

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION REPORT

SCCAS REPORT No. 2009/210

Abbey Farmhouse, Bridge Road, Snape (swimming pool) SNP 096

M. Sommers
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HER Information

Planning Application No: C/09/0444

Date of Fieldwork: 12 August 2009

Grid Reference: TM 3906 5795

Funding Body: Mr and Mrs James

Curatorial Officer: Dr Jess Tipper

Project Officer: M. Sommers

Oasis Reference: suffolkc1-63124

Digital report submitted to Archaeological Data Service:

http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/catalogue/library/greylit

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Summary

An archaeological evaluation was carried out at Abbey Farmhouse, Bridge Road, Snape, in advance of the construction of a swimming pool. A single 9.5m trench was excavated down to the top of the natural subsoil but no archaeological features or artefacts of any period were identified. The natural subsoil consisted of an orange-yellow sand and silt which occurred at a depth of *c.* 350mm (Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service for Mr and Mrs James).

1. Introduction

It has been proposed to construct a swimming pool at Abbey Farmhouse, Bridge Road, Snape. The Planning Authority were advised that any consent should be conditional upon an agreed programme of archaeological work taking place prior to the commencement of the development.

The first stage of the programme of work, as specified in the Brief and Specification produced by Dr. J. Tipper, of the Suffolk County Council Conservation Team, (Appendix 1) was the undertaking of a trenched evaluation in order to ascertain what levels of archaeological evidence may be present within the swimming pool area and to inform any mitigation strategies that may be deemed necessary.

The swimming pool site is located within a vegetable and fruit garden to the southeast of the main house. The National Grid Reference for the approximate centre of the proposed pool is TM 3906 5795 (Fig. 1).

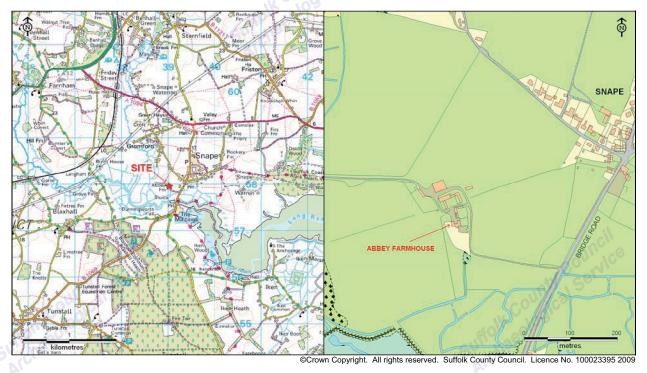


Figure 1. Location Plan

The archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service's Field Team who were commissioned and funded by the owners, Mr and Mrs James.

2. Geology and topography

The site is situated upon a level plateau that overlooks the upper reaches of the River Alde and associated marshland to the south. It is in an area of open farmland approximately 350m southwest of Snape village.

The geology consists of freely-draining sandy soils, overlying drift deposits of either glacial or fluvial origin. There are also surface layers of variable thickness of fine-grained loess deposits, derived from windblown material from glacial sources.

3. Archaeological and historical background

There are no known sites recorded on the County Historic Environment Record within the actual swimming pool area but it is within 50m of a Listed Building, an aisled barn (grade II*) located to the northwest. It is believed to date from the mid to late 13th century and is probably part of a farm serving the Priory of St Mary, established in the 12th century (see Appendix 2), the site of which is situated c. 300m to the southwest (HER ref. SNP 009). Consequently there is a high potential for medieval remains to be located at this site.

Abbey Farmhouse is also a Listed Building that is thought to date from the Late 16th or early 17th century. It was built after the priory had been dissolved probably as part of a privately owned farm centred on the existing barn.

4. Methodology

A trial trench was machine excavated down to the level of the natural subsoil using the back arm of JCB type wheeled excavator fitted with a 1.6m wide toothless ditching bucket. The trench was excavated in accordance with an approved plan.

The machining of the trench was closely observed throughout in order to identify archaeological features and deposits and to recover any artefacts that may be revealed.

