

KN for 2001 Exhibition

Reepham Tithe Map 1846

The first point to note is that the centre of the town is not marked on this map as it is in Hackford, not Reepham.

All land in the parish is recorded in the Tithe Schedule as pasture, arable or as houses, gardens, 'premises' etc. A smaller percentage of land remained as woodland or new plantations.

The major landowners at the time were Sir Richard Paul Jodrell of Salle Park and Rev. Edward Humphreys who also owned land in Hackford. Their income from most of the land came from rents.

Interestingly, the majority of smallholders seem to be concentrated in Reepham Moor. Land may have been inherited as the owner is sometimes the wife. In addition to arable land near their cottage in the Moor, they often owned pasture ('grazing ground') in Kerdistone.

Fields in Kerdistone and adjacent parts of neighbouring parishes were on poor land which was used as grazing ground which seems to have been used as such for a very long time whilst the better land for arable is nearer the town and water meadows.

Some fields between Salle and Reepham are listed as parts of 'Sall Field' (320) or 'Reifham Field' (150,). It seems reasonable to assume the former existence of large open fields in this area. Another large open field north of Reepham Moor seems to have been known as 'Iron Snack Field'(161, 163).

However, even by the sixteenth century enclosure had begun in this largely stock raising area which had traditionally utilised the common land on heath and in water meadows.

The names of the fields often give some clues as to the history of land use or ownership:

Beggars Hall (117) seems to preserve the name of a former manor, Bagerhall, which may have been part of Kerdistone manor. In 1846 this belonged to the Bulwer Lyttons of Wood Dalling and Heydon. It is on the east of the lane now known as Kerdigreen Lane, marked on older maps as Wood Dalling Lane. West of Kerdigreen Lane are Ellis' Grazing Ground (93), now known as Kerdigreen, and several fields named Abbots (104, 105, 106) which probably acquired this name because they belonged at one time to one of the local abbeys, possibly the Priory of Walsingham. We are probably looking at the grazing green of the medieval parishes here as these field boundaries have remained largely unchanged from the sixteenth century map to the present.

The church, in one guise or another, owned a lot of land. Most supplied income to clergymen or to the poor as 'charity' land.

Town Land' (70) is in Kerdiston and was let out by the Rector and church wardens as charity land. Field 331 – now Stimpson's Piece - was formerly held by Trustees for Clergymen's Widows who held other land in the parish for this charity. Parson's Pasture (2) - glebe land near Themelthorpe boundary was owned by the Dean & Chapter of Norwich Cathedral. One field (122) is owned to supply income to the incumbent of St. John's, Maddermarket. There is considerable glebe land, mostly in the grazing area and including two of the fields with 'Abbots' in their name.

Many fields have owners' names as their title, perhaps the person who originally enclosed it, or names give indications of use or soil type, eg. Clay Pit Close, Brick Kiln Pightle, Gravel Pit Close. Two interesting names of long standing are:

Castons Bittons (159), on the right of the Cawston Road, reappears with a variety of spellings over the centuries and the field next to it, Barn Ten Acres (158) was formerly known as Lamkins.

Further along that road is Bath House Close (197), also an old name. As there is a pit in this wooded close one can but speculate on its old use.

Geology of the Area

Reepham and its satellite villages are situated on the southern rim of the high land forming the watershed between the Bure and Wensum rivers. The underlying geology is chalk, overlain by Norfolk Crag which slopes gently to the east. This was later covered by the glacial drift laid down during the Ice Ages. The area is known as the 'dissected claylands'. The clay is very variable in thickness, sometimes rolled back to great thickness because of the successive advances of the ice.

