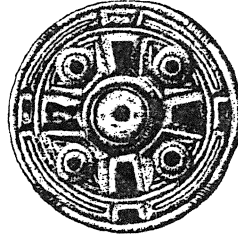


OFFICE COPY

Library



ARCHAEOLOGY FIELD UNIT
FULBURN COMMUNITY CENTRE
HAGGIS GAP, FULBURN
CAMBRIDGE CB1 5HD Tel: 881614
(fax)

Archaeological Field Unit

Tydd St Giles New Sewerage System: Medieval and Post Medieval Remains

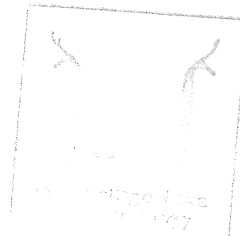
Andrew Rudge

January 2003

Cambridgeshire County Council

Report No. 209

Commissioned by *Anglian Water*



ARCHAEOLOGY FIELD OFFICE
FULBORN COMMUNITY CENTRE
HAGGIS GAP, FULBORN
CAMBRIDGESHIRE CB1 5HD
Tel: 01223 5762014
Fax: 01223 880946

Tydd St. Giles New Sewerage System: Medieval and Post Medieval Remains

Andrew Rudge

January 2003

Editor: Aileen Connor
Illustrator: Emily Oakes

With Contributions by Tony Baker and Andrew Hatton



Report No. 209

©Archaeological Field Unit
Cambridgeshire County Council
Fulbourn Community Centre
Haggis Gap, Fulbourn
Cambridgeshire CB1 5HD
Tel (01223) 5762014
Fax (01223) 880946

arch.field.unit@cambridgeshire.gov.uk
<http://edweb.camcnty.gov.uk/afu>

SUMMARY

In November and December of 2002, the Archaeological Field Unit of Cambridgeshire County Council (AFU) conducted an archaeological Watching Brief over the construction of a new sewerage system in the village of Tydd St. Giles, Cambridgeshire (grid ref TF 4268/1647). The work revealed evidence for medieval activity, including the possibility that Grimston type pottery was in production nearby. Also identified were the remains of a series of drainage ditches, of unknown date, all of which appear as if they were filled as a result of a large-scale episode of flooding.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1 INTRODUCTION	1
2 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY	1
3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND	3
4 METHODOLOGY	3
5 RESULTS	6
6 DISCUSSION	8
7 CONCLUSIONS	9
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	10
BIBLIOGRAPHY	10
LIST OF FIGURES	
Figure 1 Location Maps	2
Figure 2 Pipe-Line Route showing Archaeological Features and Location of Sections	4
Figure 3 Section Drawings	5

Tydd St. Giles New Sewerage System: Medieval and Post Medieval Remains (TF 4268/1647).

1 INTRODUCTION

In November and December of 2002, the Archaeological Field Unit of Cambridgeshire County Council (AFU) conducted an archaeological Watching Brief over the construction of a new sewerage system in the village of Tydd St. Giles, Cambridgeshire (grid ref TF 54271/31647) (Figure 1). The work was carried out at the request of Anglian Water and was undertaken in response to a recommendation made by Andy Thomas, Principal Archaeologist, Land Use and Planning, Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeology Section.

Archaeological monitoring of the construction of the sewerage system was centred on the junction of Hockland Road, Kirkgate and Church Lane (Figure 2), which lie within the historic centre of the village of Tydd St. Giles, close to the Parish Church of St Giles. In total approximately 535m of trench were monitored. In the south the trench extended north along Church Lane from a point parallel to the southwestern corner of the churchyard, until meeting the junction of Hockland Road and Kirkgate. In the west the trench extended east along Hockland Road, from the Rose and Mitre public house, onto and along Kirkgate to the allotment gardens. A further segment of the sewerage system that branched off Kirkgate to run along Fold Lane was also monitored.

2 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

Tydd St Giles is located 6 miles north of Wisbech within a low lying marshland area of Silt Fen. It is bounded on the north and west by the Shire Drain and on the east by the River Nene, both of which also form county boundaries (Woodgate, 1967).