Excavation continued until the undisturbed natural subsoil was encountered, the exposed surface of which was then examined for cut features or deposits. Had any features/deposits been noted they would have been sampled through hand excavation in order to determine their depth and shape and to recover datable artefacts.

Following excavation the nature of the overburden was recorded, the trench location was plotted and the depths were noted. A brief photographic record of the work undertaken was also compiled using a 10 megapixel digital camera.

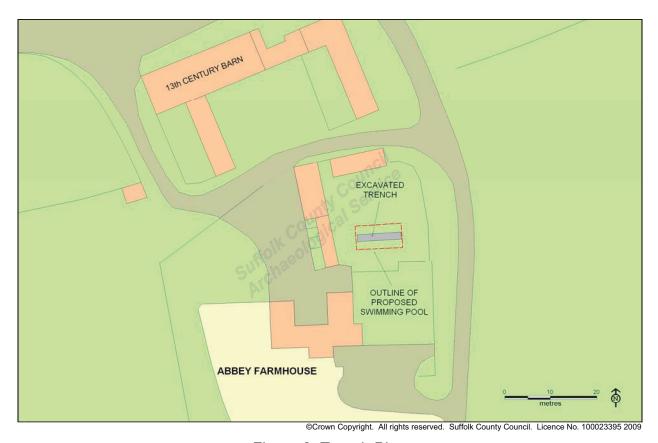


Figure 2. Trench Plan

5. Results

A single trench with a total length of 9.5m was excavated across the proposed development area (Fig. 2). The trench revealed a natural subsoil of fine, orange-yellow sand with silt at a depth of *c*. 350mm (Plates I and II). The overburden comprised a garden soil within which was occasional fragments of brick or tile. The garden soil lay directly on the surface of the natural subsoil and the interface between the two was blurred and irregular.

No significant archaeological features or deposits were noted in the trench and no artefacts were recovered from the resultant spoil.

A spread of low-grade concrete associated with brick fragments and flints was noted in the southeast corner of the trench which corresponds with the location a small outhouse marked on the 1st, 2nd and 3rd editions of the Ordnance Survey map (1:2500 scale) of the area.

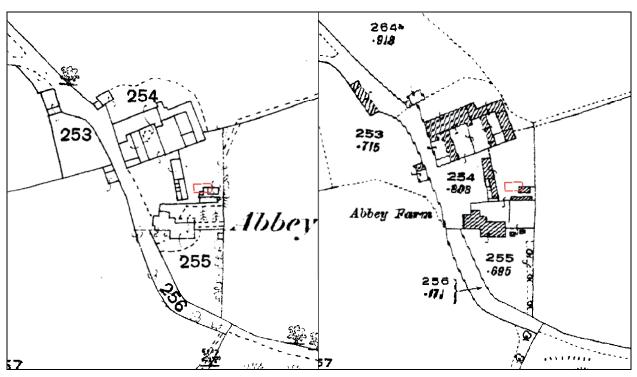


Figure 3: 1st (left) and 3rd (right) Edition Ordnance Survey, 1:2500 scale sheets (rescaled extracts – proposed swimming pool marked in red)

6. Finds and environmental evidence

No environmental evidence and no artefacts were recovered during this evaluation.

7. Discussion

No evidence for early activity was recovered from the excavated trenches. It was cleanly cut and had any features or deposits been present it is highly likely they would have been identified.

Based on the absence of evidence from the excavated trench no detectable activity,

medieval or otherwise, has been undertaken within the swimming pool area. This does

not entirely preclude the possibly that some small isolated features could occur outside

the actual trench but given the complete absence of any early artefacts recovered

during the evaluation this would seem unlikely.

8. Conclusions and recommendations for further work

The only conclusion that can be drawn is that it is unlikely that any significant

archaeological deposits or features are under threat from the proposed development

and consequently no further work is recommended.

Archive deposition 9.