The heavy clay on the highest lands to the east and north was heath and forest. The streams cut down through the clay forming wet valleys with much gravel and sand. Only along the River Eyn, curving south of Sall, through Reepham, Hackford and part of Whitwell do we see land which was light enough for the early cultivators to use their primitive wooden ploughs. This was where the ploughlands developed, above the water meadows in the wet valley bottoms and below the grazing lands which later became so important for the grazing of sheep. Not until Victorian times do we see the development of such hamlets as Jordon's Green on the higher land. Not until after the Second World War did grazing give way generally to arable on this heavier clay.

Prehistory

Archaeological finds have shown the presence of early man as long ago as the Early Stone Age. These were nomads moving into near tundra conditions as the ice drew away. It was not until the New Stone Age (Neolithic) that men began to settle, to till the ground and pasture animals. Finds of occasional tools and evidence of fires show that Palaeolithic man was present in the area.

About 3000 years ago, as we move into the Bronze Age, we begin to see man really influencing the landscape and it is by then that we see the effects of man's farming activities in reducing the woodland. The poor land of most of north Norfolk became what we know as Norfolk heath.

By the Iron Age we now know that agriculture was well established and there was a large population in this part of the country. We later hear of these Iron Age inhabitants of Norfolk as the Iceni tribe who, first, co-operated with, and later rebelled against, the Romans.

Were the Romans here?

The Romans were certainly present in the area. We know that the Roman road from Denver to the coast crossed the area. It crossed through Whitwell on the line of the road coming from Billingford through Bawdeswell. Its line is lost here, probably because the area was so wet that the line varied to find the most solid ground. A bank in Whitwell park is said to mark the Roman Road. Roman remains have been found at Cawston, crop marks have indicated a possible Roman marching camp in Whitwell and there was a quite important Roman town at Brampton by Buxton.

Finds of Roman brooches, coins and pottery indicate the probable presence of a Romano-British settlement in the Kerdiston area. Pagan Saxon brooches and other material indicate continued occupation in this area. This indicated early presence may be the reason for the apparent precedence of Kerdiston over Reepham in the Middle Ages.

Early Middle Ages

We have much more evidence for Saxon settlement, particularly in the persistence of early administrative practices, even down to the present, once we move into the Saxon period. Land division into county, hundred and parish ran alongside the manorial system. This became a deeply complicated system of local law and administration.

East Anglia is poor in documentary evidence from the Saxon period but once we get into Norman times we have that precious jewel, the Domesday Book. This was William the Conqueror's inventory of all his newly conquered lands and gives us a window into a particular period of time. Domesday gives details for land ownership and manorial structures. Everyone ultimately held their land of the king, including churchmen and freemen.

Domesday gives details of manors at three times, during the time of Edward the Confessor, immediately after the Conquest and at the time of the survey in 1086.

Domesday Book Record – 1086

These are some of the records of the manors in this group of parishes. Note that each parish contains from two to four manors, one more reason for the complicated intermix of land holdings in these villages, as is common in Norfolk.

Note that each Domesday entry records the state of the manor in the time of Edward the Confessor (TRE) at the time of the Conquest ('then') and 1087 ('now')

Land of William de Warenne (f. 156b)

Stinetuna (one of the Salle manors)

Rardulf holds Stinton which Wither 1 freeman held TRE as 3 ploughlands, then as now: 9 villeins, 39 bordars, 3 serfs. Then as now 3 ploughs on the demesne and 8 ploughs belonging to the men and 4 acres of meadow, wood for 100 swine and 1 mill. Then as now, 2 rounceys, 20 beasts and 40 swine and 120 sheep and 27 goats and 3 hives of bees. 1 church with 14 acres and 14 sokemen with 80 acres. Then as now 4 ploughs, wood for 10 swine and 1 acre of meadow and 1 bordar. Two of these sokemen Ralf held when he made a forfeiture and they had 12 acres and were worth 20 pence. In the whole it was then worth 100 shillings, now seven pounds. It is one league in length and half in breadth and pays 11 pence towards the king's geld.

