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# The Castle and Borough of Wiston, Pembrokeshire

By Kenneth Murphy

*SUMMARY. Wizo the Fleming founded a castle and settlement at Wiston before AD 1112. Both foundations were moderately successful for a period of perhaps one or two centuries, but they had fallen into decay by the later Middle Ages. This paper reviews the historic and physical evidence for the castle and borough of Wiston, and describes the results of recently undertaken small-scale archaeological investigations.*

## INTRODUCTION

Wiston is situated in the county of Pembroke, 7km north-east of Haverfordwest and 10km north-west of Narberth (NGR SN 022 181). Wiston is now a village, the core of which consists of St. Mary's Church, the ruins of a motte and bailey castle, the Manor House, St. Aidan's school, Cawdor House farm and a scattering of other nineteenth- and twentieth-century domestic and agricultural developments (Fig. 1). The village lies at 120m above OD on the crest of a rounded ridge. The motte and stone keep of the castle dominate the modern village, and from the summit of the motte a panorama is obtained, with views to the south across the lowlands of southern Pembrokeshire and to the north across rolling countryside to the Preseli Mountains, 15km away.

Silurian mudstones and siltstones, known locally as 'rab' comprise the underlying geology (Geological Survey of Great Britain [England and Wales] 1974), which, as revealed in the archaeological investigations, are overlain by thin layers of boulder clay and other fluvio-glacial deposits. The land in and around Wiston is classified by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (1972) as grade three and four agricultural land. Dairy farming and stock rearing comprise the main agricultural industries, with most of the land under permanent pasture.

The first archaeological investigation in Wiston was a salvage excavation carried out in 1979 during the construction of a house. In 1989, historical and archaeological evidence was gathered by D. G. Benson of Dyfed Archaeological Trust to present at a public inquiry held to investigate a planning application for housing development. In the following year, a survey of the castle was undertaken by the author and other members of Dyfed Archaeological Trust in advance of Cadw taking the monument into Guardianship, and excavations were carried out in Church Field. Excavation and building survey took place in the castle in 1994, an earthwork survey of 'The Green' in 1995 and an examination of the line of a possible Roman road through the village, also in 1995. Several watching briefs have also been carried out during building work in the village. The results of all these investigations are described below.