Figure 1 Location Map showing Route of the Pipe-Line (red).

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

No previous archaeological work is recorded as having been undertaken in Tydd St. Giles. The Sites and Monuments Record for Cambridgeshire (SMR), however, has recorded a number of find spots within the parish. These include several sherds of Roman pottery, including Castor ware and Grey wares (03961, 03998); Early to Middle Saxon hand-made pottery (09014), and a number of find spots containing material, including pottery, bone and daub, of medieval date (10921,10917,11166). The village itself is situated 6 miles north of Wisbech and forms the northern most parish in Cambridgeshire. To the immediate north-west, just over the border in Lincolnshire, lies the sister parish of Tydd St. Mary. The two parishes are divided by the Shire Drain, a stream that is believed to have formed an important boundary, separating, as it has done, two counties, two dioceses, and in all probability two Anglo-Saxon kingdoms (Woodgate, 1967). The origin of the name 'Tydd', in Tydd St. Giles, is uncertain, and no mention of the village is made in the Domesday Book, since it was in the liberty of the bishop of Ely. However, a number of possible meanings for the origin of the name have been put forward. These include a) that the name was derived from an Old English personal name such as 'Tidi', b) that the name comes from the OE for a 'slight hill', and c) that the name refers to a 'small wood'. A further alternative links the use of the Saxon word 'staith', as used in the Domesday Book for 'Tydd' St. Mary, with a meaning for those parts of the banks of a watercourse or sea beach used for a regular landing-place for men and goods. It seems plausible therefore, given the location of the Shire Drain, that 'Tydd' St. Mary would have had its counterpart, 'Tydd' St. Giles, on the opposing bank/shore. From this evidence it would appear that Tydd St. Giles, as a recognisable settlement/entity, may have its origins within the Anglo-Saxon period.

4 METHODOLOGY

The pipe trench was excavated, under archaeological supervision, in rolling segments by a machine using a toothed trenching bucket. Once each segment of trench was open it was inspected visually and recorded using pro-forma context sheets, photographs and drawings at scales of 1:10 and 1:20. Where access into the trench was restricted on safety grounds the trench was recorded by visual observation from the side.