Paper archive: T:\ENV\ARC\PARISH\Snape\2009-210 Abbey Farmhouse (swimming pool)

Photo Archive: GDA 36 - GDA 38 in T:\ENV\ARC\MSWORKS3\Digital photos\GDA

Historic Environment Record reference: SNP 096

10. List of contributors and acknowledgements

The evaluation was carried out by M. Sommers from Suffolk County Council

Archaeological Service, Field Team. The machine was provided by Holmes Plant

Limited and was operated by M. Lagden.

The project was directed by M. Sommers, and managed by Rhodri Gardner, who also

provided advice during the production of the report. The final report was checked by

John Newman.

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Plate I. soil profile as revealed in southern face of the trench (ref. GDA 36)



Plate II. view of the trench looking west.
Abbey Farmhouse is just visible in the upper left corner (ref. GDA 37)

Disclaimer

Any opinions expressed in this report about the need for further archaeological work are those of the Field Projects Team alone. Ultimately the need for further work will be determined by the Local Planning Authority and its Archaeological Advisors when a planning application is registered. Suffolk County Council's archaeological contracting services cannot accept responsibility for inconvenience caused to the clients should the Planning Authority take a different view to that expressed in the report.

Appendix 1 Brief and specification

Brief and Specification for Archaeological Evaluation

ABBEY FARMHOUSE, BRIDGE ROAD, SNAPE (C/09/0444)

The commissioning body should be aware that it may have Health & Safety responsibilities.

1. The nature of the development and archaeological requirements

- 1.1 Planning permission has been granted by Suffolk Coastal District Council (C/09/0444) for the construction of a new swimming pool at Abbey Farmhouse, Bridge Road, Snape, Suffolk (TM 390 579).
- 1.2 The Planning Authority has been advised that any consent should be conditional upon an agreed programme of work taking place before development begins (PPG 16, paragraph 30 condition).
- 1.3 The area of the swimming pool measures *c*. 9.75 x 4.90m in area, on the north-east side of Abbey Farmhouse. It is located at *c*. 7.00m AOD, and overlooking the River Alde. The underlying geology of the site comprises glaciofluvial drift (deep sand).
- 1.4 This proposal lies in an area of high archaeological importance, recorded in the County Historic Environment Record, situated on the site of The Grange, the farm associated with the Priory of St Mary at Snape. Parts of the site and possibly the buildings are thought to date back to the time of the medieval priory. There is high potential for encountering important medieval remains at this location. The proposed works will cause significant ground disturbance with the potential to damage any archaeological deposit that exists.
- 1.5 In order to inform the archaeological mitigation strategy, the following work will be required:
 - A linear trenched evaluation is required of the development area.
- 1.6 The results of this evaluation will enable the archaeological resource, both in quality and extent, to be accurately quantified. Decisions on the suitably of the area for development, and also the need for and scope of any mitigation measures, should there be any archaeological finds of significance, will be based upon the results of the evaluation and will be the subject of an additional specification.
- 1.7 All arrangements for the field evaluation of the site, the timing of the work, access to the site, the definition of the precise area of landholding and area for proposed development are to be defined and negotiated with the commissioning body.
- Detailed standards, information and advice to supplement this brief are to be found in *Standards* for *Field Archaeology in the East of England*, East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 14, 2003.
- 1.9 In accordance with the standards and guidance produced by the Institute of Field Archaeologists this brief should not be considered sufficient to enable the total execution of the project. A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) based upon this brief and the accompanying outline specification of minimum requirements, is an essential requirement. This must be submitted by the developers, or their agent, to the Conservation Team of the Archaeological Service of Suffolk County Council (Shire Hall, Bury St Edmunds IP33 2AR; telephone/fax: 01284 352443) for approval. The work must not commence until this office has approved both the archaeological contractor as suitable to undertake the work, and the WSI as satisfactory. The WSI will provide the basis for measurable standards and will be used to satisfy the requirements of the planning condition.