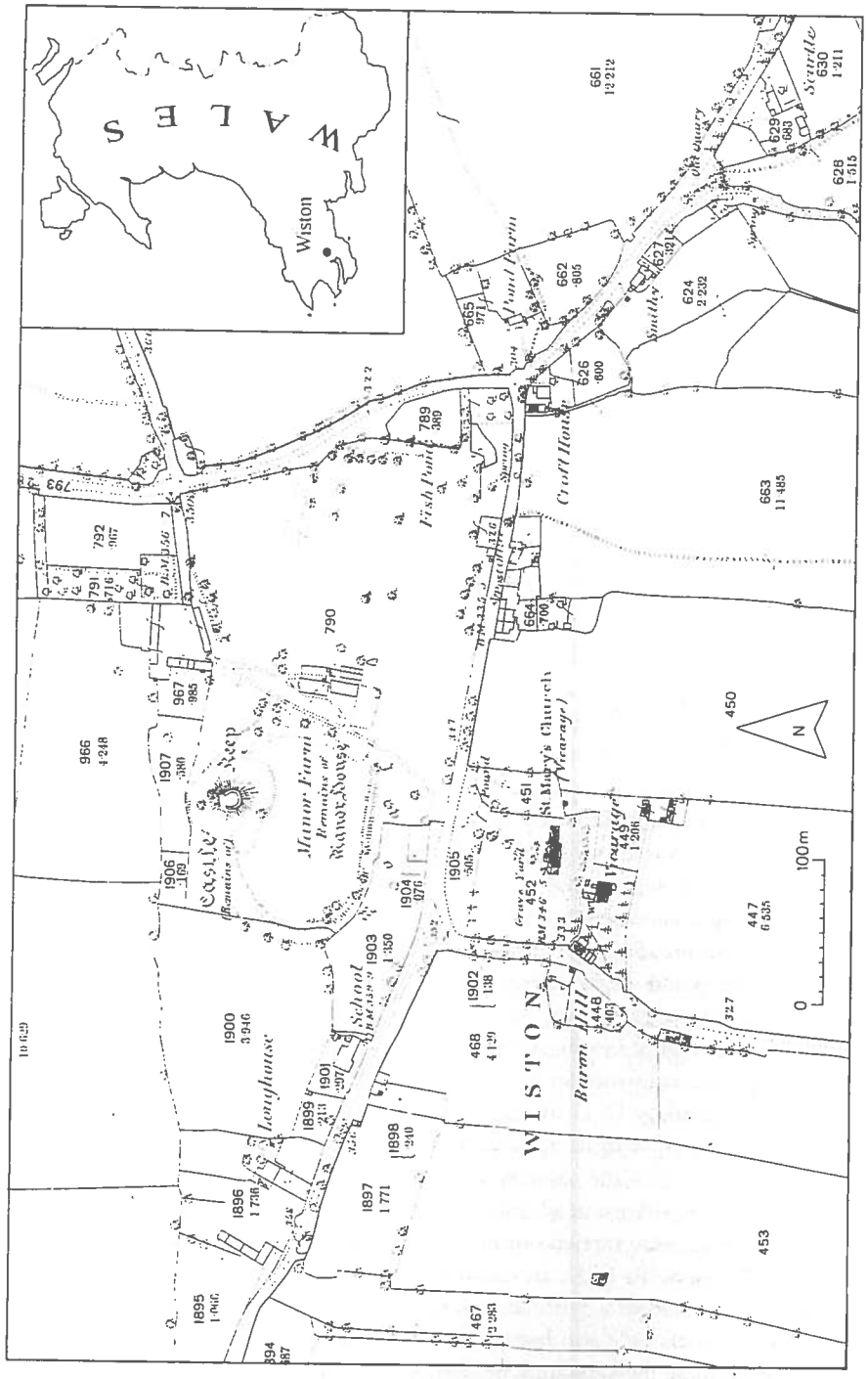


Figure 1. Location map with an extract of the Ordnance Survey 1:2500 First Edition, published 1889.



## HISTORY

The land gained by the Anglo-Normans in their invasion of Dyfed in 1093 was secured by the construction of castles and by the establishment of settlements under the protection of these castles. Colonists, most prominent of whom were Flemings, were encouraged to settle as an act of policy by Henry II (Rowlands 1980, 147) in the newly conquered lands. According to Giraldus Cambrensis' celebrated late twelfth-century description the Flemings were: *'a people brave and robust, ever most hostile to the Welsh; a people, I say, well versed in commerce and woollen manufactories; a people anxious to seek gain by sea or land, in defiance of fatigue and danger; a hardy race, equally fitted for the plough or the sword'* (Rhys 1930, 77). Southern Pembrokeshire was not the only place to experience colonisation by Flemings. According to Davies (1990, 11) they settled extensively in northern England and in parts of Scotland and may have made a substantial contribution to the late twelfth-century Anglo-Norman colonisation of Ireland. Though dramatic and of long-lasting significance, these twelfth-century settlements in Britain must be set against a wider European backcloth of large-scale migration and colonisation; including, as Davies (1990, 11) has noted, the transformation of the German landscape east of the Elbe by Flemings.

It is from the Fleming Wizo that Wiston takes its name. A key document, dated to 1139-48 by Darlington (1968), to the eponymous Wizo is contained in the Cartulary of Worcester Cathedral Priory. In translation it reads:

> *Letter of Gilbert earl of Pembroke to T[heobald] archbishop of Canterbury informing him that Wizo* princeps *of the Flemings inhabiting Dungleddy (co. Pembr.) in Wales, passing through Worcester on his way from Flanders to take possession of that place, gave to Aldred, a chaplain of the monks, the church which he planned to build there, with reversion to the monks so that they could construct a monastery there, and, on his arrival there with Aldred, granted in writing with the confirmation of Wilfred bishop of St. David's all that he promised at Worcester. The writer, visiting Worcester when returning from Wales, was informed of this by Aldred who had given the church of Dungleddy to the monks. He has confirmed the grant of the church and requests the archbishop to send mandates to the bishop of St. David's and his archdeacon for the restoration to the monks of the seisin which they had before the war.*

Wizo built his church and castle at a site now known as Wiston in the *cantref* of Daugleddau. Wizo's arrival in Pembrokeshire must have been prior to 1112, as Bishop Wilfred died in that year (Darlington 1968, xxxii). It is not entirely clear from the above document whether Wizo was travelling to Pembrokeshire for the first time to take up residence or whether he was on his way back, having returned to Flanders, perhaps to gather colonists, after serving in the Anglo-Norman army of conquest of Dyfed. Rowlands, writing in 1980, states that Wizo came directly from Flanders (148), though he notes that Flemings took part in the Norman Conquest of England (146) and that some of the Dyfed Flemings may have served as mercenaries for the English king. Rowlands (1980, 148) also suggested that the Flemish settlers came to Dyfed in groups under their own leaders (*locatores*), a theme that has been expanded by Kissock in a recent study (forthcoming). Indeed, Kissock argues strongly for Wizo acting as a *locator* and suggests

that after founding a Wiston in Pembrokeshire he moved on to establish a second one in Lanarkshire. Wizo died before 1130 (Toorians 1990, 100).

In a recent study of the Flemish settlement of Pembrokeshire, with an emphasis on the role of Wizo, Toorians (1990) has contributed to the explanation of a problem that has been commented upon by several historians. It would seem that St. Peter's Monastery, Gloucester (Conway Davies 1946, 253-4) claimed to have been granted Wiston Church, and a similar claim was made by Worcester. Rowlands (1990, 143) attributes the granting of the church to two religious housed as forgetfulness on Wizo's part in the turbulent times. Toorians' (1990, 100-1) interpretation of the historical data is more plausible; he suggests that it was Wilfred, Bishop of St.David's, who granted Wiston Church to Gloucester; a grant that Wizo was unaware of when he travelled through Worcester to Pembrokeshire. However, Wilfred's confirmation of Wizo's grant to Worcester indicates forgetfulness or some ulterior motive on the bishop's part. The dispute between Gloucester and Worcester rumbled on for most of the first half of the twelfth century until Gloucester renounced their right to Wiston Church in 1152 (Conway Davies 1946, 271-2). Worcester later granted the rights of the church to the Knights Hospitallers at Slebech (Toorians 1990, 101).