Kerdestuna

... was held by Godwin a freeman TRE, now the same. Rardulf holds 2 ploughlands. Then as now 16 villeins and 20 bordars; then 2 serfs; then as now 2 ploughs on the demesne and 3 ploughs belonging to the men and 8 acres of meadow; wood for 40 swine. Then 2 rounceys, now none. Then 4 beasts, now 6; then 40 swine, now 7. And now 60 sheep and 24 goats and half a church with 6 acres. And 1 sokeman with 5 acres of land and 1 freeman with 30 acres of land and half a priest with 7 acres of land. Then as now among them all 1 plough. Then as now it was worth 100 shillings. One freeman was added to this manor in King William's time with 45 acres of land and 6 bordars; then as now between himself and the men 11/2 ploughs and 11/2 acres of meadow. Wood for 10 swine and the fourth part of a mill and he is worth 20 shillings. And this is all by way of exchange with 2 manors of Lewes. It is 11/2 leagues in length and a half in breadth and pays 15 pence towards the king's geld, whoever may hold there.

Hacforda was held by Tuold, which Wither a freeman held as 11/2 ploughlands; then as now 6 villeins and 10 bordars and 1 serf. Then as now 2 ploughs on the demesne and 3 ploughs belonging to the men. And 4 acres of meadow, wood for 60 swine. One sokeman with 11 acres of land and half a plough; 1 mill; when it was taken over 4 rounceys, now 3 and 10 beasts, 40 swine and 60 sheep; now 5 hives of bees. One church with 9 acres and 2 acres of meadow. Then as now it was worth 50 shillings and it is 5 furlongs in length and 3 in breadth and pays 4 pence whoever may hold there. This is by exchange with Lewes. In **Dalling** 5 freemen. In **Tyring** the same holds 1 freeman and 1 ploughland. Among them all then as now 31/2 ploughs and 2 acres of meadow, wood for 8 swine. Then it was worth 20 shillings, now 30. It is by exchange with Lewes. He of Tyinga was in the rental of the king's manor of Salla in the time of Earl Ralf and under Robert Blund and 1 year under Godric. Now he is held by William de Warrenne. This the hundred testifies, that he was a freeman TRE.

Lands of Ralf Bainard (f. 247)

In Kerdestuna Tord, a freeman, held 2 ploughlands for a manor TRE, now Gaosfridus Bainard. Then and afterwards 30 villeins and now 16 and now 14 bordars. Then and afterwards 2 serfs, now 1. Then as now 2 ploughs on the demesne. Then and afterwards 4 ploughs belonging to the men, now 3 and 5 acres of meadow. Wood for 20 swine. When he received it, 2 rounceys, now 4. Then 4 beasts, now 10. Then as now 40 swine, now 50 sheep. Then 60 goats, now 28 and 2 hives of bees. And 3 1/2 sokemen with 25 acres of land and then as now half a plough. Then as now it was worth 4 pounds and 5 shillings. To this land belong men in **Reifham** and they are valued with the above land. And Reifham, whoever holds there, is half a league in length and 4 furlongs in breadth and renders 3 pence of geld.

Land of Berner the Crossbowman (f. 268)

In **Hacforda** 1 freeman held 1 ploughland TRE. Then as now 3 villeins and 3 bordars. Then as now 1 plough on the demesne and half a plough belonging to the men and 2 acres of meadow. Wood for 30 swine. Then as now 1 rouncey and 5 swine and 12 sheep. And it is worth 12 shillings.

