St. Lawrence Church,
Burnham, South Humberside
The Excavation of a Parochial Chapel

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INTRODUCTION

The deserted medieval village of Burnham, or Brume, lies in the western part of the parish of Thornton Curtis on the chalk of the Lincolnshire Wolds, some 6km south of Barton-upon-Humber, on the old road between Barton and Cayton (Fig 1) at National Grid Reference TA 057171. The site of the village was marked by two impressive series of earthworks (Fig. 2), so substantial that they have been misinterpreted as the entrenchments of the battlefield of Brumbarne (Hunt, 1905, 28-43). In fact, the northern series constitutes the remains of a formal garden and landscaping associated with the post-medieval Burnham Park and lies outside the area of the medieval village. The southern series of earthworks, east of Burnham Manor Farm and within Chapel Close, lie at the head of a shallow, dry valley and comprise the remains of the village proper. The presumed site of the church was marked by a prominent oval mound in the centre of the field. This mound was saved from destruction by the prompt action of Mrs. Eleanor Russell and Mr. G. F. Bryant and the cooperation of Mr. Peter Strawson, the landowner, when the earthworks of Chapel Close were levelled in 1976, and was excavated by the writer from 12 December 1976 to 28 February 1977. It did indeed prove to be the site of the church. The site presented an ideal opportunity to investigate a parochial chapel, unlikely to be disturbed by burials, which could be related to a village layout.

Mrs. Russell, who observed the destruction of the village earthworks in the spring of 1976, collected pottery and other finds ranging in date from the 12th - 16th centuries which could be related to specific areas of the village. Study of these finds has made a simple analysis of the village development possible and helped to place the chapel in its context as part of the settlement as a whole.

The earliest pottery finds, dating up to no later than the 13th century were found in crofts along the road, now a hollow-way, running north of Burnham Manor Farm. These crofts were presumably abandoned by the late 13th century because early 14th - late 15th century pottery was found only in the field called Chapel Close, south of the farm. The pottery evidence suggests that this group of crofts was, in its turn, abandoned by the late 15th century or even later.

It appears then that the church lay south-east of the earlier settlement, a point confirmed by the discovery of early croft ditches in an Elsan pit north of the church which did not continue beneath it. Perhaps they were orientated to the late-Saxon layout of the village since they respected the church. At some point in the late 13th century the focus of the village shifted with crofts being settled on the previously undeveloped east-west street, south of Burnham Manor Farm, with the church then at the centre of the settlement (Fig. 2).

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THE EXCAVATION

The whole area of the mound was examined, all but the western 10m down to the surface of the natural chalk, revealing the well-preserved remains of a stone church built in the second half of the 10th century, and remaining substantially as built through three periods of repair and alteration to its destruction in c.1550 (Fig. 3). Below the original stone church were pits and post-sockets cut into the natural frost-shattered chalk, indicating the existence of a timber church on the site which dated from the early 10th century.

The description and plans below are based on the original field notes and plans which are held by Baysgarth House Museum, Barton-upon-Humber together with all other materials and finds related to the site, and must be understood to be interpretative.

Phase A, Early 10th Century: (Figs. 4 and 10)
The earliest features revealed were two shallow gullies (Fig. 4) a and b, cut into the natural chalk and sealed by a thin layer of turf. Neither gully produced any finds, but a spread of 3rd-century pottery in the turf-line would suggest that both features were of Roman date, if not earlier, and had no association with the later development of the site. Cut into the natural chalk, and through the turf layer, were fourteen definite and two probable post-holes representing the south and east walls of a rectangular structure, and two deep pits, c and d. All these features were sealed by a deposit of dark brown soil, not unlike the underlying turf layer, which contained a quantity of mid-10th century pottery. At the junction of the deposits, and against the east wall of the building, was a single infant burial, apparently associated with the structure.

The timber building lay beneath the chancel of the later stone church which had removed all traces of its west and

Fig. 1 Location map of Burnham and principal sites mentioned in the text.
north walls, and the close axial and stratigraphical relationship of the two structures would suggest that the timber building was built as the original village chapel, and not as a secular structure. As the setting of the wall-posts was reasonably regular, the plan of this first church can be reconstructed with some confidence. The mean spacing of the posts was 0.7m from centre to centre, and allowing that the missing west and north walls were cut away by the footings of the later chancel, the building must have measured 5.5m from west to east and 4.1m from north to south. The slightly unequal spacing of the wall-posts, coupled with the fact that they do not align exactly, suggests that the building was of primitive carpentered construction, and that the wall-posts represent the framework of a clay or cob wall, and not post-and-plank construction (Beresford, 1975, 36-40). Nothing survived of the superstructure, but cob walls and a roof of shingle or thatch would not be inappropriate.

The third post-hole from the west in the south wall showed clear evidence of recutting, and two post settings outside the east wall line may be secondary, suggesting either a major repair with the replacement of rotted timbers, or a total rebuilding. Unfortunately, the final withdrawal of the posts had destroyed any indications of the other wall-posts being original or replacements. In spite of this, it is clear that the building stood for long enough to require major repair before it was demolished in the mid-10th century, a date clearly supported by pottery evidence.

Within the church, two slight post-holes in the south-east corner may represent the supports of a bench rather than part of the wall structure.

Immediately west of the timber church was a large oval pit, c, some 4.1m in length, and with a maximum width of 1.33m, cut into the natural chalk to a depth of 1m. Although it was not fully excavated, it was possible to demonstrate that its filling was coeval with the destruction of the timber church. The pit was lined with a pale yellow-brown mortar which rendered it watertight. It lay approximately on the same axis as the timber church, and a little to the north of its centre line, perhaps respecting the position of a west door. Enough of the pit was examined to show that it held no burials, but its relationship to the timber church seems clear. Excavation within the nave of
Fig. 3 Schematic development of St Lawrence’s Church, Burnham.
the later church showed that there was no other major structure of this period to the west, and that the space had served as an open area within which this pit was the major feature. Associated with pit c and the north-west corner of the timber church, was a smaller, irregular feature, pit d, of which only one quadrant had survived the building of the stone church. Although the pottery from this pit was similar to that from pit c, pit d may well be earlier than the original church, for when projected, it must either have underlain the north-west angle of the church or cut it away.