Meanwhile, the dispossessed native Welsh did not stand idly by as their former lands were being granted away by invaders to foreign religious houses. The *Brut y Tywysogyon* records attacks on the invaders by the Welsh throughout the early twelfth century, but it is not until 1147 that the first direct reference to Wiston was entered in the chronicle, when the castle was taken by Hywel ab Owain (Jones 1955, 221). The castle was presumably soon recaptured by the Flemings, though there is no record of this, as it was retaken by the Welsh—by Hywel ap Sais, the son of the Lord Rhys—in 1193 (Jones 1952, 74). This time it remained in Welsh hands for two years before being recaptured by the Flemings, on Whit Sunday, 1195 (Lloyd 1911, 580). Twenty-five years later the castle was once again subjected to attack; for the year 1220 the *Brut* (Jones 1955, 221) records that Llywelyn ap Iorwerth destroyed Wiston Castle and burned the town—this is the first reference to a settlement at Wiston. Following this episode of destruction, Henry III commanded William Marshall II to repair the castle at Wiston and also that of Narberth, which had also been destroyed (Patent Rolls 1901, 254-5). Toorians (1990, 103) considers that the repairs to Wiston were not carried out, instead the *caput* of Daugleddau was moved to a new castle at Picton, 5km to the south. King (1962, 327) is not in agreement with this suggestion as he believes that Wiston's masonry keep may be Marshall's work. What is certain is that after 1220 the status of Wiston Castle becomes less important as it no longer appears in the documentary record.

There is thus precious little written evidence relating to the castle at Wiston: the borough is even less well served. The main source of documentary evidence for Wiston after 1220 relates to the Wogan family. There are two branches of the Wogan family in Pembrokeshire: the Picton branch and the Wiston branch; these can be traced back to the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries respectively, though no common ancestor can be found (Green 1916). Perhaps the presence of the Wogan family in Wiston



from such an early date can be taken to indicate that either the castle continued in use after 1220 or that it was superseded by a house built, perhaps, on the present site of the Manor House. Certainly, the reference to a monthly court at Wiston in an inquisition of 1419 on the death of Sir John Wogan indicates a manorial presence. It is not, however, until the sixteenth century that documents refer directly to the borough, and then only fleetingly. In 1525, Jankyn Eynon released Rees ap Thomas of his right in three burgages and gardens in Wiston between lands of John Wogan and of 'John Goba of the lane' and 'the Mary Lane' (Ancient Deeds 1906, 270), while in 1577 amongst the extensive holdings of Sir John Wogan recorded in an inquisition were 'twelve and a half burgages in the town of Wiston, lately bought from different persons' (Green 1916, 199). These two documents seem to be the only ones that refer directly to physical aspects of the borough; even so it is not possible to locate the individual burgage plots mentioned. Only 'the Mary Lane' can be located with any degree of confidence; it is presumably the lane between St. Mary's Church and Church Field.

The Manor House is recorded a little more fully in the historical record. Green (1916, 219) considers that by 1694 the house was leased out and in a poor state of repair, a statement that is supported by a description of it in 1715 (*ibid.*, 220) as 'the capital mansion house of ye family called Wiston, which was then uninhabited and much out of repair'. A sketch of 1740 of Wiston castle and Manor House preserved in the Bodleian Library (Gough Maps 37, fol.25v) illustrated here as Plate 1, shows a gate-house with the main house behind it. It is not easy to marry this view with the earliest surviving large-scale maps of Wiston; the tithe map of *c.* 1840 and an estate map of *c.* 1855 (Carmarthen Record Office, Cawdor Box 227). The latter shows the Manor House as a five-bayed building, south-facing, with either six chimneys or crenellations. The house was demolished soon after this map was drawn; only a rear wing and an undercroft in a modern outbuilding survive from the original structure.

Some authorities (Beresford 1988 and Soulsby 1983) have disputed the claims of Wiston to be a borough, though it is quite clear from documents that the inhabitants never doubted their burghal status. For instance, in *c.* 1704, the 'burgesses of the borough of Wiston' petitioned Parliament against the actions of Sir Arthur Owen who was excluding them from their ancient privileges of voting in a parliamentary election of a burgess to serve the borough of Pembroke, a right they shared with Tenby (National Library of Wales, Bron II, 1674). By 1811 it was clear that Wiston was a rotten borough, as a list of burgesses, proposed by Lord Cawdor, who had purchased the Wiston estate from the Wogans in 1794, contained 261 names from Cawdor's Golden Grove estate in Carmarthenshire (CRO, Cawdor 2/74). A few years later in 1835, the first report of the Commissioners on Municipal Corporations to Parliament (Green n.d., Vol. 19, 351-2) recorded under the 'Borough of Wiston' a mayor, an alderman, burgesses and an annual fair (a weekly market had apparently been held up to about 1600 [Soulsby 1983, 269]). They did note, however, that no-one had knowledge of a charter. Wiston continued to elect a mayor into the twentieth century - the final throes of borough status.