Lands of Rainald son of Ivo (f.233b)

Witewell was held by Ketel, a freeman TRE as 2 ploughlands and 15 acres for a manor. Then and afterwards 8 villeins, now 7. Then as now 14 bordars. Then 4 serfs, now 2; then as now 2 ploughs on the demesne. Then 6 ploughs belonging to the men, afterwards and now 4 and 14 acres of meadow. Wood for 80 swine; 3 mills now 2 and half a fishery. When he received it 2 rounceys, now 1. Then as now 6 beasts. Then 80 swine, now 34. Then 50 sheep, now 60. Then as now 20 goats. Then 6 hives of bees now 12. Two freemen with half a ploughland. Then and afterwards they had 1 1/2 ploughs, now 1 and 3 acres of meadow. And 2 freemen with half a ploughland and, then as now, 1 plough and 2 acres of meadow. Wood for 5 swine. It was then worth 4 pounds, now 6 pounds and 16 pence. Those 2 freemen are worth 6 shillings. And it is 1 league in length and a half in breadth and renders 5 pence in geld of the hundred of 20 shillings

The King's land (f. 115)

Caustuna was held by Harold TRE as 11 ploughlands and 40 acres. Then and afterwards 36 villeins, now 35. Then and afterwards 26 bordars, now 34. Then and afterwards 6 serfs, now 4. Then and afterwards 4 plough on the demesne, now 3 and 2 could be added. Then and afterwards 26 ploughs belonging to the men, now 16 and others could be added. 20 acres of meadow. Then wood for 1500 swine, now 1000. Then as now 2 mills. Then 4 rounceys, now the same. Then 20 beasts and now; then as now 40 swine and 60 sheep and 50 goats and 5 hives of bees. Ten sokemen TRE whereof Rainald son of Ivo, has 2 and William the Bishop has 2 and Count Alan 1 and Godric 2 as part of the king's fee which Count Ralf held when he made forfeiture. William de Warenne has 2 and Roger Bigod one. And besides this Harold held to Caustuna TRE Marsham and Blikelinga and 23 sokemen. And these 2 manors William the Bishop holds and Erfast held. And Walter Gifard holds 26 sokemen whom Bodin his predecessor held. Harold also used to hold to this manor 5 sokemen whom Earl Ralf held. Now Godric holds them as part of the king's fee. Then it was worth 30 pounds, now 40 by tale. And it is 2 leagues in length and 2 in breadth whoever may be holding it. And 7 pence for geld.

f. 261b.

Botuna is held by the same persons as one ploughland; a sokeman of Harold held it TRE. Then as now 1 villein and 4 bordars and 1 serf. One plough on the demesne and half belonging to the men and 2 acres of meadow. Wood for 16 swine. It was then worth 10 shillings and now. The soke is in Caustuna. All this was delivered for one manor. (including Calthorpe and Guton in Brandiston.)

f. 114. In **Witewell** one outlying estate which belongs to Caustuna was held by Harold TRE. One ploughland, then 10 bordars, now 7. Then as now one plough on the demesne; then 1 plough belonging

to the men, now none. Wood for 20 swine and 5 acres of meadow. And it is in the valuation of Caustuna.

[Caustuna also held land in Gunthorp, Brandiston, Taverham, Hevingham, Brampton, Irmingland, Corpusty, Thurton (Thurgarton) and Banningham]

Booton Common

Booton Common is just outside the boundary of Reepham but shares a valley bottom with Reepham Moor. Uses of this common included summer grazing and the alder would have been coppiced for poles. This map, made a few years ago, shows how water meadows revert to scrub, alder carr and fen when no longer grazed and managed. Such areas can become wild life refuges and it is now being grazed again to regain the character of a managed common with a mix of woodland and meadow..

Booton Common was designated a SSSI in 1987. Plants which grow here include Marsh Helleborine, Fragrant Orchid, Bog Pimpernel, Adder's Tongue Fern and Meadow Thistle. As it is so wet, mosses and liverworts are well represented among the reeds and sedge. Birds are also attracted to the site.

Water meadows running up towards World's End. Quite a large farm stood there in the Sixteenth century. Cattle are still grazed here in the summer. Note the drainage ditches needed to keep such wet land usable and the old grown-out hedges.

This field is one of the old open fields. Its shape can be clearly picked out on every map since 1588. Note the high curving banks along the road which bear witness to the age of this field on the lighter land in the parish.