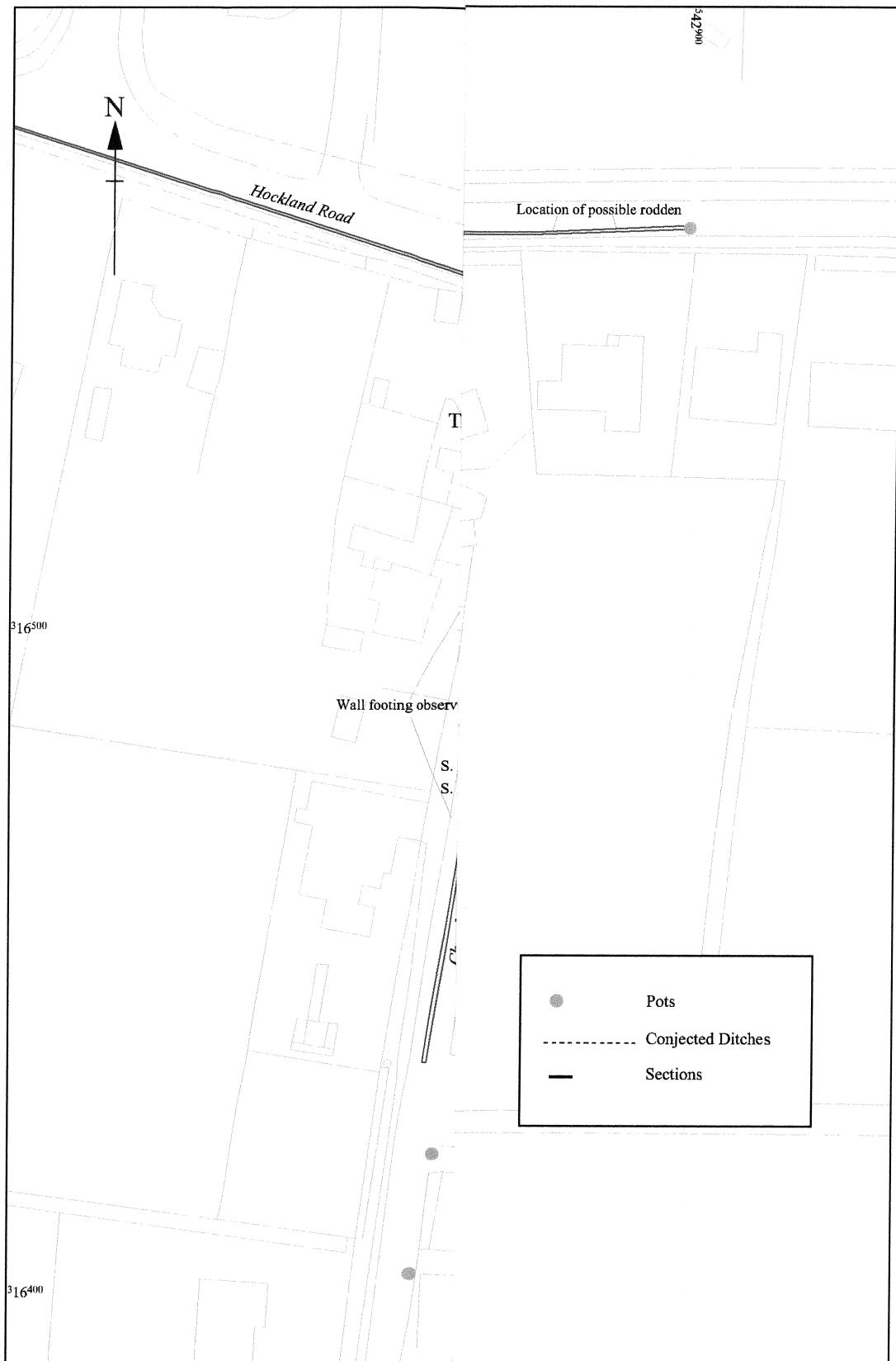


Figure 2 Pipe-Line Route showing Archae

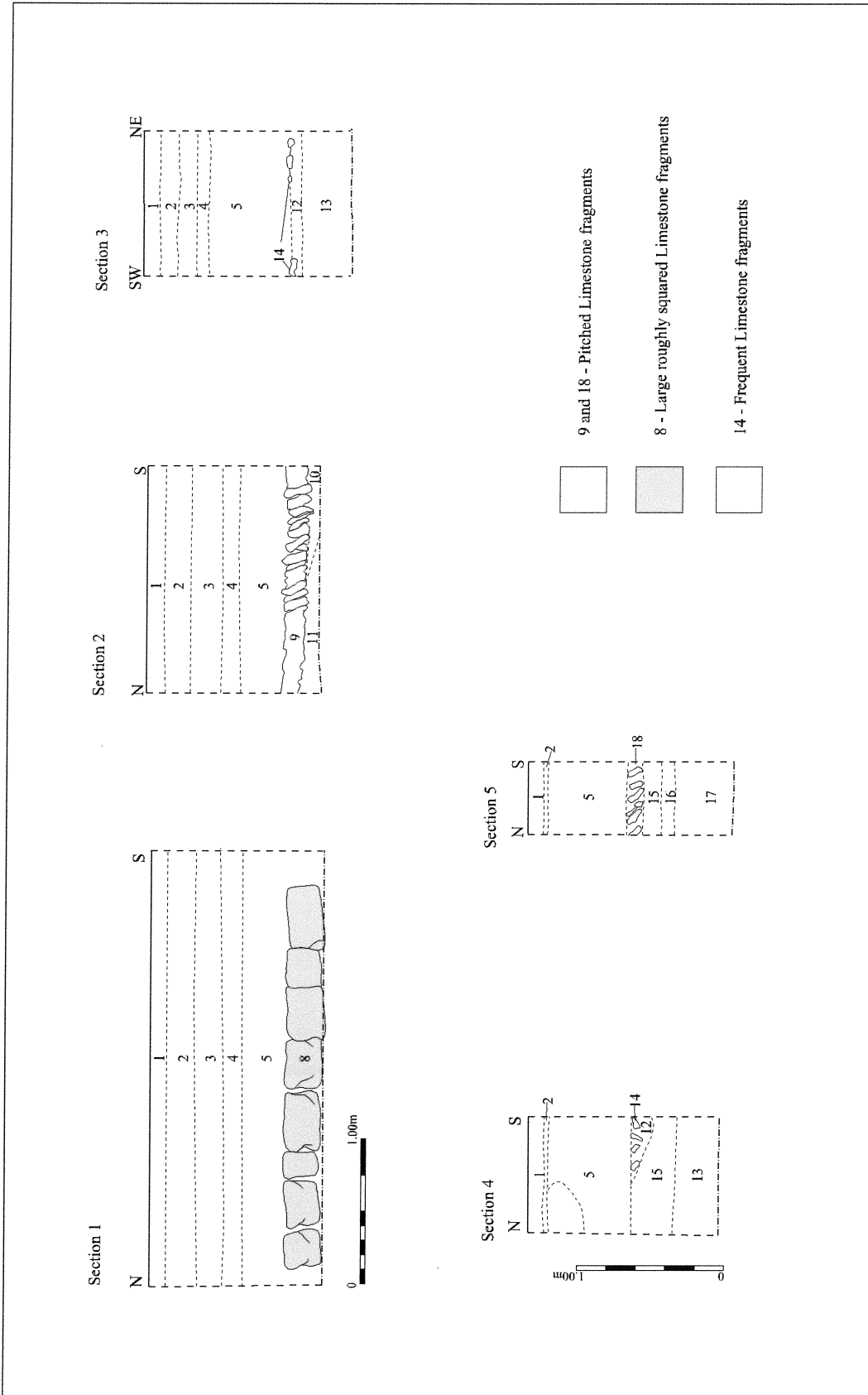


Figure 3 Section Drawings

5 RESULTS

The observations of the sewerage system can be divided into three distinct component parts, which will be addressed individually, Trench 1, Trench 2 and Trench 3 (Figure 2).

Trench 1 (Figures 2 & 3. Note, only sections depicting archaeological remains are included i.e. 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5)

Trench 1 ran roughly centrally along the length of Church Lane up to the junction with Hockland Road and Kirkgate. The trench was approximately 120m in length, 0.75m wide and between 1.05 and 1.40m deep.

In the northern half of the trench the earliest deposits encountered, contexts 13, 17, 23, and 25, consisted of a series of similar mid and dark brown grey silts and clayey silts with very occasional brick fragments including, in context 17, fragments of brick dating to the later medieval period. Pottery (Grimston ware) dated to between 1250 and 1500, animal bone and brick fragments were recovered from context 13. These deposits were overlain to the north of the trench by context 22, and by contexts 11, 15 and 16 in the centre of the trench.

Context 22 was an 0.20m thick deposit of brownish grey clayey silt with frequent brick inclusions, contexts 11, 15 and 16 were up to 0.30m of very firm orange brown silts, which contained no finds.