Phase B, Late 10th Century (Figs. 5 and 10)
The destruction of the earliest church was coupled with the building of a substantial 2-cell structure in stone (Figs. 5 and 10). The date of this operation is well attested by the pottery in phase-groups one and two below, from soil dumped at the time. The stone church, which largely survived in plan was built on an elaborate foundation of two courses of pitched chalk blocks rammed into a trench dug into the natural chalk, capped by a layer of crushed and rammed chalk, which in turn had a layer of black, humic soil rammed above it. Above the humic soil was a second layer of crushed chalk on which the walls were built (Fig. 10). A close examination of the footings indicated that the nave, the east, south and west walls of the chancel were laid out together, and that the footings of the chancel north wall were not of the same build. They were also slightly out of alignment with the wall they carried (Fig. 10, section C-D). This suggested that the nave was built against the original timber chapel, whose west wall was removed, and the timber church was kept in use as a temporary chancel whilst the south and east walls of its replacement were raised to roof level. Once the nave was completed, the chancel arch was temporarily closed and the original chapel demolished. The north wall of the new chancel was then built and the church completed. The walls were of coursed chalk rubble set in a fat, pale brown mortar, with an outer casing of ironstone which only survived in places. The north wall of the nave stood to a maximum height of eleven courses on its inner face at the east end, the north wall of the chancel to six courses, and the east wall to nine courses. The plain, chamfered bases of the chancel arch responds survived in situ, being cut from substantial blocks of ironstone, heavily tooled on the diagonal. Above them, the lower ashlars of the responds survived as impressions in the mortar. The distance between the faces of the responds was 1.6m. The surviving plinths projected some 0.1m from the face of the rubble walling, which was apparently plaster-faced. At the west end of the nave, opposed doors were provided in the north and south walls, that on the north retaining its threshold of three large blocks of ironstone. A single voussoir survived from the south door (below p. 57 and Fig. 17.1), all other traces of which had been removed by robbing. Little of the west wall, including its foundations, had survived, being cut away for a later westward extension of the nave.

Below the floor of the nave and chancel were traces of building operations. Post-holes c, d, f, g, h and j must be associated with scaffolding used during construction, whilst k, a post-hole packed with three large pieces of Roman brick, incorporated within the footings of the west wall, may have been the setting for a post used in marking out the site of the nave. Also sealed by floor makeup was the small lead-working hearth, e, cut down into the natural chalk. The provision of this hearth would suggest that at
least some of the windows were glazed, no doubt within the chancel. The nave floor, of mortar, survived in places, principally in the south-west corner, and in front of the chancel arch, where it was worn and patched. Within the chancel, the floor of white mortar was more or less complete except in the north-west corner, where a post-medieval disturbance had cut away the floor, and along the south wall where the floor had fallen away into a 16th-century robber trench which had removed the wall to its footings. The mortar floor indicated the liturgical arrangements of the chancel. It had been laid after the construction of the altar, which survived only as a ‘ghost’, the masonry having been removed, some 6.62m by 1.05m, set 0.6m to the west of the east wall. In the south-east corner of the chancel the mortar floor had been worn away, presumably by the priest moving to the rear of the altar in the course of services. The degree of use must have been considerable to have worn such a hollow down to sub-floor levels. Two features within the chancel, a and b, are more difficult to interpret. The former was a small pit packed with chalk rubble and appeared to be a post-setting. It had no counterpart on the north side of the chancel, and so is unlikely to relate to a ciborium or canopy. The small post-hole, b, on the south side of the chancel arch, may have had a partner to the north, removed by the later disturbance but surviving as an impression in the edge of the mortar floor. The most likely explanation is that the arch was closed by a gate, rail, or screen, supported on posts set in b and its neighbour.

Phase C, Late 12th Century (Figs. 6, 7 and 8)
During the final quarter of the 12th century the church was subjected to a campaign of repair and modernisation which left little trace in plan. Initially, the west wall of the late 10th-century church was removed to its lowest pitched chalk footings, and the nave was extended westward by 2.85m internally. The new west end, largely destroyed by post-medieval stone robbing, was built of mixed flint blocks and water-worn boulders faced externally with small ironstone blocks, set onto a thin spread of orange-yellow mortar in the bottom of a shallow construction trench. As the surface of the natural chalk rose towards the west, the floor of the extension was cut into it, with the effect that the construction trench for this new work had no inner face. Coupled with this extension, the original nave doors, now too far to the east, were blocked with mortared chalk rubble and a new south door was provided in the south-western corner of the old nave. The ashlar-work of this new door was totally removed by later stone-robbery, but its later blocking survived to show its precise location. The nave was refloored with yellow mortar, substantial areas of which survived in the south-west corner of the nave associated with the new door, and in the north-east corner (not shown on Fig. 6).

The east wall of the nave was provided with a new chancel arch set on the late Saxon abacus. Three voussoirs and the upper part of the south respond survived where they had fallen. Architecturally, the arch can be dated c.1170-1190, a date not in conflict with the single sherd of Lincoln ware pottery associated with this phase (below p. 55. The sherd is not illustrated). Within the chancel, the floor was resurfaced with orange mortar, respecting the original arrangements of altar and other fittings. Stone chippings in a slowly accumulating humic deposit around the outside of the church were associated with this phase, and may relate to the repair of the superstructure or more dras-
Fig. 6 The church with its 12th-century extension to the nave, and western bell-cote and refitted chancel of the early 14th century.
tic work such as the enlargement or replacement of windows. There is considerable evidence to show that the church was provided with painted glass early in the 13th century, not only in the chancel, but also in the nave, and this rebuilding phase may have been more protracted than the archaeological evidence would suggest. The paucity of cultural material associated with the structure before its final demolition and the total lack of moulded detail surviving in situ, coupled with the substantial survival of the lowest wailing of the first stone church, makes the interpretation of this phase extremely difficult. It can only be presumed that the new chancel arch and refenestration of the nave and chancel belong to the same work as the western extension of the nave. No evidence survived for the structure of the roof in this or the preceding phase, and it is presumed that the roof covering was of thatch or shingle.