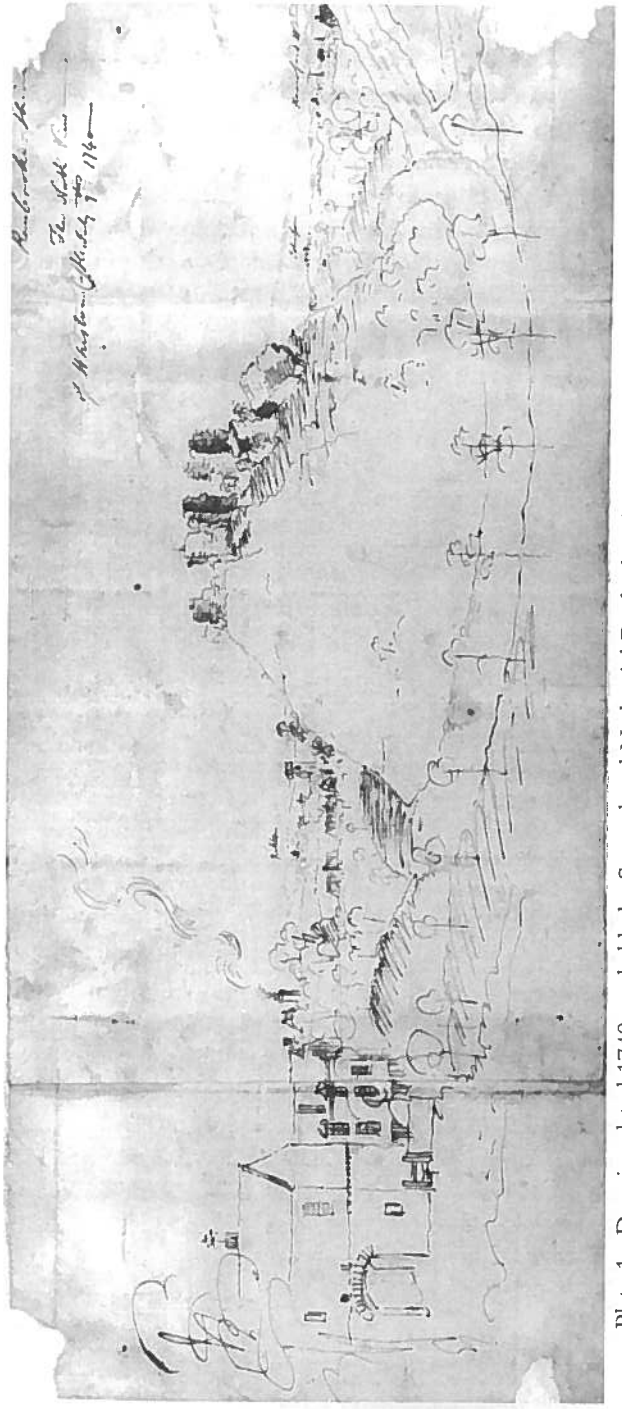

Plate 1. Drawing dated 1740, probably by Samuel and Nathaniel Buck, showing Wiston Castle and the Manor House. *Reproduced by kind permission of the Bodleian Library.*



## TOPOGRAPHY AND RESULTS OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS

### THE CASTLE

*Topography*

Wiston is, at first sight, one of the finest examples of a motte and bailey castle in Wales. The bailey is kidney-shaped, 130m by 80m, and defended by a earth-built bank and ditch (Fig. 2). This bank and ditch is at its strongest on the north and north-western sides where the bank rises to 3m in height and the silted ditch is at least 2.5m deep. No ditch is now visible on the south and eastern sides of the bailey, though small-scale excavations in advance of improving access through the modern gap on the south side of the bailey confirmed its presence here. The entrance to the bailey is on the east side. Earthworks immediately outside the entrance, north-west of the Manor House, may indicate the position of a horn-work or foundations of a stone gate. A gate-house is shown on the 1740 drawing of Wiston (Plate 1), but this seems to be to the north-east of the present Manor House rather than to the north-west and is more likely to be a structure associated with the house than with the castle. This entrance to the castle and the house would have been approached via a deep hollow-way. A secondary entrance may exist on the south-west side of the bailey.

Internally, the bailey is featureless apart from some very slight earthworks; these may be the remains of the rabbit warren (coneygar) referred to on eighteenth- and nineteenth-century documents (CRO, Cawdor Box 109, *A Particular of Wiston Estate*, 1794). A geophysical survey (conducted by Geophysical Surveys of Bradford, 1991) detected a 20m diameter circular anomaly and linear features, possible ditches, in the north-west corner of the bailey and anomalies which may be pits on the north-west and eastern side of the bailey.