Overlying and extending southwards of 15 was a thin layer, 0.06–0.09m thick, of clean pale brown silt, 12, upon which sat a single course of limestone, 14 (=9, 8 and 18), possibly the remains of a wall or other structure. Limestone course 9 sat on a similar deposit, 10 (possibly the same as 12).

Contexts 18, 14, 9, and 8 possibly represent the remains of a stone wall. 14 consisted of patchy limestone fragments, <100mm in size, which were found spread across the full width of the trench. A single firebrick, probably from a pottery kiln, was recovered from 14. The firebrick had a green glaze very similar to that found on Grimston wares, and may therefore date to the same period and significantly may indicate nearby pottery production. The limestone fragments became increasingly frequent towards the eastern side of the trench as the footings extended southwards. After c26.0m the limestone rubble gave way to, 9, a single course of very close set, steeply sloped fragments of limestone, which formed a layer 0.12–0.18m in thickness. The layer of limestone fragments, 9, occurred exclusively in the eastern section of the trench and extended southwards for 8.70m where it abutted 8, an identically aligned single course of roughly squared, neatly laid limestone blocks. These were 0.20 – 0.44m in length by 0.23 – 0.26m in thickness, and like 9 occurred only in the eastern section of the trench. The limestone blocks were visible for 5.30m before the divergence of trench and wall alignment rendered them invisible. Probing confirmed that the stone blocks continued southwards for at least a further 1.60m. The stonework, 9, apparently also