By the close of the 13th century, the church had fallen into disrepair. Water had been running down the inner faces of the walls, the lower courses of which were badly frost-shattered, suggesting that the roof at least was defective, and the floors within the building were badly worn. Early in the 14th century, a complete restoration was undertaken, and the amount of work that needed to be done clearly shows the poor state of the building.

Phase D, Early-mid 14th Century (Figs. 6 and 10)
The restoration of the church in the first half of the 14th century was considerable, although the basic outline of the building remained unchanged. A fixed point for this work is provided by two coins stratified below the floors in the nave and chancel, and a third from a makeup level belonging to the same phase outside the north wall.

Within the nave, three glaziers' hearths, a, b and c, attest the further glazing or repair of windows. Small fragments of tracery were found outside the east wall suggesting that a new window, in the Decorated style, was inserted in the chancel. Within, the building was replastered throughout, covering the frost-damaged walls, and given a thick coating of limewash. A new vestry was partitioned off at the west end of the nave by a wall of flint and chalk blocks set in pale brown mortar, which survived to a height of 0.5m, plastered on both faces. The vestry was entered from the north-west corner of the nave, the single-course chalk and flint threshold and north jamb of the door surviving. The position of the vestry made the 12th century south door unusable, and it would seem that the blocking of the original south door was removed. The nave was refloored with mortar over a packed layer of dark brown soil, within which was Coin 1, a near-mint silver halfpenny of Edward III. c.1335-43. Associated with this restoration of the nave was the insertion of a niche to the south of the chancel arch to hold a finely-modelled cult figure of St Lawrence, the greater part of which was found lying on the nave floor below the demolition materials of the mid-16th century. Fragments of the niche also survived.

Within the chancel, the restoration was even more apparent, with the provision of a raised altar platform occupying the eastern half, and the altar placed against the east wall. The plaster on the inner face of the east wall carried on around the south face of the altar, showing that the alteration of the liturgical arrangements was contemporary with the major building works. North of the altar, a chalk and ironstone bench, d, was provided against the north wall of the chancel, and a large post-pit, f, with a clear recutting.
occupied the space between. The platform was raised by a single step of brick, set on a mortar footing, *h*, which was sealed by the mortar bed of a printed tile floor, which still retained the imprint of the tiles and a few fragments that remained in situ. Below the brick step, the central area of the chancel had a floor of plain bricks, 0.26m by 0.13m by 0.04m, set into the same brown soil that had been used to pack up the nave floor. From this same deposit, below the altar platform, came Coin 2, a badly worn silver penny of Edward I, c.1302-10. It is clear that the brick floor was never wider than the opening of the chancel arch where it terminated against a timber cill, leaving two areas to north and south with no apparent flooring. The area to the south may well have been filled with stonework set on a wooden floor, for no wear was apparent on the surface of the soft brown floor-packing. To the north however, the situation is complicated by pit *g*, a deep robber trench of 19th century date cut through destruction deposits to remove a structure some 1.8m by 1.3m in floor area which had stood in this corner of the chancel. The most likely structure to occupy this area would have been a small altar tomb. Whilst there were no other burials within the area excavated, a number of scattered human bones were recovered and may well have derived from here.

Both the nave and chancel were re-roofed, the new roof being covered with lead, clips and nails which were recovered from both construction and demolition levels.

A timber belfry was raised on a low flint and chalk wall of three courses with diagonal pad-stones of ironstone at the corners against the west gable of the nave. From the care with which the cill-walls had been finished, it would seem that the belfry had been a carpentered structure, with plaster-filled panels, fragments of which lay on the trampled earth floor. Entry must have been from the vestry, through the west wall of the nave, but no trace of a door survived.

**Phase E, 15th Century (Figs 8, 9 and 10)**

At some point towards the middle of the 15th century the timber belfry was demolished and replaced by a low tower built within the 14th-century vestry, which entailed substantial alterations to the walls at the west end of the nave. Only the east, and part of the south wall-widening associated with the tower survived post-medieval stone robbing, but enough remained to reconstruct the whole (Fig. 3). The vestry door was blocked with flint and chalk blocks set in reddish-brown clay, with the sporadic inclusion of re-used bricks measuring 0.2 by 0.13 by 0.06m, and still retaining traces of white mortar. Following this, a foundation of three courses of flint blocks, set in brown clay, was laid upon the vestry floor. On this, two courses of the wall-widening that would have carried the additional weight of the tower were carried up in flint and occasionally chalk blocks set in a very hard, pale brown mortar. What survived indicated the precise nature of the widening (Fig. 8). Against the east wall of the old vestry the first course of mortared work consisted of six blocks of flint set at intervals of 0.18m, forming the sides of seven nesting boxes built within the thickness of both the east and south walls. If the spacing was regular throughout, there would have been nine such boxes in each of the four walls in each tier. The second course of mortared work formed the capping of the nesting boxes and the base of the next tier. The bag-
shaped plan of the boxes clearly shows that they were not intended as putlog holes, but the basal tier of a dovecote constructed within the lower stage of the tower. Entry may have been through the presumed door in the west wall of the nave that had given access to the timber belfry. Further work of this period seems to have been restricted to the repair of the chancel, where bricks of the same size as those used in the blocking of the vestry door were found, discarded by the stone robbers. No further work seems to have been done after this date.

**Demolition, c. 1550**

The church was partially demolished and robbed in the mid-16th century, when a small hut or lean-to was built against the east wall of the chancel, presumably as shelter for the workmen. Within the hut was a hearth and a considerable quantity of pottery which comprises phase group 6, below p. 55, and animal bone. The initial demolition seems only to have involved the removal of the tower and the sandstone casing of the nave and chancel, perhaps together with part of the chancel arch responds. Part of the arch lay where it had fallen with a section of the south respond including the abacus, and it would seem that only the best stone had been taken. The church was then left as a standing ruin, to be haphazardly robbed until the mid-19th century, when it was levelled and further robbing in the chancel removed the structure in the north-west corner and the bench to the north of the altar. After this, the site was grassed and lightly ploughed over to produce the prominent oval mound which survived until excavation.