The motte consists of a conical mound which rises 7m above the surface of the bailey, It is surrounded by at ditch 2-3m deep which merges on its northern side with the bailey ditch. The position of the motte in relation to the rest of the castle suggests that the motte's construction post-dates that of the bailey defences; a suggestion which is strengthened by the presence of what appears to be the remains of the bailey bank protruding from the motte on its western side. The motte is capped by a polygonal stone keep; this is described in greater detail below.

*Excavations*

In October and November 1994 a short programme of excavation and recording was undertaken in advance of works by Cadw to consolidate the remains of the keep and to improve access to the monument. Three areas of the castle were investigated: the interior of the keep, a line of proposed steps up the motte and the modern entrance through the south side of the bailey's defensive circuit. Only the work within the keep is described here; excavation in the two other areas was limited and produced little archaeological evidence. A detailed report on the excavation (Murphy 1994) is lodged with the Dyfed Sites and Monuments Record.

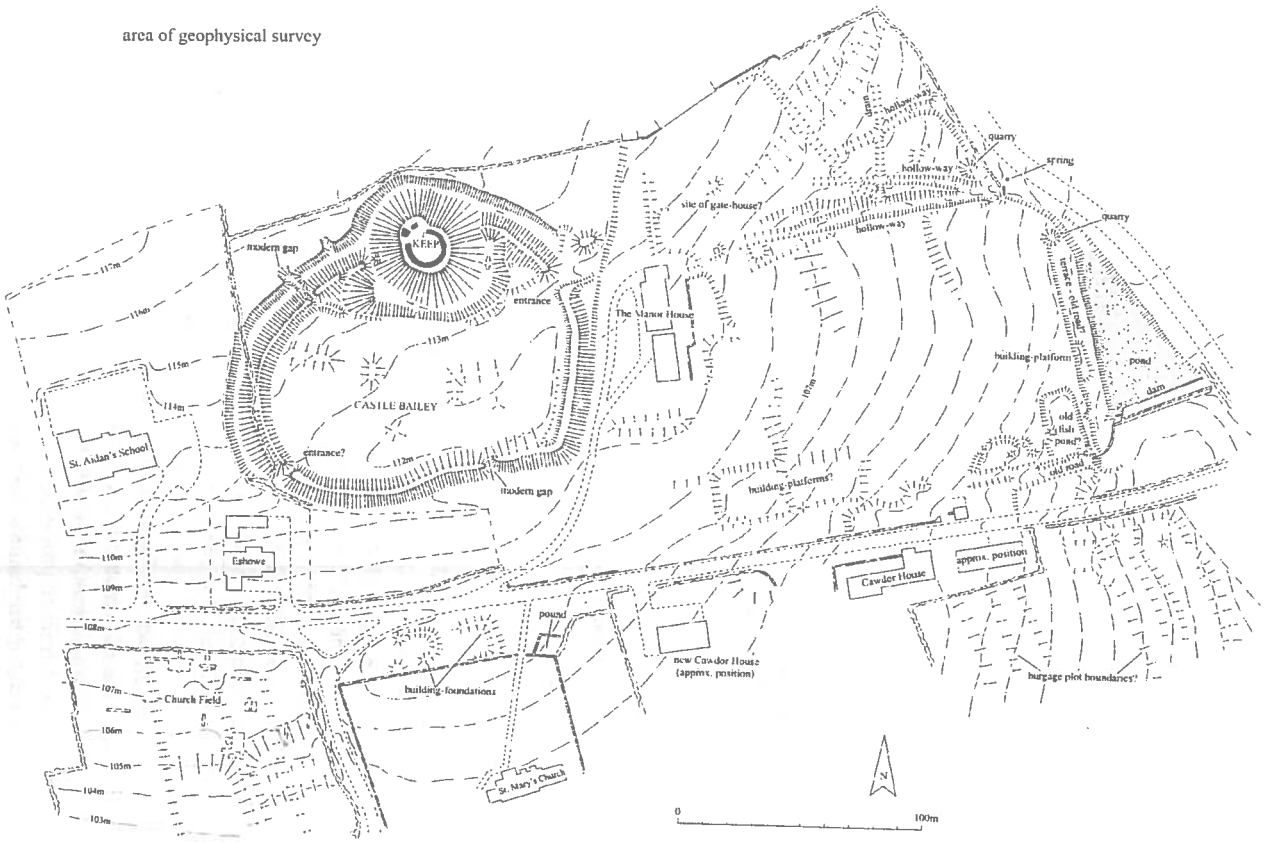


Figure 2. Modern topography of Wiston, based on surveys by the author of Wiston Castle, Church Field and The Green. *Reproduced by permission of Cadw.*