This view looks across the heavier claylands in Kerdistone. These heavy clay lands were often marked on older maps as 'Grazing Grounds' which stretched across between Reepham, Salle and Wood Dalling. Nowadays they form acres of arable land but still have very few houses.

Reepham Society

History Exhibition

2001

The exhibition which is presented today offers vignettes of the past of the group of villages centred around the market town of Reepham . Hackford and Whitwell are now part of the modern parish of Reepham. The churchyard is shared between the three, indeed, the Market Place and most of the built up part of Reepham are actually in the historical parish of Hackford. Salle is, and always has been, a separate parish with its superb church of St. Peter and St. Paul and its separate manorial development.

When we turn to Kerdiston, which was originally the more important section of Reepham with Kerdiston, we begin to see how the parish boundaries of the parishes and even the old manors were almost irrelevant in terms of who owned the land and who rented land where.

Only Reepham is a nucleated town, centred on its market and the churches. The other villages are spread out as individual farms and groups of cottages along the edges of the common fields and grazing grounds. All of them, with other villages such as Wood Dalling and Booton, therefore, functioned together as one economic unit.

The Middle Ages

We have very little hard evidence of the area during the Middle Ages except the presence of our parish churches and the few mentions in Charters and writs. There are two monuments in St. Mary's to

members of the de Kerdiston family. The box tomb against the north wall of the chancel is of some historical importance.

The map on display shows how the parish boundaries of Reepham, Whitwell and Hackford divide up the churchyard. Discoveries of skeletons outside the churchyard seem to indicate a formerly larger graveyard of some antiquity.

Reepham has been a market town since 1276 when Edward I granted a charter to Sir John de Vaux for a weekly market on each Saturday and an annual fair on the eve, day and morrow of St. Peter.

This view from the tower of St. Michael's looks down on what is now the beginning of Ollands Road. At bottom right is Randall's Yard, fronted by what was the Farrier's Arms and a blacksmith's – now occupied by the Spar Shop. Just above is Malthouse Yard and the cottages which still remain, though there are a number of new houses around them.

On the left, the garden on the road has been built on but some of the other buildings remain although much restored. Ollands House can just be seen at top right.

Back Street has not changed much on a superficial inspection but a notice on the front of the Old Bakehouse probably indicates that it was still in business when this photograph was taken.

Rebuilding Reepham

Look around the centre of Reepham and you see a Georgian brick-built village yet the 'Great Rebuilding' of England is supposed to have taken place in Tudor times...

Inside many of the more important, and some of the smaller houses, we can still find evidence of earlier, often half-timbered buildings which have been re-faced in brick, rebuilt or extended.

In the centre of the town, hiding in yards behind and between the older houses, we find Victorian workmen's cottages remaining from a time when there was still work on farms, in the brewery and in other trades.

Nowadays modern houses are encircling the town as we reach another period of change in the fortunes of those who live in the county. Rebuilding happens in times of prosperity.

The '**Cardinal's Hat**', is the last house in Reepham to retain its half-timbered façade. It is said to be the only house to be spared from the terrible town fire which destroyed All Saint's and most of the houses in Back Street in the mid-sixteenth century. This photograph shows the back of the house before it was restored.

The house was formerly known as 'Candle Court' but was renamed after the discovery of this wall-painting, said to be of a cardinal. It appears to be a medieval wall painting, possibly of a saint and probably painted over until its recent discovery. It is now in Norwich Museum.

(Thanks to Mr. McDonnell, the present owner, for the loan of the photographs.)

Moor Farm is the last building out on Reepham Moor and is often said to be the oldest building in Reepham. A report by the Norfolk Archaeological Unit states that it is a timber-framed building, possibly a hall-house, with its oldest parts dating from around 1500. It has, of course, been much altered and extended.

[Thanks to Mrs. Vera Tyler who researched the house when she lived there and drew up the diagram of the structural development .

