

## RECENT ARCHAEOLOGY

## A BARN BETWEEN EAST BARSHAM AND GREAT SNORING CONTAINING REUSED MEDIEVAL BUILDING MATERIALS

by Alayne and George Fenner, Vic Nierop-Reading and Diana Smith

A barn at TF 931338 was examined in October 2002 by the Survey Team of the Norfolk Historic Buildings Group. The building is now ruinous, with the roof off and partly collapsed. There is a pile of rubble from the collapsed walls on site.

The barn is rectangular, about 50 ft long by 20 ft, and aligned north to south. It is divided into three compartments by solid cross-walls without openings. The central compartment is smaller than those on either side. The north compartment, facing the adjacent road, has lost all trace of its entrance while the centre and south compartments have entrances on their western sides.

The walls are about nine feet high at the eaves, with a bonding/levelling band of three courses of bricks laid in English bond at mid height. These bricks, measuring 8 Å x 4 Å x 2½ ins, appear to be 19th century, as does the remains of a 30° timber roof truss beside the building. This truss is in wrot (planed) timber with struts and blockings for a single purlin. The 'king post' (central tension member) is a three-quarter-inch metal rod with a shoe at the top and a nut below the bottom timber.

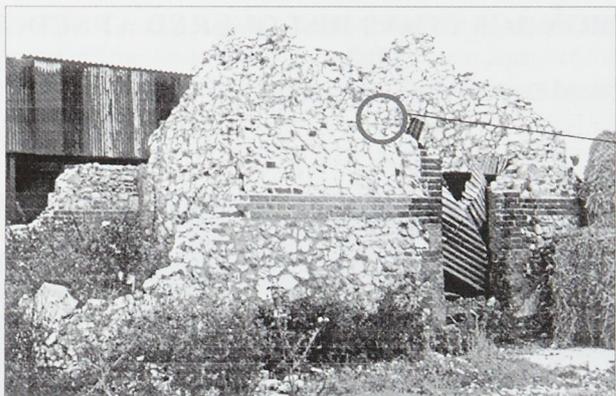
Both the standing walls and the rubble contain a large number of moulded stones and stone fragments which appear to have come from a medieval church. All the walls are in random rubble with a mixture of stones, both moulded and unmoulded, clunch, flints, and some bricks which appear to date to the 17th–19th centuries.

The question of how the medieval material came to be reused in a 19th-century building may be answered by three articles in *Norfolk Archaeology*. These, from Vol. II,<sup>1</sup> Vol. III<sup>2</sup> and Vol. XI<sup>3</sup>, refer to a barn beside East Barsham Manor House containing many large fragments of carved stone. The 1896 publication states that the barn had been pulled down six years earlier and illustrates alabaster fragments of a Pieta and of St Ann found during the demolition, suggesting they must have come from Walsingham Priory. It seems likely that material from this demolition, in the valley just below the building here considered, was reused here in the 1890s.

We are grateful to Mr David Perowne for allowing us to examine the building.

December 2002

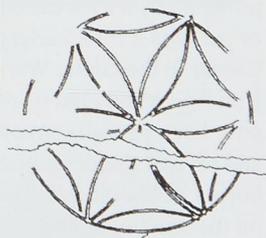
1. Letter from the Rev. F. Cubitt re-read by Mr. D. Turner in 'Extracts from the Proceedings of the Committee 1848', *Norfolk Archaeol.* II (1848), 406.
2. Mr. F. Cubitt, 'Extracts from the Proceedings of the Committee, 1849', *Norfolk Archaeol.* III, 415.
3. Rev. W. Martin, 'Some fragments of sculptured stone found in a barn at East Barsham', *Norfolk Archaeol.* XI (1896), 257.



A



B



T  
H

Plate 1. Medieval masonry re-used in a barn near East Barsham

A: Stone with mason's X mark

B: Single large slab, split into two, showing ?apotropaic incised decoration and the letters T and H