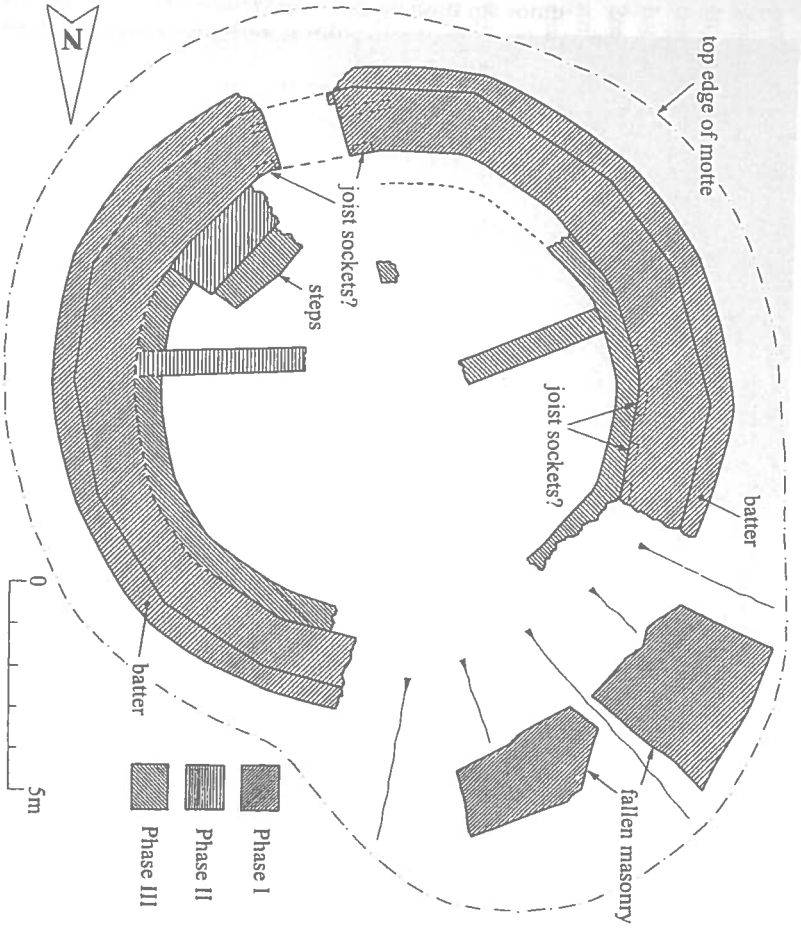


Figure 3. Plan of Wiston Castle keep.

Prior to excavation, the inside of the keep was filled with rubble up to a depth of at least 2.8m. This rubble covered the inner wall faces of the keep and dipped down steeply towards the centre forming a depression which had the appearance of a fairly recent disturbance. Only the outer, Phase I wall (Fig. 3) was visible prior to excavation. The purpose of the excavation was to expose the inner faces of the keep's wall to permit their consolidation and to provide a level surface within the keep. No floor levels or occupation deposits were investigated; test pits showed that the level surface formed following the clearance of the rubble was about 0.2 - 0.4m above medieval floor levels.

The investigations revealed three phases of building. The main wall of the keep, Phase I, formed a polygon of which 13 sides survive; three, or possibly four sides having fallen away to the north. The maximum internal diameter formed by this wall was about 12m. The wall stood to a maximum height of over 4m and varied in thickness from 1.45 to 1.6m, increasing to over 2m at its base due to a pronounced external batter. Entrance to the keep was by a doorway on the south side, with a simple round-headed opening. A reddish-pink plaster, which pre-dated the Phase II and III walls, adhered to parts of some internal faces of this wall. It is unclear whether the six joist sockets (Fig. 3) were contemporaneous with this period of building or later additions. Phase II comprised a