**DISCUSSION**

The late Saxon vill of Burnham, along with that of Thornton Curtis was held at the Norman conquest by Grim who had substantial holdings centred on this area (Foster and Longley, 1924, 151). The manor of Thornton with Burnham was granted by William I to Ernulfs de Burun, although some sokeland of Burnham, at Somerby near Brieg, was granted to William de Percy (Foster and Longley, 1924, 104 and 151). By the time of the Lindsey Survey in 1115-18, the manor appears to have been jointly held by Alan de Percy who specifically held four bovates at Burnham, and a lesser part of Thornton Curtis, and Geoffrey, son of Payne, who held two bovates. The reminder of Thornton Curtis was held by Stephen, Count of Aumale (Foster and Longley, 1924, 249-251). The vills of Thornton Curtis and Burnham were both granted by William le Gros, Count of Aumale to his newly founded Augustinian priory of Thornton in 1139 (VCH, 1906, 165). Burnham continued to be held as part of the priory, and later abbey, estate until the house was suppressed on 12th December 1539 and it passed to the endowment of Henry VIII’s college of Thornton (VCH, 1906, 165). In common with the abbey’s normal policy of estate management, Burnham would have been tenanted for a rental in cash or kind from the early 14th century, and it was not run as a grange though Burnham Ferme remained an important adjunct to the abbey as late as 1540. The Thornton granges all occupied manors held in hand by the abbey at: Barrow on Humber, Goxhill, East Halton, Thornton, Wootton, Ulceby, Kirmington, Owmby, Rothwell, Stainton le Vale, Risby and North Owcersby (VCH, 1906, 165). In consequence, there was nothing exceptional in the history or development of the village. Only one medieval reference in made to a chapel at Burnham: in 1340 (Owen, 1975, 21), and it is presumed that St Lawrence’s church or chapel was suppressed in the
Fig. 10 Excavated sections of St Lawrence's Church.
general dissolution of chantries, or at the suppression of Thornton College in 1547.

The earliest church is without exact parallel, but conforms to a type of building which is emerging in Eastern England generally, and particularly in the East Midlands, which is not restricted to churches. Beresford has suggested that timber churches were built on the same principal as contemporary domestic buildings, with a similar ground plan and constructional details. In Lincolnshire, the closest analogy can be seen in the peasant houses belonging to the earliest phase of occupation at Goltih which can now be dated to the late 9th and 10th centuries (Beresford, 1975, 21-3 and Fig. 14). Here, the same inexact alignment of wall-posts can be seen, interpreted by the excavator as reinforcement for clay or cob waling which clearly has a long history in the vernacular architecture of the county. The alternative forms of waling, which have yet to be seen in the East Midlands except in major structures such as the early Goltih halls, would be of post-and-panel type, of cleft oak logs, or of horizontal boarding held between staggered posts. Of these, the latter might just be possible at Burnham, particularly in respect of the east wall (Fig. 4). The closest parallel is an apparent church of perhaps 8th century date at Nazeingbury, Essex (Huggins, 1978, 64-75 and Figs. 6 and 9), where post-pits were set at mean centres of 0.74m, close to the spacing recorded at Burnham, but there was one major difference in the plan. At Nazeingbury, the alignment of the two walls which survived was reasonably precise. The critical factor must have been the provision of a straight wall-plate on which the roof would be constructed. Cob walls of 0.6m to 0.8m width would provide a square building which could carry a regular carpentered roof, perhaps of some sophistication.

A remarkably similar church excavated at Raunds, Northamptonshire, in 1980, was built of stone and comprising a rectangular cell measuring 5.7m by 4.3m externally. This building was dated to the 10th century by associated pottery (Boddington and Cadman, 1981, 107 and Fig. 7.3). The single cell plan of modest proportions can be seen in contemporary urban churches, usually in stone. At York, the earliest phase of the church of St Helen on the Walls, Aldwark, was dated to the late 9th or early 10th century on the basis of associated pottery, and measured 7.8m by 5.8m with walls 0.7m to 0.8m thick (Magilton 1979, Figs. 5-7), whilst the contemporary church of St Paul in the Bail at Lincoln measured approximately 9m by 6.5m with walls roughly 1m thick. All four buildings have a length to width ratio of 4:3.

The provision of an atrium to the west is not unknown or indeed unexpected, and the situation at Burnham may be paralleled at Rivenhall, Essex, where the first stone church of late-Saxon date is set to the west of its timber predecessor in what was apparently an open space (Rodwell and Rodwell, 1973, 219-31). However, the large mortaria-pit remains enigmatic and without parallel.

It is easier to find comparable structures of later 10th century date which compare with the first stone church at Burnham, if only because of the considerable number of surviving churches which contain work of that date. Two such churches in Lincolnshire, at Sutterby and Calceby, remain substantially unaltered structurally and are closely similar to Burnham not only in plan, but in building materials as well. At Sutterby, the church survives essentially as a pre-Norman structure, refenestrated up to the 18th century, and with a recent chancel clearly built on old foundations. The north wall of the nave, with an inserted
12th century door, retains side-alternate quoining at the north-east angle (Pevsner and Harris, 1964, 384). The nave measures 9.9m by 6.75m, the chancel footings 4.0m by 4.5m externally. The walls are of chalk rubble, faced externally with greenstone. At Cakeby, the near-identical church, ruined since the 16th century, has not suffered from extensive alteration, and the high-standing chalk rubble walls, now retaining only a little of their greenstone outer facing, show that the windows must have been high up. Neither church has had more than a cursory examination and both would repay detailed recording. Further afield, excavated churches at Lincoln, Thetford, Raunds and Wharram Percy indicate the standard nature of the two-cell plan in the 10th and 11th centuries. St Marks Church, Lincoln, most probably of mid-11th century date, compares closely with the ground plan recorded at Burnham, with paired lateral doorways and an altar set forward of the east chancel wall. The ritual arrangements of the chancel, though of considerably more sophistication, reflect the situation at Burnham (Jones, 1981, 98-101). This general layout is echoed in the late 10th-century phase of the church of St Paul in the Bail at Lincoln. The writer is grateful to Mick Jones and Brian Gilnour who discussed the development of this site in great detail and in advance of their own publications. The church of St Michael, Thetford, rebuilt in stone early in the 11th century again confirms the general trend, whilst the late-Saxon stone church at Wharram Percy, North Yorkshire, can be seen not only to confirm the plan-type, but also to have a similar form of foundation construction. (The writer would particularly acknowledge lengthy discussions of the Wharram Percy Church with Rob Bell in advance of his publication of that structure.) At Raunds, the late 10th century saw the building of a two cell church of like scale but of poorer construction on the site of its single cell predecessor (Boddington and Cadman, 1981, 109-11 and Fig. 7.5).
Whilst there is no difficulty in finding comparable late Saxon church ground plans, the excavated church at Burnham produced several details which were not so obviously typical of the late 10th century. The most difficult feature to reconcile with this date was the chancel arch. Unlike most quoted examples (Taylor and Taylor, 1965, puszim) it had its plinth set in line with the wall face and there was clear evidence that the jambs were not built entirely of through-stones, nor was there any suggestion of flanking pilaster strips which are a common feature though rare in Lincolnshire. However, the late Saxon chancel arch at All Saints, Bracebridge, Lincoln, is very close in style and construction to the remaining work at Burnham, and compares closely in date, and further confirmation of the acceptability of the Burnham chancel arch can be seen in the pre-conquest south door of Bartholm Church, Cambridgeshire (Taylor and Taylor, 1965, 85-6 and Fig. 37; 41-2 and Fig. 20).