extended northwards of the rubble footings, 14 mentioned above since, after a short break of 1.50m, where little limestone was present, a similar layer of limestone, 18, again lying at a steeply sloping or pitched angle, was identified. Context 18 consisted of pitched limestone fragments, but in this instance the limestone was more widely spaced than in 9, and appeared to overlie, and lie within a matrix of clean pale brown silt, 15, similar or equivalent to 12. The pitched limestone of 18 was found across the full width of the trench and extended northwards for 7.70m.

Overlying the stonework (18, 14, 9, and 8) was 5 (=21), a thick, compact deposit, up to 0.61m thick, of dark brownish grey silt containing variable quantities of brick fragments. A number of finds, including clay pipe, iron nails and 17th century pottery were recovered from context 5.

Overlying and sealing context 5 was 4, a layer of very dark brown grey fine sand silt, up to 0.12m in thickness (equivalent to 19 in the north of the trench), which was in turn overlain by 3.

Layer 3 (=24) was a mid to pale brownish yellow fine sand silt, up to 0.22m in thickness. Sealing context 3 was context 2.

Context 2 was a layer of very compacted brick rubble and gravel hardcore, c0.28m in thickness. Directly overlying this was 1, the present road surface.

Trench 2

Trench 2 ran along Hockland Road, from the Rose and Mitre public house, onto and along Kirkgate to the allotment gardens for approximately 360m. The trench was excavated to a width of 0.75m, and a depth of c1.20 - 1.80m. At varying intervals a 'pot' was excavated to a further depth of approximately 3.0m using a drilling platform. Monitoring on this section of the main was undertaken at intervals, due to the nature of the work/constraints in construction, and limited access to the trench itself, as shoring was required to prevent collapse. As a consequence the trench could only be recorded by visual observations made from the side of the trench, and only those sections where features of archaeological interest were identified were recorded.

The earliest deposit identified was a layer of peat, 26, at a depth of approximately 3.0m. Overlying this was, 5, the same thick, compact deposit, of dark brownish grey silt seen in trench 1, which was in turn sealed by, 4, c0.20m of dark brown grey fine sand silt equivalent to that recorded in trench 1. The hard core and tarmac of the present road surface sealed 4.

No features were identified in the western section of Trench 2, between the Rose and Mitre and the junction of Hockland Road with Church Lane. However, four ditches and a possible pond, each cut into layer 5, were identified along the course of the western stretches of Kirkgate. These included from west to east, **44, 42, 30, 28** and 45 (noted as a possible pond on Figure 2).

44 was identified as a northwest-southeast aligned ditch, approximately 1.05m in width and 0.60m in depth, which was filled by **43**, a dark grey silty clay.

42 was located just to the east of **44**, another northwest-southeast aligned ditch, again c1.05m in width and 0.60m in depth. **42** was filled by **41**, a dark grey silty clay.

Layer **45** was located to the west of the junction between Kirkgate and Fold Land. This was a very dark brownish black organic material, which has been tentatively identified as the remains of a pond.

30 represented the remains of a large ditch approximately 2m in width, aligned northwest-southeast, which was filled by **29**, a dark grey silty clay.

The final feature identified along Kirkgate was **28**, a ditch c0.5m in width and 0.5m in depth, aligned northwest-southeast. **28** was filled by **27**, a dark greyish silty clay.

Trench 3

Trench **3** ran along the course of Fold Lane for approximately 70.0m. The trench was excavated to a width of 0.75m, and a depth of c1.20 - 1.80m. The earliest deposit noted was context **5** (see trenches **1** and **2**) into which **5** ditches were cut. These included from west to east **40**, **38**, **36**, **34** and **32**. As in Trench **2**, these features were sealed by **4** and then the hard core and tarmac of the present road surface.

