds were collected from this excavated segment than from the others. Most of the pottery assemblage (over 50 sherds, including three jar rims) consisted of EMW, but five sherds of St Neots Ware were collected from lower fill deposit *131*. These sherds, which included a jar rim, are of Saxo-Norman date.

Two less substantial ditches, were also sectioned in Trench G. While these may have been concentric features running immediately outside the bailey ditch, they may equally have been unrelated and they followed an alignment closer to east-to-west. They, too, contained small amounts of St Neots Ware in addition to larger quantities of EMW.

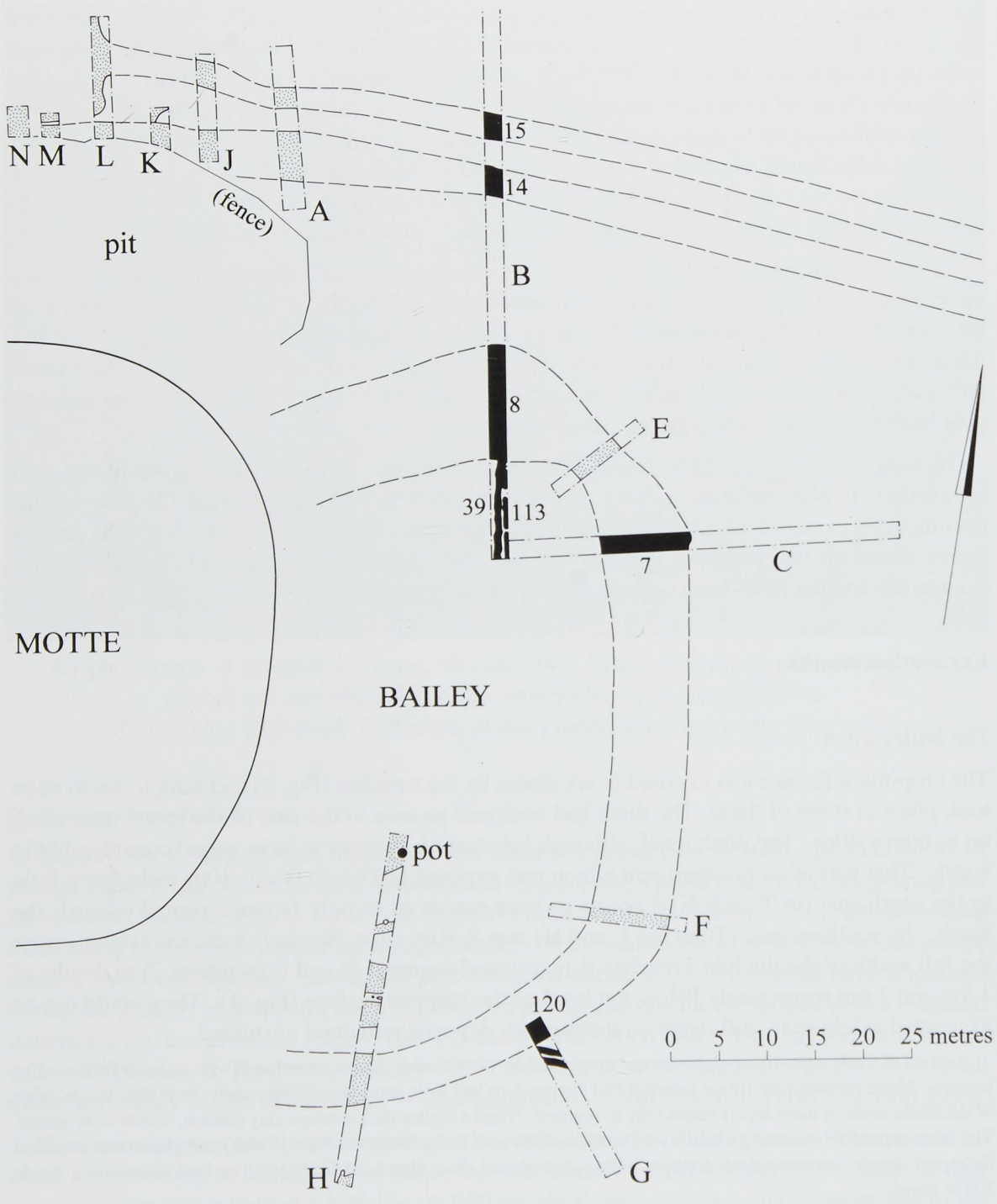


Fig. 3 Location of Trenches A-N, showing trenches, crop-marks and all features. Scale 1:750. Unexcavated features stippled, excavated features in black.