The extension of the nave to the west in the 12th century would seem to be a fairly standard development where extra space was provided with the minimum of inconvenience. Both St Paul in the Bui, Lincoln and St Michael's Church, Thetford, demonstrate a similar development at approximately the same date. Generally, the growth in the 11th and 12th centuries is demonstrated by church expansion, either by a western extension or by the provision of a new chancel to the east of the original church (for an eastern expansion, see Coppack 1978, 97-101 and Fig. 4). At Burnham, the later conversion of the western part of the nave to a vestry would suggest that the hopes of the 12th century had been too high, or that the church was no longer in regular use but functioned as a private chapel or chantry. Although the village layout altered substantially by the early 14th century, there is no indication of shrinkage. Indeed, there is some suggestion from the pottery collected of expansion.

Although the documentary evidence is lacking, there is good evidence that the statue of the church had changed by the mid-14th century. The robbed feature in the north-west corner of the chancel can only have been an altar tomb, and it must be noted that there were no other burials within or outside the church. A similar situation has been noted at Bolton, near Pocklington in East Yorkshire, where a similar burial was located before the altar of a parochial chapel (Coppack, 1978, 99). If St Lawrence's Church was established as a chantry at this date, it would provide a context for the major restoration that the church went through. The major feature of this period was undoubtedly the provision of the timber-framed tower or bell-cage against the west gable of the nave. Such a tower is less easy to parallel today in Lincolnshire than it was in the 18th century, improving restoration and natural decay having taken a substantial toll on what must have been a fairly common feature of the smaller churches and chapels of the county. Two lost examples can be quoted which indicate the most likely form of the structure. The first, from Horsington, west of Horncastle, is known from a pencil drawing of late-18th century date in the Sir Joseph Banks' collection (Fig. 11). This shows a timber-framed, free-standing, openwork structure to the north-west of the church, with a thatched cap. It is clearly ruinous, and may originally have been built with clay or plaster panels, for which there was evidence at Burnham. This church was totally rebuilt between 1858 and 1860 by David Brandon (Pevsner & Harris 1964, 278). The other church, demolished in c. 1789, is North Conesby, or Flixborough Old Church as it was also known, recorded rather basically in the Gentleman's Magazine (1786, 825 & pl II, Fig. 7), and of similar form (Dudley 1931, 82-3 and Fig. 37. See also Laughlin & Miller 1979, 198).

The mention of a low stone tower in the western part of the nave is not exceptional, except for the provision of a dovecote within its basement storey. Such a feature is, to say the least, irregular, and might indicate that the church was already in lay hands, either as a private chapel, or put to secular use at least in part. The quality of the work must have been good for the tower was the earliest part of the church to be demolished in the 16th century.

FINDS FROM THE EXCAVATION

THE COINS:
By Kevin Leahy.

Three coins, all associated with construction deposits of Phase D, were recovered:
Coin 1: Halfpenny, Edward III, London 2nd coinage, Class 9 (1335-43). The coin is damaged but has slight wear only.
Coin 2: Penny, Edward I, London, Class X (1302-10). This coin is heavily worn.
Coin 3: Penny, Edward I, London, Class I (1279). This coin is heavily worn.

The state of all three coins is compatible with a deposition date within the second quarter of the 14th century.

LATE-SAXON AND MEDIEVAL POTTERY (Figs. 12-14).
By Dr. Colin Hayfield.

The excavations at Burnham recovered 531 pottery sherds from no more than 268 original vessels; of these, twenty were Roman and the rest of late-Saxon and medieval date. Pottery contexts were separated archaeologically into eight stratified phase-groups and one multi-phase group dating from the 10th to the 16th century. Some phase-groups such as 4 and 24 had independent coin dating; some could be dated from documentary sources, and some, less reliably, were dated by their pottery.

The major fabric types are noted below. The fabric classification is based on that used for a regional study (Hayfield 1985) which account for apparent irregularities in the fabric coding. The full ceramic make-up of each phase-group is presented in Tables 1 and 2.

Fabric Classification

General date ranges have been provided for each of the fabric types provided below. A more detailed evaluation of their dating evidence can be found in Hayfield 1985.

I. LATE-SAXON FABRICS

Torksey type wares (CT) 9th-11th centuries.
A hard, heavily sand-tempered coarseware fabric similar to that produced at Torksey in central Lincolnshire (Barley 1981). A typical vessel has reduced black surfaces and pale grey cores with red-brown margins.

Lincoln Grey type wares (CL) 9th-11th centuries.
A very hard, rough textured, sand-tempered coarseware fabric which was usually reduced to blue-grey or grey (Coppack 1980).