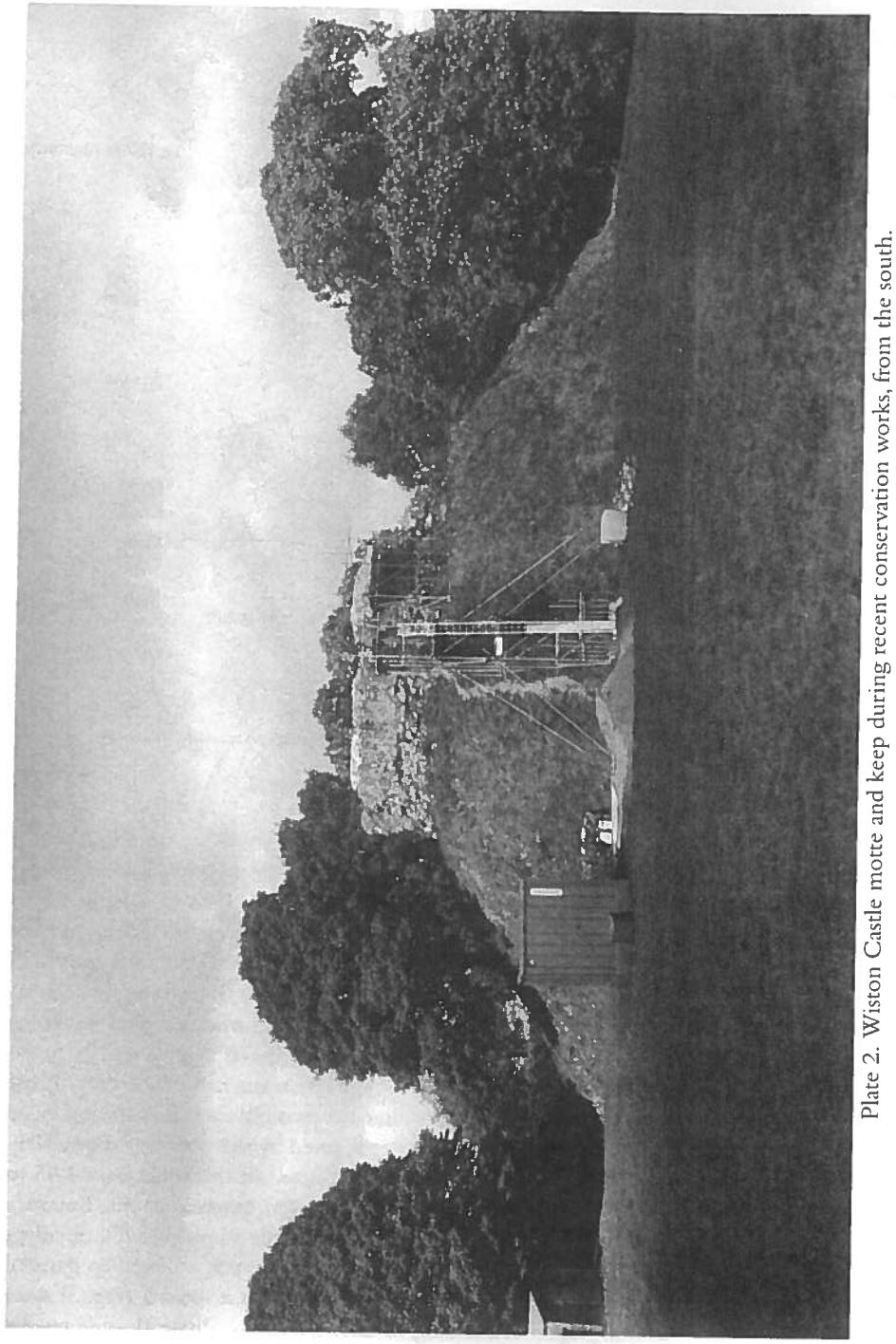

Plate 2. Wiston Castle motte and keep during recent conservation works, from the south.



partial cross wall and a block of masonry—almost certainly the remains of steps. The stone from these two walls had been robbed and only a few courses of masonry survived. In Phase III the whole of the internal face of the keep was re-skinned by a wall 0.65m thick. This wall effectively reduced the internal diameter of the keep to 10.7m. Robbing had entirely removed the wall on part of its circuit, but on the south side it stood to over 2m in height. Contemporaneous with this inner skin wall were: a second cross wall, a small block of masonry with a face that continues the line of the west side of the entrance passage-way, and an extension to the masonry steps.

The rubble fill of the keep was composed of many layers which represented several successive episodes of rapid wall collapse, slow accumulation of soil and rubble during periods of relative stability, and residues from the activities of stone robbers. Artefacts discovered during the excavation were consistent with rubble accumulation from the medieval period through to the twentieth century. Of particular note were: several roofing slates made from local shale, a fragment of a ridge tile in the local gravel-tempered fabric and fragmentsf window glass from the upper fill of the robber trench of the Phase III walls. A sherd of a medieval ceramic puzzle (see report below) was also found in the rubble fill. Brief notes on the pottery and on the small assemblage of animal bone from the rubble are provided below. The central hollow noted prior to excavation seemed to continue down beneath the excavation level; this was either a treasure hunter's pit or the result of stone robbing of a central pier.

## THE BOROUGH

### *Topography*

It is only in the past two decades that the character of Wiston has begun to differ from the image depicted on early editions of Ordnance Survey maps, and then only marginally as the little modern development that has occurred has usually been small-scale, i.e. single houses, and often away from the historic core of the settlement. Wiston in 1889 is shown on Figure 1 and the modern situation in the historic core is shown on Figure 2.

The extent and exact location of the former borough is now not easy to determine, however, enough evidence survives in the form of earthworks to provide some indications as to its layout. There seems to be a regular, planned element to the borough comprising the east-west hollow-way that emerges from the castle entrance, the north-south terrace/old road alongside the pond and the modern east-west road through the village (Fig. 2). At its eastern end the modern east-west road originally had a course further north, to the south of the pond's dam, while its width to the north of Cawdor House and the new Cawdor House seems to have been narrowed by the construction of a ha-ha wall alongside its northern verge. If these observations are correct, then the width of the original road through Wiston would have been substantial, certainly of sufficient width for a market place; the pound to the north of the church perhaps being the only physical remains of this market. The date of the modifications to the road are unknown, but its seems likely that the ha-ha was constructed in the seventeenth or eighteenth century to provide uninterrupted views from the Manor House across open country to the south. The dam and pond may be earlier, but they seem to be in