- 1.10 Before any archaeological site work can commence it is the responsibility of the developer to provide the archaeological contractor with either the contaminated land report for the site or a written statement that there is no contamination. The developer should be aware that investigative sampling to test for contamination is likely to have an impact on any archaeological deposit which exists; proposals for sampling should be discussed with the Conservation Team of the Archaeological Service of SCC (SCCAS/CT) before execution.
- 1.11 The responsibility for identifying any constraints on field-work, e.g. Scheduled Monument status, Listed Building status, public utilities or other services, tree preservation orders, SSSIs, wildlife sites &c., ecological considerations rests with the commissioning body and its archaeological contractor. The existence and content of the archaeological brief does not over-ride such constraints or imply that the target area is freely available.
- 1.12 Any changes to the specifications that the project archaeologist may wish to make after approval by this office should be communicated directly to SCCAS/CT and the client for approval.

2. Brief for the Archaeological Evaluation

- 2.1 Establish whether any archaeological deposit exists in the area, with particular regard to any which are of sufficient importance to merit preservation *in situ*.
- 2.2 Identify the date, approximate form and purpose of any archaeological deposit within the application area, together with its likely extent, localised depth and quality of preservation.
- 2.3 Evaluate the likely impact of past land uses, and the possible presence of masking colluvial/alluvial deposits.
- 2.4 Establish the potential for the survival of environmental evidence.
- 2.5 Provide sufficient information to construct an archaeological conservation strategy, dealing with preservation, the recording of archaeological deposits, working practices, timetables and orders of cost.
- 2.6 This project will be carried through in a manner broadly consistent with English Heritage's Management of Archaeological Projects, 1991 (MAP2), all stages will follow a process of assessment and justification before proceeding to the next phase of the project. Field evaluation is to be followed by the preparation of a full archive, and an assessment of potential. Any further excavation required as mitigation is to be followed by the preparation of a full archive, and an assessment of potential, analysis and final report preparation may follow. Each stage will be the subject of a further brief and updated project design; this document covers only the evaluation stage.
- 2.7 The developer or his archaeologist will give SCCAS/CT (address as above) five working days notice of the commencement of ground works on the site, in order that the work of the archaeological contractor may be monitored.
- 2.8 If the approved evaluation design is not carried through in its entirety (particularly in the instance of trenching being incomplete) the evaluation report may be rejected. Alternatively the presence of an archaeological deposit may be presumed, and untested areas included on this basis when defining the final mitigation strategy.
- 2.9 An outline specification, which defines certain minimum criteria, is set out below.

3. Specification: Trenched Evaluation

3.1 A single linear trial trench is to be excavated across the location of the swimming pool, measuring 9.00m in length x 1.80m in width.

- 3.2 If excavation is mechanised a toothless 'ditching bucket' at least 1.80m wide must be used. A scale plan showing the proposed locations of the trial trenches should be included in the WSI and the detailed trench design must be approved by SCCAS/CT before field work begins.
- 3.3 The topsoil may be mechanically removed using an appropriate machine with a back-acting arm and fitted with a toothless bucket, down to the interface layer between topsoil and subsoil or other visible archaeological surface. All machine excavation is to be under the direct control and supervision of an archaeologist. The topsoil should be examined for archaeological material.
- 3.4 The top of the first archaeological deposit may be cleared by machine, but must then be cleaned off by hand. There is a presumption that excavation of all archaeological deposits will be done by hand unless it can be shown there will not be a loss of evidence by using a machine. The decision as to the proper method of excavation will be made by the senior project archaeologist with regard to the nature of the deposit.
- In all evaluation excavation there is a presumption of the need to cause the minimum disturbance to the site consistent with adequate evaluation; that significant archaeological features, e.g. solid or bonded structural remains, building slots or post-holes, should be preserved intact even if fills are sampled. For guidance:

For linear features, 1.00m wide slots (min.) should be excavated across their width;

For discrete features, such as pits, 50% of their fills should be sampled (in some instances 100% may be requested).