Late-Saxon Shell-Tempered fabric (SI) 9th-11th centuries.
A predecessor of the medieval shell-tempered wares; this was a smooth to soapy textured, shell-tempered, coarseware fabric. Most vessels were oxidised to oranges or buffs but some reduction occurred. This was the dominant late-Saxon product in North Lincolnshire (Hayfield 1985).
2. MEDIEVAL COARSEWARE FABRICS

Shell-tempered fabrics (S4) 11th-14th centuries. The differing vessel forms offer the clearest distinction between this fabric and S1, although the S4 fabric has a slightly less soapy surface texture. Most vessels were oxidised to orange, buff or red, with blue-grey reduction of cores.

Coarse Sandy fabric (C2) 11th-14th centuries. A heavily sand-tempered coarseware fabric whose vessels were generally oxidised to reds and oranges, with blue-grey reduction of cores. Despite their rough-textured surfaces, most products were carefully potted.

3. MEDIEVAL FINEWARE FABRICS

Fine Sand-Tempered fabric (F1) 11th-14th centuries. A soft-to-hard, finely sand-tempered fabric, usually oxidised to reds, with suspension glazes superceding from the late 12th century.

Orangewares (O1) 11th-14th centuries. A very finely tempered, smooth textured fabric that was usually oxidised to reds, pinks and oranges. Splashed glazes were employed before c.1150, with suspension glazes in use later. Copper-green glazes were typical, usually with a characteristic mottling of the glaze on the lower margin.
Lincoln ware (ML) 12th-14th centuries.
This fabric was represented by a single, unillustrated jug sherd from phase-group 3 (Table 1).

Medium Sandy fabric (ML) 13th-15th centuries.
A soft-to-hard, sand-tempered fabric, characterised by a distinctive filler of semi-translucent orange wind-blown sand, originating from the Cover sands of north-west Lincolnshire which out-crop extensively in the Scunthorpe region. Oxidised surfaces varied from pale buff to orange, reducing to pale grey or black in cores and occasionally on inner surfaces. Yellowish-orange and green suspension glazes predominated.

Smooth Humberware (H1) 13th century.
A transitional fabric combining the fabric and texture of the orangewares with the hardness, glaze and forms of the Humberwares.

Humberwares (H2) 13th-16th centuries.
A hard-to-very-hard, rough textured, sand-tempered fabric usually oxidised pale orange to brick red. Cores and inner surfaces were frequently reduced to blue-grey or grey, whilst their suspension glazes were usually an olive-green with a light orange-brown surface flecking.

Fine Humberwares (OC) 15th-16th century.
A finer fabric variant produced in several of the Humberware kilns, which was used for the new late-medieval fine-
wares such as cups, chalices etc. Such vessels were designed to challenge the threat to the traditional markets of the Humberwares posed by the new Cistercian wares.

Toynbot/Bolingbroke type fabric (T1) 13th-17th centuries. A hard to very hard, sand-tempered fabric, similar to Humberware, but with paler coloured surfaces, including pinks, buffs and greys. The typical orange-brown or olive-green glazes usually had a distinctive pocked surface reminiscent of earlier splashed glazes. This was predominantly a southern and central Lincolnshire fabric. Within North Lincolnshire it was less common, its distribution strengthening eastwards towards the coast.

Cistercian wares (CIST) 16th century. A hard, finely sand-tempered reddish fabric, usually carefully potted and covered on both surfaces with a bright purple-black glaze. Small table vessels such as cups, chalices and posset pots dominated the repertoire.

Regional Strays (R)
A minor category embracing two unprovenanced vessels that were probably traded into the area (Table 1).

Stratified Pottery Groups
Phase-group 1 (Nos 1-3): 10th century?
Sherds deriving from two pits within the nave area (Fig. 4, c and d) which were otherwise undated, although strati-
graphically associated with the late-Saxon timber structure. No. 1 parallels a Torsey-type rim found in late-Saxon deposits from St Peter’s Church, Barton-on-Humber, currently considered to be of 10th century date.

**Phase-group 2 (No. 4): 10th century?**
This small group immediately post-dated phase-group 1, deriving from a layer which sealed the demolition of the Saxon timber church, and is probably also of late-Saxon date. No. 4 being paralleled at Goltho Manor, Lincolnshire in early to mid-10th century deposits (Coppuck 1980).

**Phase-group 3: 12th century**
A single, unillustrated sherd from a Lincoln ware suspension glazed jug (Table 1) was recovered from a deposit, dated on architectural grounds to the 12th century.

**Phase-group 4 (Nos. 5-9): 10th-14th centuries**
The material which came from the construction deposits of the 14th-century rebuilding, dated from the late-Saxon period to the mid-14th century, suggesting that this building work involved some considerable disturbance to the underlying layers. Vessels, nos. 5-6 were residual, and nos. 7-9 contemporary with the rebuilding. Coins 1 and 2 were associated with this material.

**Phase-group 2 A (Nos. 10-20): 10th-15th centuries**
This phase-group came from a series of deposits immediately outside the walls of the church on the north side of the nave, ranging in date from late-Saxon to the mid-14th century rebuilding. Coin no. 3 was found in the upper levels of these deposits.

**Phase-group 5 (Nos. 21-24): 10th-15th centuries**
These vessels were associated with the building of the lower stage of the western tower which also contained a dovecote. The orange wares (nos. 21-33) were residual, whilst nos. 24 was later, probably 15th century.

**Phase-group 6 (Nos. 25-41): mid-16th century**
This was the largest phase-group from the site and came from the earliest demolition deposits of the building, likely to date from the middle of the 16th century.

The range of late-medieval vessels forms associated with this demolition proved somewhat surprising. Normally such deposits reflect the vessel types in use within the building at the time of destruction; from robbing deposits a wider range of material might be recovered, including residual vessels disturbed from earlier layers and perhaps the remains of a few pots associated with the robbing activity.