Context **40** was a U shaped ditch, c2.0m in width and aligned northwest-southeast which was filled by **39**, a grey silt. No artefacts were noted, but **40** appeared to be a continuation of ditch **30**.

Ditch **38** was 0.80m in width and 0.60m in depth, and was aligned northwest-southeast. It was filled by **37**, a dark grey silty clay.

Ditch **36** was approximately 1.80m in width and appeared to be aligned ESE-WNW, and was filled by **35**, a dark grey silty clay.

Cut **34**, although its width could not be determined, again appeared to be a ditch, this time aligned northwest-southeast, and with a measurable depth of 0.85m. It was filled by **33**, a dark grey silty clay.

Cut **32** was a U shaped ditch, approximately 1.50m in width and 0.80m in depth. **32** was aligned northeast-southwest and was filled by **31**, a dark grey silty clay.

6 DISCUSSION

Trench 1

Trench **1** produced the only datable evidence. The earliest evidence to be identified, the Grimston ware and remains of hand made red brick, were found

in the lowest deposits encountered. This evidence suggests that those layers lying below, and possibly including 12, the base for the probable wall footings, are of later medieval (or possibly earlier) date. Sealing the lower 'medieval' deposits are the remains of the footings to a probable north-south wall. The wall appears to have been composed of roughly cut limestone blocks, 8, and smaller limestone fragments lain sloping, almost vertically, one against another, 9 and 18. Parts of this wall also appear as if they were almost completely robbed out, as indicated by 14. The one piece of dating evidence to have been retrieved from the remains of the wall was the firebrick from context 14. The firebrick may well have been reused in the construction of the wall itself, and suggests a late medieval or early post medieval date for construction. The brick is of further interest in itself, if it is indeed a firebrick, since it would suggest that a kiln had been in use in the immediate vicinity, and that that kiln had been used in the production of 'Grimston' ware. If this was the case, then the production of Grimston ware may extend to Tydd St. Giles itself. To the immediate east of the wall footings identified in trench 1, is the west facing wall of the church of St. Giles, the wall here appears to follow the same alignment, and may indicate that the foundations identified in trench 1 represent an earlier boundary wall associated with the church. Alternatively, it is possible that this limestone course represents the remains of a drain or earlier road edging. Overlying and sealing the remains of the structure is context 5, from which c17th century material was recovered. This appears to represent an episode of post medieval activity in which the structure was removed. The subsequent layers represent relatively recent levelling layers, finishing finally with the present road surface.

Trench 2 and 3

No datable material was retrieved from trenches 2 and 3, however all those features identified appear to have been cut into context 5, as seen in trench 1. It seems likely therefore that the majority of these features date to some point within the post-medieval period. The ditches themselves appear to have been constructed for drainage, and the ubiquitous fills, all of which are apparently identical, may well represent a large-scale flood event.

The Victoria County History (Woodgate, 1967) notes that the village pound was located on Fold Lane and it is possible that some of the ditches observed here relate either to the pound itself or to drainage or access to it.

7 CONCLUSIONS

The objective of the fieldwork was to establish, if possible, the character, date, extent and state of preservation of any archaeological remains within the area affected by the excavation of the trench for the mains water pipe, and to this effect the work was successful. Deposits dated to the medieval period were identified surviving below the remains of a possible late medieval wall, and of particular significance a possible firebrick of medieval date was recovered.

The firebrick may have been used in the production of Grimston ware, and may therefore indicate that Tydd St. Giles was until now, an unknown production site. A number of apparent drainage ditches, possibly dating to the post-medieval period were also identified. All of the ditches also appear to have been filled during one flood event.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author would like to thank Anglian Water who commissioned and funded the archaeological work. The project was managed and edited by Aileen Connor. The author would also like to thank Tony Baker and Bob Hatton who carried out the fieldwork and provided the information on which the text was based, and Emily Oakes for the illustrations.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Woodgate, G.M.G., 1967 in Pugh, R. B., *The Victoria history of the Counties of England: A History of Cambridge and the Isle of Ely Volume IV.*

Sites and Monuments Record for Cambridgeshire