- 3.6 There must be sufficient excavation to give clear evidence for the period, depth and nature of any archaeological deposit. The depth and nature of colluvial or other masking deposits must be established across the site.
- 3.7 Archaeological contexts should, where possible, be sampled for palaeoenvironmental remains. Best practice should allow for sampling of interpretable and datable archaeological deposits and provision should be made for this. The contractor shall show what provision has been made for environmental assessment of the site and must provide details of the sampling strategies for retrieving artefacts, biological remains (for palaeoenvironmental and palaeoeconomic investigations), and samples of sediments and/or soils (for micromorphological and other pedological/sedimentological analyses. Advice on the appropriateness of the proposed strategies will be sought from Rachel Ballantyne, English Heritage Regional Adviser for Archaeological Science (East of England). A guide to sampling archaeological deposits (Murphy, P.L. and Wiltshire, P.E.J., 1994, A guide to sampling archaeological deposits for environmental analysis) is available for viewing from SCCAS.
- 3.8 Any natural subsoil surface revealed should be hand cleaned and examined for archaeological deposits and artefacts. Sample excavation of any archaeological features revealed may be necessary in order to gauge their date and character.
- 3.9 Metal detector searches must take place at all stages of the excavation by an experienced metal detector user.
- 3.10 All finds will be collected and processed (unless variations in this principle are agreed SCCAS/CT during the course of the evaluation).
- 3.11 Human remains must be left *in situ* except in those cases where damage or desecration are to be expected, or in the event that analysis of the remains is shown to be a requirement of satisfactory evaluation of the site. However, the excavator should be aware of, and comply with, the provisions of Section 25 of the Burial Act 1857.
- 3.12 Plans of any archaeological features on the site are to be drawn at 1:20 or 1:50, depending on the complexity of the data to be recorded. Sections should be drawn at 1:10 or 1:20 again

- depending on the complexity to be recorded. All levels should relate to Ordnance Datum. Any variations from this must be agreed with SCCAS/CT.
- 3.13 A photographic record of the work is to be made, consisting of both monochrome photographs and colour transparencies and/or high resolution digital images.
- 3.14 Topsoil, subsoil and archaeological deposit to be kept separate during excavation to allow sequential backfilling of excavations.
- 3.15 Trenches should not be backfilled without the approval of SCCAS/CT.

4. General Management

- 4.1 A timetable for all stages of the project must be agreed before the first stage of work commences, including monitoring by SCCAS/CT. The archaeological contractor will give not less than five days written notice of the commencement of the work so that arrangements for monitoring the project can be made.
- 4.2 The composition of the archaeology contractor staff must be detailed and agreed by this office, including any subcontractors/specialists. For the site director and other staff likely to have a major responsibility for the post-excavation processing of this evaluation there must also be a statement of their responsibilities or a CV for post-excavation work on other archaeological sites and publication record. Ceramic specialists, in particular, must have relevant experience from this region, including knowledge of local ceramic sequences.
- 4.3 It is the archaeological contractor's responsibility to ensure that adequate resources are available to fulfill the Brief.
- 4.4 A detailed risk assessment must be provided for this particular site.
- 4.5 No initial survey to detect public utility or other services has taken place. The responsibility for this rests with the archaeological contractor.
- 4.6 The Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Standard and Guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (revised 2001) should be used for additional guidance in the execution of the project and in drawing up the report.

5. Report Requirements

- An archive of all records and finds must be prepared consistent with the principles of English Heritage's *Management of Archaeological Projects*, 1991 (particularly Appendix 3.1 and Appendix 4.1).
- 5.2 The report should reflect the aims of the WSI.
- 5.3 The objective account of the archaeological evidence must be clearly distinguished from its archaeological interpretation.
- 5.4 An opinion as to the necessity for further evaluation and its scope may be given. No further site work should be embarked upon until the primary fieldwork results are assessed and the need for further work is established.
- 5.5 Reports on specific areas of specialist study must include sufficient detail to permit assessment of potential for analysis, including tabulation of data by context, and must include non-technical summaries.
- 5.6 The Report must include a discussion and an assessment of the archaeological evidence, including an assessment of palaeoenvironmental remains recovered from palaeosols and cut features. Its conclusions must include a clear statement of the archaeological potential of the site, and the significance of that potential in the context of the Regional Research Framework (*East Anglian Archaeology*, Occasional Papers 3 & 8, 1997 and 2000).