Kerdiston Cross

Kerdiston Cross is marked on several early modern maps. Very little of it remains and it is difficult to find nowadays. Only the rubble core remains. This is probably the very last piece of worked stone from the cross which still remained on the site.

Salle Park in 1807

This map is a copy of a map surveyed very soon after the completion of Salle Park. It demonstrates very clearly how parkland merges with the surrounding farmland from which it was carved.

The dairy farm in the park and the cottages on the east of the park have now quite disappeared.

The surveyor of this and many other estate maps for Richard Paul Jodrell was Jeremiah Bone. He was a schoolmaster in Aylsham but is also a registered surveyor. This map is dated 1807 but there is also a date of 1815 in one enclosure. This is not a mistake – these were working documents usually drawn up to record changes in the estate.

Reepham Churches and Churchyard

Reepham is unique. Its shared churchyard contains not two but three churches. Both churches have suffered considerable rebuilding, especially during the nineteenth century. However, the archaeological report carried out by Edwin Rose of the Norfolk Archaeological unit during the renovations of 2000 makes some interesting comments.

The phenomenon of a shared churchyard, especially at the junction of parish boundaries, is a Saxon feature, often making use of unproductive land at the edge of settlements. The present buildings of St. Mary's and St. Michael's can be dated to the 14th. century with later additions. The re-use of worked stone in the walls includes much ironbound conglomerate* which is a sign of Saxon or Norman building. The fact that the chancel of St. Mary's is at a much lower level than the rest of the churches and that the chancel of St. Michael's is offset from the nave are also possible indicators of earlier churches on the site. St. Mary's font is Norman (St. Michael's has now been moved to Little Witchingham] and the lists of rectors also goes back to an earlier date than the present buildings. The two churches are described as Perpendicular in the official listing but they retain strong Decorated features as is common in Norfolk.

The siting of St. Mary's tower to the south of the church is also unusual. It is possible that this was originally a tower porch but it seems more likely that it was built here because the churches were so close together. The archaeological report concludes that these are Saxon foundations rebuilt during the 14th. and 15th. centuries. The third church of All Saints, Hackford, is now represented only by the remains of one wall of the south porch.

St. Mary's has a memorial of international importance in the tomb of Sir William de Kerdiston of 1361 as well as a nearly contemporary de Kerdiston brass, both in the chancel. The memorial slabs, formerly in the chancel have, now been moved to the north aisle and show some interesting features including a palimpsest at the east end. The removal was due to the renovation of the chancel by the Jodrell family at the end of the nineteenth century. St. Michael's boasts a splendid Jacobean pulpit, complete with sounding board, whilst its chancel houses the 1914/18 war memorials and the Eighteenth century memorials of the Monsey family of Whitwell. All the valuable church silver from both churches is now held in the Treasury of Norwich Cathedral.

* Conglomerate is the brown stone visible in the walls.

The churchyard seems to have been much bigger at one time as skeletons have been revealed under Church Hill during rebuilding and the laying of drains. Back Street appears to be the older road around the churches, probably following the original southern boundary of the Market Place. The market is mentioned as having been held, before the charter was granted in 1276, in the then much larger churchyard.

Bryant's Map of Norfolk 1826

This map is one of a series of twelve county maps. It was produced in the early days of accurate map making. It appears probable that Bryant had access to the new Board of Ordnance (later the Ordnance Survey) triangulations as well as using organised teams of surveyors.

The map is at a scale of rather more than one inch to a mile. It shows hundred boundaries and the old unrevised parish boundaries.

A map such as this would be financed by subscription. Gentlemen's seats are shown where the owner was a subscriber.

Comparison with Faden's eighteenth century and later Ordnance Survey maps is invaluable in tracing boundary changes, road changes and enclosure of commons. There are, however, occasional inaccuracies.

We are grateful to Sir John White for the loan of this map.