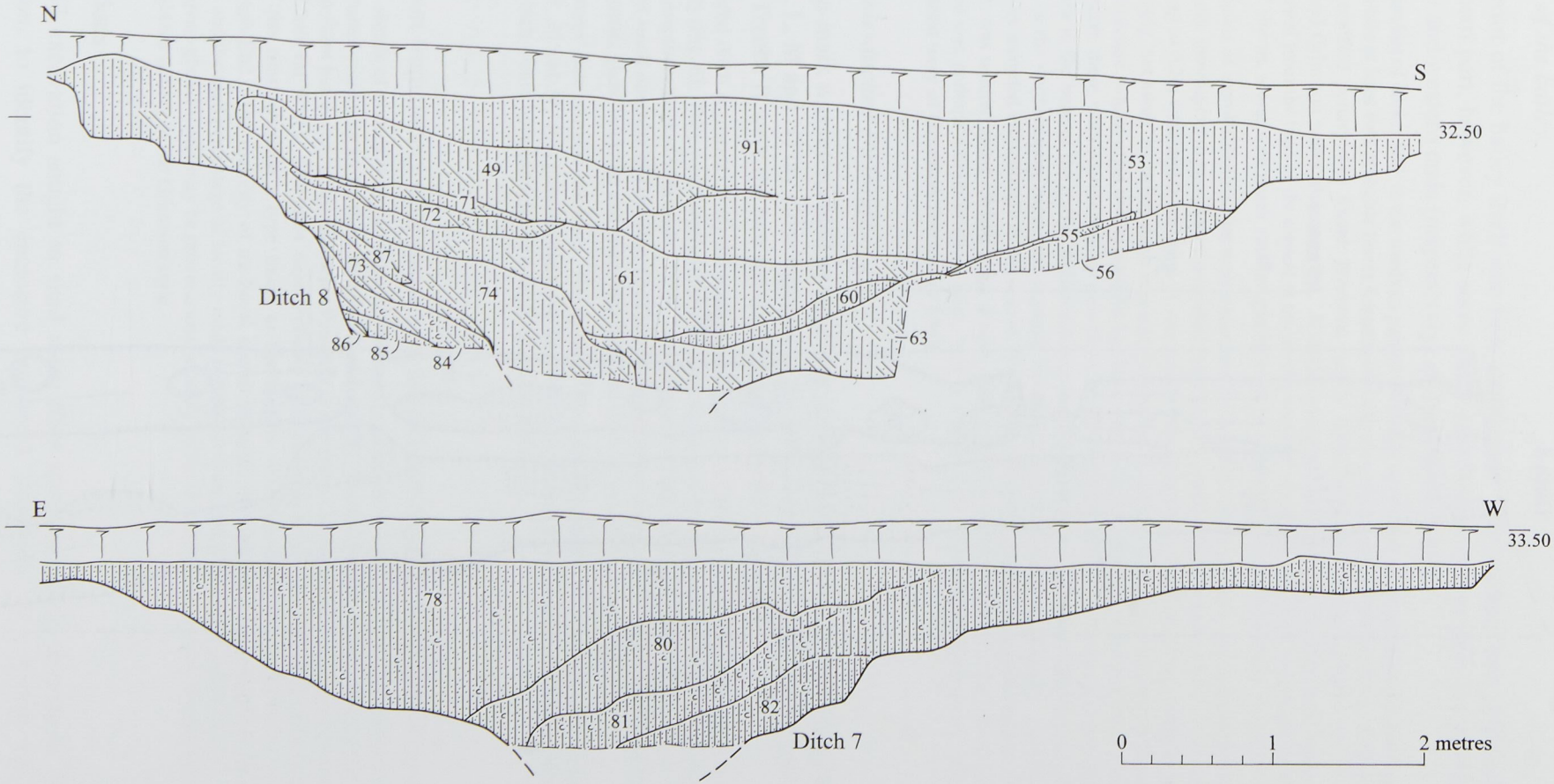


Fig. 4 Trenches B and C: sections across bailey ditch. Scale 1:50

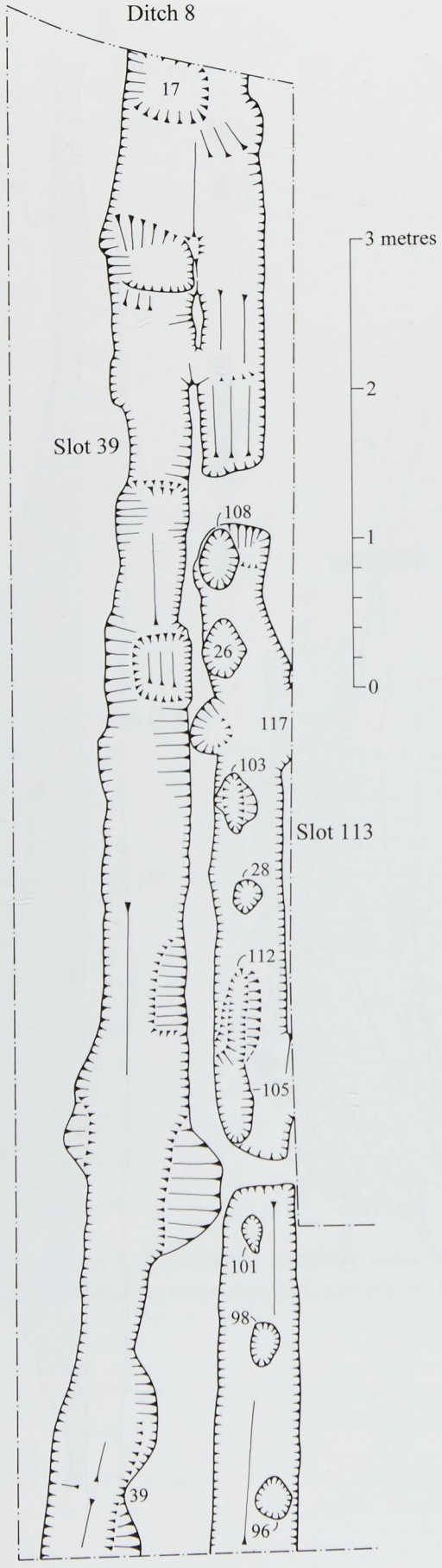


Fig. 5 Trench B: plan of building. Scale 1:100

Interior of the bailey

The interior of the bailey itself saw little excavation. The northern end of Trench H traversed its southern part, however, while some study of its north-eastern part was possible within the southern and western ends (respectively) of Trenches B and C.

Some patches of darker soil in the southern part of the bailey might have represented individual post-holes and other features, while at least two probable linear features crossing the trench were observed. None of these were excavated. Some unstratified pottery was found, however, mostly EMW although smaller quantities of St Neots, Grimston Thetford and Grimston wares also occurred. A single near-complete Grimston Thetford bowl with an out-turned rim was recovered from the base of the topsoil at the northern end of the trench. Another concentration of pottery included 122 EMW sherds, along with much smaller quantities of St Neots, Grimston Thetford and Grimston wares.

The remains of a probable structure were excavated in Trench B, in the northern part of the bailey (Figs 3 and 5). A shallow gully, interrupted in two places, extended from north to south along the eastern side of the trench. This feature (*113*) was up to 0.7m wide and 0.3m deep. It was at least 10m long, extending beyond the southern limit of excavation and seemingly 'cut away' by bailey ditch segment 8 immediately to the north. It was probably a foundation for a post-in-trench structure, whose main timber uprights had been sited at typical intervals of 0.4m–0.5m. At least ten post-holes were recorded; these were represented by post-pipes identified within its fill during excavation, and by well-defined deeper areas in the base of the gully. Additional post-impressions might have gone unrecognised during excavation, especially in the northernmost excavated segment which was not sectioned longitudinally. A similar linear feature, gully *39*, was recorded immediately to the west of *113* and approximately parallel to it. Although of similar proportions to *113*, this was uninterrupted. While some deeper areas were recorded in its base it was less obviously a structural feature, and was perhaps a drain or eaves-drip. Very few finds were recovered from Trench B. The few sherds that were collected were of Grimston Thetford or EMW.