The large number of cisterns, storage jars and cup fragments from both this and the two subsequent phase-groups, might seem more in keeping with an inn or brewhouse than a church. A very similar range of vessels-forms was recovered from the demolition deposits of the brewhouse at Thornholme Priory. It might suggest that the church had fallen in to a secondary and less orthodox use after its supression. Much of this pottery lay close to the remains of a timber shed built against the east wall of the chancel. This may have acted as a store room or perhaps even a woodmen’s hut connected with the demolition, but the size of the group is perhaps rather large for such an interpretation. In comparison, the demolition deposits from Thornholme Priory church only produced one or two late-medieval vessels including a South Netherland majolica altar vase, perhaps a more appropriate discovery from a demolished church.

**Phase-group 7 (Nos. 42): mid-16th century**
Pottery from a series of robber trenches cutting through the demolition material of phase-group 6. Both phases contained a similar range of pottery. It is therefore likely that demolition and robbing took place within a short period of time.

**Phase-group 8 (Nos. 43-48): c.1550-1600**
This pottery came from the rubble which sealed the robber trenches, forming part of the residue of waste material not considered worthy of re-use. Many of the forms resembled those of phase-groups 6-7 and were probably of similar date. Cistercian wares occurred for the first time in this phase (Table 1), with two type IV cups (nos. 47-48) and a Humberware copy (no. 46) of a Cistercian ware form.

**Discussion**
This fragmentary pottery assemblage was in many ways typical for church excavations. The amount of pottery was small, save for demolition deposits, and there was a high percentage of identifiable residual material. There was therefore little scope for an empirical approach to the dating of this pottery. Instead, reliance has had to be placed on comparisons between the various fabrics and forms from Burnham with those from other assemblages within the region (Hayfield 1985).

**FLOOR TILES (Fig. 15)**
Scattered throughout demolition deposits within the chancel and spilling through the chancel arch into the eastern part of the nave were thirty-seven fragments of floor tile, including one complete tile, all apparently derived from the eastern part of the chancel where tile impressions remained in the mortar bedding of the altar platform. A second complete tile, not counted in this total, was stolen during the excavation. None remained in situ, and the floor had been ripped up during the demolition of the chancel. This floor must date after the deposition of Coin 2 perhaps deposited in the second quarter of the 14th century, and belongs to Phase D. All the tiles are in a red/brown hard sandy fabric of poor quality, printed with designs in a thin white slip. Wasters in an identical fabric are known from Thornton Abbey, and now displayed in the site museum. It is presumed that the tiles used at Burnham derive from the same source. Five patterns were identified:

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**Fig. 15** Floor tiles from St Lawrence’s Church. Scale 1:4.
Fig. 16 Window glass from St Lawrence's Church. Scale 1/2.

1. Plain tile without white slip, 108mm square and 27mm thick with traces of a clear lead glaze on the edges. The upper surface is heavily abraded.

2. Tile of 108mm side and 25mm thick, printed with a white border below a yellow lead glaze.

3. Tile of approximately 100mm side and 27mm thick scribed with diagonal stripes in white slip, glaze as 2 above. From a repeating pattern.

4. Fragmentary tile, 26mm thick, printed with a diaper design in white slip. From a repeating pattern.

5. Fragmentary printed tile 27mm thick from a four tile pattern with a central rosette and radiating lines.

WINDOW GLASS (Fig. 16)

By plotting the occurrence of window glass fragments and lead canes it was possible to identify individual windows within the building. There had been a centrally placed window in the 12th-century west wall, three windows in both the north and south walls of the nave, two in both the north and south walls of the chancel, and a centrally placed window, or group of windows in the east wall.

A total of ninety-nine fragments of window glass were recovered; sixty-seven from demolition contexts of the mid-16th century, twenty from 15th-century floor makeup, and twelve from deposits of the early-mid 14th century. The greater part of the glass was of early 13th century date, yellow-green in colour, some 2-4mm in thickness, and painted on the inner surface in reddish-brown enamel. No more than ten pieces of unpainted glass, again predominantly yellow-green in colour, but 3-4mm in thickness, were recorded. That glass derived from 16th century demolition contexts clearly came from windows which had survived in situ until c.1550, but there were also fragments from identical windows in floor material which is apparently derived from windows which were removed or re-glazed in the early 14th and 15th centuries. Two pieces of glass represent early 14th century work, but no glass is obviously later than this period. No glass was recovered from deposits earlier than the 13th century. All original edges are grozed.

1-4. Undecorated quarries of pale yellow-green metal, except one which is dark blue. Undated. All from 16th century demolition.

5-10. Fragments of lead and diaper border of early 13th century type. 8 was found in 14th century floor makeup in the chancel, 5 and 6 in 15th-century flooring in the nave, 7, 9 and 10 are from 16th-century destruction.

11-13. Fragments of border design, all from 16th-century demolition levels.

14-20. Fragmentary quarries with stiff-leaf decoration and cross-hatching typical of the early 13th century. 18 was recovered from 15th-century floor makeup in the nave, the remainder coming from assorted 16th century destruction levels.

21-22. Fragmentary quarries with naturalistic foliage decoration of early 14th century type. Both come from mid-16th century deposits.

Of the above, 17 could be related to the east window(s); 2 to the south-east chancel window, 16 and 20 to the south-east chancel; 14 to the north-east chancel window; 11 to the north-west chancel window; 3 and 6 to the south-east nave window; 5 to the south nave window; 13, 21 and 22 to the south-west nave window; and 9, 15 and 18 to the north nave window. The only window which clearly held glass of early 14th century date was that in the south-west
corner of the nave, lighting the contemporary vestry, and there remains the possibility that a new window had been inserted here. Otherwise, it would appear that the church had retained its 13th century fenestration throughout.

STONE DETAIL AND A FIGURE OF ST LAWRENCE (Figs. 17 and 18)

Within demolition contexts throughout the church were ten cut stones which related to architectural features of the building. All of these could be assigned to particular parts of the structure and are described here. In addition, excavation recovered two non-architectural stone objects and a substantial fragment of a cult statue of St Lawrence.

1. Ironstone vousoir, 0.24m deep, with heavy diagonal tooling, from the area of the Phase B south door and presumably late-10th century in date.