- 5.7 The results of the surveys should be related to the relevant known archaeological information held in the County Historic Environment Record (HER).
- 5.8 A copy of the Specification should be included as an appendix to the report.
- 5.9 The project manager must consult the County HER Officer (Dr Colin Pendleton) to obtain an HER number for the work. This number will be unique for each project or site and must be clearly marked on any documentation relating to the work.
- 5.10 Finds must be appropriately conserved and stored in accordance with *UK Institute of Conservators Guidelines*.
- 5.11 The project manager should consult the SCC Archive Guidelines 2008 and also the County HER Officer regarding the requirements for the deposition of the archive (conservation, ordering, organisation, labelling, marking and storage) of excavated material and the archive.
- 5.12 The WSI should state proposals for the deposition of the digital archive relating to this project with the Archaeology Data Service (ADS), and allowance should be made for costs incurred to ensure the proper deposition (http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/policy.html).
- 5.13 Every effort must be made to get the agreement of the landowner/developer to the deposition of the finds with the County HER or a museum in Suffolk which satisfies Museum and Galleries Commission requirements, as an indissoluble part of the full site archive. If this is not achievable for all or parts of the finds archive then provision must be made for additional recording (e.g. photography, illustration, analysis) as appropriate. If the County HER is the repository for finds there will be a charge made for storage, and it is presumed that this will also be true for storage of the archive in a museum.
- 5.14 The site archive is to be deposited with the County HER within three months of the completion of fieldwork. It will then become publicly accessible.
- 5.15 Where positive conclusions are drawn from a project (whether it be evaluation or excavation) a summary report, in the established format, suitable for inclusion in the annual 'Archaeology in Suffolk' section of the *Proceedings of the Suffolk Institute for Archaeology*, must be prepared. It should be included in the project report, or submitted to SCCAS/CT, by the end of the calendar year in which the evaluation work takes place, whichever is the sooner.
- 5.16 County HER sheets must be completed, as per the County HER manual, for all sites where archaeological finds and/or features are located.
- 5.17 An unbound copy of the evaluation report, clearly marked DRAFT, must be presented to SCCAS/CT for approval within six months of the completion of fieldwork unless other arrangements are negotiated with the project sponsor and SCCAS/CT.
 - Following acceptance, two copies of the report should be submitted to SCCAS/CT together with a digital .pdf version.
- 5.18 Where appropriate, a digital vector trench plan should be included with the report, which must be compatible with MapInfo GIS software, for integration in the County HER. AutoCAD files should be also exported and saved into a format that can be can be imported into MapInfo (for example, as a Drawing Interchange File or .dxf) or already transferred to .TAB files.
- 5.19 At the start of work (immediately before fieldwork commences) an OASIS online record http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis/ must be initiated and key fields completed on Details, Location and Creators forms.
- 5.20 All parts of the OASIS online form must be completed for submission to the County HER. This should include an uploaded .pdf version of the entire report (a paper copy should also be included with the archive).

Specification by: Dr Jess Tipper

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3 July 2009 Date: Reference: / AbbeyFarmhouse-Snape2009

This brief and specification remains valid for six months from the above date. If work is not carried out in full within that time this document will lapse; the authority should be notified and a revised brief and specification may be issued.

If the work defined by this brief forms a part of a programme of archaeological work required by a Planning Condition, the results must be considered by the Conservation Team of the Archaeological Service of Suffolk County Council, who have the responsibility for advising the appropriate Planning Authority.