The double-ditched enclosure

This crop-mark was intercepted by trenching at eight points (Fig. 2 and 3). Six of these trenches (A, J, K, L, M and N) lay close together in the area immediately to the north-east of the motte. Only in Trench B were the two parallel ditches actually excavated.

Steep-sided ditch segments *14* (to the south) and *15* (to the north) lay 2.6m apart and were 1.6m and 1.3m deep respectively (Fig. 6). They were largely filled with thick loamy soil deposits, which contained varying fractions of clay and were sometimes flecked with chalk. Ditch *14* was devoid of finds apart from a little animal bone. Finds from ditch *15* included small numbers of Grimston Thetford, unglazed Grimston and EMW sherds, but some fragments of post-medieval metal, glass, brick/tile and coke were collected from its intermediate and upper fills.

The features' date remains unknown. Nearly all of the finds from ditch *15* came from intermediate and upper fill deposits *23*, *30* and *34*. It is possible that these lie within a medieval or post-medieval re-cutting of the original ditch (Fig. 6), which would have extended to a depth of at least 0.8m.

Finds

Finds apart from pottery were sparse. All artefacts are listed by context in the project archive.

The 645 sherds of pottery (from 45 contexts) are mostly of medieval date, although three sherds of gritty Iron Age pottery occurred residually as did three Romano-British sherds. Sherds of Thetford-type Ware (3) and St Neots Wares (11) were present but in very small numbers. Products of the nearby Grimston kilns are well represented, however, as are Early Medieval Wares. The latter were probably manufactured locally, possibly at Blackborough End, although several of the rims resemble a type found at Castle Acre (Milligan 1982, 219) which has not been found at Blackborough End. The majority of medieval sherds represent cooking pots. The relatively small proportion of tablewares and the high percentage of locally-made pottery are both typical of a rural settlement site. Interestingly not all of the green-glazed wares may be provenanced securely to the Grimston kilns: it is likely that kilns elsewhere also produced glazed pottery in the Grimston style.

Conclusions

The 1987 excavation sought to shed more light upon the likely date-range of the castle's occupation, to identify the enclosure crop-mark positively as a bailey and to date and

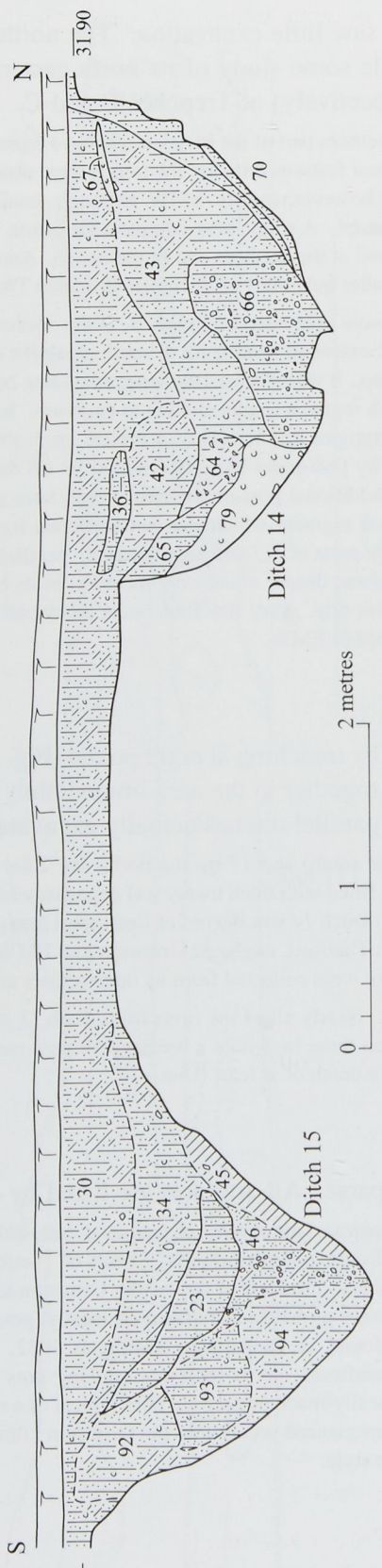


Fig. 6 Trench B: sections across enclosure ditches *14* and *15*. Scale 1:50

characterise the large double-ditched feature by sectioning the various crop-marks. It remains unclear when the castle was built, or by whom, but useful new information has been gathered about several aspects of the site.