2. Three vousoirs from the fallen late-12th century chancel arch which had an internal radius of 1.065m (3 feet 7 inches). The arch was relieved by a heavy roll moulding below a hollow. The outer ring of the arch was divided into segments 80mm (3 1/8 inches) wide by deep scorings, a common late 12th century feature. Given the width between the chancel arch responds, the arch was clearly pointed. All three vousoirs were heavily limewashed in the mid-14th century, obscuring the original decoration, and this limewash has not been removed. Traces of red paint are apparent where the roll moulding has been chipped. Two of the vousoirs were found between the responds together with two square sectioned blocks with heavy diagonal tooling and a badly damaged plain chamfered impost from the south respond which dated from the late-10th century. The third vousoir was found in the filling of feature g in the chancel. The sections of respond and impost are not illustrated.

3. Chalk vousoir from the re-used arch of a window or door in the west wall of the nave, of unknown date between the late-12th and early-14th century. It was found within the destruction debris left by the demolition of the 15th-century tower which incorporated the west wall of the nave.

4-5. Two near-identical fragments of chalk tracery, perhaps from the niche that held the cult statue described below. There are traces of blue print in the hollows, and red paint on the rolls. Both pieces were found in destruction deposits at the east end of the nave.

6. Segment of an upper stone of a hand-mill in millstone grit. The lower surface has worn smooth, and a socket

Fig. 17 Stone detail from the church. Scales: 1-3, 1/8; 4-7, 1/4. (D. Fulford)
remains in the broken edge of the stone for a handle. This stone was found within reflooring in the nave associated with the insertion of the 15th century tower.

7. Fragment of a mould in a greenish-brown shale cut with two pairs of parallel grooves. This piece is broken at either end and its original form cannot now be determined. Found on the surface of the brick paving in the chancel.

8. Cult statue of St Lawrence (Fig. 18), found lying face downwards at the east end of the nave within 16th-century demolition debris. All that remains is the torso, carved in Lincoln limestone. The back of the figure had been left rough, but the visible areas were worked to a high finish, over much of which the original paint survives. St Lawrence is dressed in a long, straight tunic, painted red, its texture emphasised with the heavy use of a serrated chisel; below a cloak or stole which hangs in heavy folds over each arm. An area of green paint survives on the drapery below the right arm, but much of this garment was left as natural stone, for superimposed on both the green paint, and an unpainted area were 'raspberry' patterns of gold leaf. These occur at the same point on either side of the figure. A patch of black paint below the left hand represents the lining of the cloak. St Lawrence carries a miniature grid-iron, the instrument of his martyrdom, in his right hand. Slightly less than half of this, picked out with black paint, survives. In his left hand he holds a book, the cover of which is black, although the clasps is unpainted. The figure had been repaired at least once before the middle of the 16th century, for the neck shows clear signs of being roughly broken, and the head was refixed with a lead rivet, the stub of which remains. No trace was found of the head or lower body.

METALWORK (Fig. 19)
Mixed with the domestic rubbish incorporated within construction and demolition deposits and around the building was a considerable quantity of metalwork, much of which
was of good quality. The more complete objects are described below:

**Copper-alloy objects**

1. Curved plate of thin bronze sheet with two circular pin-holes for fixing and closed ends. From robbing.
2. Decorative cast mounting with a single central rivet, from pit c in the mid-14th century chancel floor.
3. Repousse-decorated plate of copper-alloy with a single pin-hole close to the centre of the piece. From demolition deposits within the chancel.
4. Copper-alloy lace end, with a section of leather thong surviving. From demolition outside the nave.
5-8. Cast pins. 8 is one of a pair. All come from mid-16th century demolition contexts.
9. Loop-headed pin of twisted wire which is brazed together at the 'point'. From Phase E construction associated with the 15th-century tower.
10. A copper-alloy tube, closed at the lower end, and with traces of silver plating on its outer surface. At the lower end, a dished washer has been sweated onto the tube. Whilst an oval plate with opposed rivet holes has been similarly fitted at the upper end and further held in place with a tag cut from the side of the tube. From early to mid-14th century deposits associated with the nave in Phase D.
11. Copper-alloy spring found with 10 above and perhaps associated with that object.
12. Fragment of vessel rim in bronze, perhaps from a small skillet. From demolition deposits in the nave.

**Lead objects**

13-14. Lead flaps with surviving fixing nails from the Phase D roof of the nave.
15. Specimen sample of lead window-came, here with a fragment of pale green glass surviving. From robbing of the east wall of the chancel and probably derived from the east window.

**Iron objects**

16. Small arrow-head from a mid-16th century context outside the chancel, associated with a spread of occupation debris interpreted as the site of a hut used during demolition (see above p.47).
17. Whittle-tanged knife, from the demolition of the nave.
18. Scale-tanged knife with wooden handle plates fixed by non-fusible rivets. From robbing of the south nave wall.
19. Chisel knife, the blade folding between two iron plates separated by a steel spring. The knife is held together by three surviving iron rivets which also secured ivory side plates, traces of which survive. From demolition of the chancel.
20. Fragment of a heavy knife-blade of triangular section. From make-up below the Phase D floor in the chancel.
21-22. Fragmentary knife-blades from demolition contexts associated with the nave.
23. Iron rod of circular section, reducing to a point at one end, perhaps as a tine to take a wooden handle. This object is broken at the top end. From demolition.
24. Joiner's shell bit, from mid-16th century demolition.
25. Iron awl of square section bar reduced to a point at both ends. Associated with construction of Phase D in the nave.
26. Small iron wedge, from Phase D construction deposits within the chancel.
27. Iron staple or binding of rectangular section with surviving branch clenched over. Phase D construction in the nave.
28. Small iron staple of square section, from demolition deposits in the chancel.
29. Fragmentary heavy staple of square section, from the robbing of the north wall of the nave.
30. Fragment of strap-hinge with a single nail-hole surviving. From the construction of the bell-cote in Phase D.
31. Male section of a barrel padlock, from demolition deposits to the north of the chancel.
32. Iron bell-clapper with a suspension ring at its upper end. From demolition to the north of the chancel.
33-36. Fragmentary horse-shoes, all from mid-16th century demolition contexts. 33 appears to be part of a corrective shoe. All appear to be scrap rather than chance losses.

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