Extract from: The Victoria History of the Counties of England: Suffolk Vol. 2 (page 79-80),

Published by: Archibald Constable & Co. Ltd. LONDON 1907

7. THE PRIORY OF SNAPE

About the year 1 155 William Martel, in conjunction with Albreda his wife, and Geoffrey their son, gave the manors of Snape and Aldeburgh to the abbot and convent of the Benedictine house of St. John, Colchester. The founders intended that a prior and monks should be established at Snape subject to St. John's, Colchester, and this was speedily accomplished. The priory, by the foundation charter, was to pay the abbey annually half a mark of silver as an acknowledgement of its submission. The monks of Snape were to say two masses every week, one of the Holy Spirit and the other of our Lady, for the weal of William and Albreda, and after their death masses for the departed. The abbot of Colchester was to visit the cell twice a year, with twelve horses, and to tarry for four days. In 1 1 63 Pope Alexander III confirmed to the prior and brethren of St. Mary, Snape, the churches of Freston and Bedingfield. The taxation roll of 1291 shows that there were then appropriated to this priory the churches of Snape, Bedingfield, Freston, and Aldeburgh with its chapel, producing an income of £23 6s 8d. The lands, rents, and mill brought in. a year, and other temporalities £11 19s. 7 1/2d.; so that the total annual income was £56 ' 18s 4 1/2d.

Upon complaint made by Isabel, countess of Suffolk and patroness of the abbey, to Boniface IX, that the abbot and convent of Colchester did not maintain a sufficient number of religious at Snape, according to the founder's directions, the pope, by bull dated 10 January, 1399-1400, made this priory independent and exempt from all control by the Colchester abbey. But whilst this matter was still in hand, the abbey of Colchester had sufficient influence to stir up the crown against this papal action. On 3 May, 1400, commission was issued to John Arnold, serjeant-at-arms, to arrest John Mersey (monk of St. John's, Colchester, and prior of Snape), which Henry IV claimed as of the king's patronage, as Mersey had obtained divers exemptions and privileges prejudicial to the abbey from the court of Rome, and was proposing to cross the seas to obtain further privileges. He was to be brought before the king in chancery, and to find security that he would not leave the kingdom without the royal licence, or obtain anything prejudicial to the abbey in the court of Rome.21 On 16 July, Mersey was still at large, for the commission to arrest him was renewed and its execution entrusted to four serjeants-at-arms. The upshot of the dispute was favourable to the abbey; but the final agreement was not reached until 1443. Pope Sixtus IV, in 1472, confirmed the priory in its possession and privileges, but with no statement as to independence.

Archdeacon Nicholas Goldwell visited this priory, as commissary of his brother the bishop on 20 January, 1492—3; Prior Francis produced his accounts, and the commissary found nothing worthy of reformation. There is record of another visitation of this small house in July, 1520; the visitor reported that everything was praiseworthy considering the number of the religious and the income of the priory; the prior was ordered to provide another brother, and to exhibit an inventory of the condition of the house at the synod to be held at Ipswich at the ensuing Michaelmas. This priory was one of those numerous small religious houses of East Anglia for whose suppression, in favour of a great college at Ipswich, Cardinal Wolsey obtained bulls in 1527-8. It was at that time valued in spiritualities at £20 per annum, and in temporalities at £79 1s. 11 1/2d, yielding a total income of £99 1s. 11 1/2d. After Wolsey's attainder, the site and possessions of this priory were granted to Thomas, duke of Norfolk, on 17 July, 1532.

Priors of Snape John Colcestre, 1307 Gilbert, occurs 1311 Thomas de Neylond, 1327 Simon de Elyton, 1349 John de Colne, 1349 Robert (.'Richard) de Colne, 1360 Richard de Bury, 1372 John de Grensted, 1385 John de Mersey, 1394

John Wetheryngsete, died 1439 John Norwych, 1439

William Cambrigge, mentioned 1441

Henry Thurton, resigned 1489 John Barney, 1489

Thomas Mondeley, 1491 Francis, occurs 1493 Richard Bells, 1504

Richard Stratford, 1514

Richard Parker, 1526

A seal of a prior of this house c. 1200 is appended to two charters at the British Museum. It represents a prior standing, holding a book in his hands, with the legend : SIGILLUM PRIORIS DE SNAPE