There may be no doubt that the 'C'-shaped crop-mark represented a small ditched bailey lying to the south-east of the motte, with an area of no more than *c.* 2500m^2. Less than 4% of its interior — nearly all of it close to its periphery — was exposed. Any attempt at dating its construction more closely than merely to the later 11th or 12th century must rest on interpretation of the assemblage of 645 sherds of pottery collected. This poses difficulties, not least because almost all of the sherds were either unstratified or came from open contexts in the fills of the segments excavated across the bailey ditch. The dominance of Early Medieval Wares, with relatively low quantities of Thetford and Grimston Thetford Ware, may argue in favour of a 12th- (rather than 11th-) century date for the onset of activity.

Continuing uncertainties regarding the date-ranges of both EMW and Thetford-type Wares make dating of this kind highly speculative. Yet recent limited excavation work at Norfolk castles — for example at Thetford Red Castle (Andrews 1995) and at Castle Rising (Morley and Gurney 1997) — has generally failed to identify activity clearly of 11th-century date, or evidence of occupation associated with Thetford-type Ware rather than EMW. The fact that so few castles in the county have seen excavation at all makes it difficult to generalise further, yet it is at least possible that the majority originated in the 12th century, with only the royal castle at Norwich and that at Thetford dating to the post-conquest decades themselves. Perhaps most of Norfolk's more modest castles like Middleton were actually built during the prolonged disorder of the mid-12th century Anarchy, which must have prompted many local magnates to consider how their property might best be defended. Sadly, these interesting possibilities cannot be discussed further.

Dwellings, workshops and stables may all have stood within a bailey of this kind. The pair of north-to-south aligned gullies recorded in the southern part of Trench B has been interpreted as part of the western side of a large rectinear post-in-trench structure. Comparable buildings of Saxo-Norman date have been recorded at several other 'rural' sites in Norfolk, including North Elmham Park (Wade-Martins 1980, 197-217), Middle Harling (Rogerson 1995, 14-24) and the earthwork enclosure at Tasburgh (Rogerson and Lawson 1992, 41-3). The small quantity of 11th/12th century pottery collected from Trench B is nearly all unstratified and is of little value for dating the structure's use. Indeed the feature's stratigraphic and chronological relationship to the bailey itself is not entirely clear. The northern end of the building certainly appears to have been cut away by the bailey ditch. This might indicate that it pre-dates the laying-out of the bailey, and that it had fallen from use by the time the ditch was dug. It is possible, however, that subsequent erosion, cleaning-out or quarrying have damaged it. Certainly this northern section of the bailey ditch appeared wider than elsewhere, heightening suspicions that its profile has been modified in some way.

The dimensions of the crop-mark double ditches, along with sterility of most of the excavated ditch fills, made the excavator suspect a prehistoric date, but this cannot be proven. The evidence for possible re-cutting of ditch *15* suggests that this part of the enclosure remained a significant boundary feature, perhaps marked by banks and hedges as well as by the ditches, which saw use and periodic redefinition over a lengthy period until recent times.

Despite their restricted scope, the excavations have shown that the crop-mark enclosure to the south-east of the motte was certainly a small bailey. The remains of a building of characteristic Saxo-Norman type were recorded within its area, while a pottery assemblage suggestive of

12th-century occupation was collected. While many uncertainties remain, not least regarding the origins and date of the fortifications, these reflect our more general ignorance regarding many aspects of Norfolk's smaller castles, and a lack of archaeological research opportunities to extend our knowledge of them.

April 1999

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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FRENCH CHURCH FARM, CAISTOR ST EDMUND

by Roger Bellinger

Introduction

Three miles to the south of Norwich lies the parish of Caistor St. Edmund (Fig. 1), most renowned for containing the Roman Town of *Venta Icenorum*. About two thirds of the way from Caistor to Poringland is the curiously-named French Church Farm, the subject of this note. The farm was given to the French and Walloon Church in Norwich in the will, dated 1730, of Thomas Blondell, who left all his 'lands, messuages and tenements in Caister[1] St Edmund and Stoke Holy Cross as they are now in the occupation of Robert Linsey unto the French Walloon Church or Congregation for ever'.

So who was Thomas Blondell? What was his connection with the French Church? And what happened to the Farm once it fell into the hands of the Church?