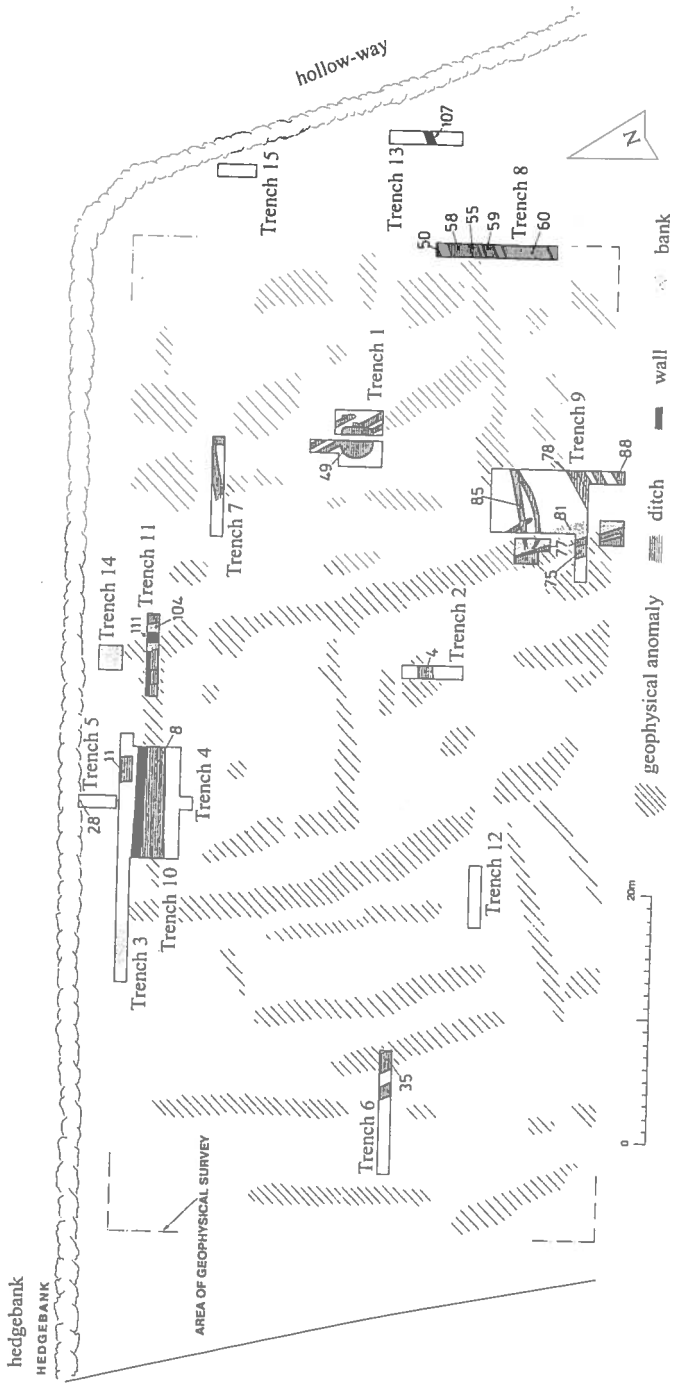


Figure 4. Plan of the excavation trenches in Church Field, 1990.



existence by 1779 as 'the grounds around the house called "the Green" and the fish pond' are recorded in the will of John Wogan (Green n.d., Vol. 5, 20-22). The area to the east of the Manor House is still known as 'The Green'. Earthworks to the west of the present pond may be the remains of a second, smaller and now dry fish pond, though this is not certain.

Building-platforms and earthworks marking the position of former house plots alongside the roads are present, but insubstantial. For instance, linear boundaries in Church Field indicate that a greater degree of agricultural subdivision formerly existed, possibly reflecting the position of former burgage plots, while insubstantial earthworks along the northern edge of the field hint at more complex archaeological remains. Further possible burgage plot boundaries in the form of linear earthworks lie in the field to the east of Cawdor House and low earthworks, possibly building-platforms to the west, east and north, though those to the north may be former garden terraces relating to the Manor House. Clear building-foundations to the north of the churchyard seem to be the remains of two stone buildings and a long, narrow field along the eastern edge of the churchyard may be a fossilised burgage plot. The sketch of 1740 reproduced as Plate 1 shows two houses either to the north or north-east of the church, possibly on the site of these building foundations or on the former burgage plot.

There are no earthworks or any other form of evidence to indicate that the settlement as defined above was ever defended.

*Excavations in Church Field*

The excavations in Church Field, Wiston, were in response to a planning application submitted by the Representative Body of the Church in Wales for three dwellings alongside the street frontage (Fig. 4). The first process in the investigation was a geophysical survey, commissioned from Geophysical Surveys of Bradford, which detected the presence of archaeological features, including what appeared to be property boundaries. Armed with this information and the knowledge that a watching brief during the construction of a house named Eshowe (see below) had revealed buried medieval deposits, it was decided to carry out a trial excavation. This was undertaken over a period of ten weeks in the summer of 1990. The excavations were funded by Cadw.

Trench 9 was located over the eastern north-south linear earthwork at a point where, according to the geophysical survey, a junction with an east-west boundary ditch could be expected (Fig. 4). The north-south earthwork, manifest only as slight surface irregularities, was found to be a bank (81) up to 0.5m high and accompanied by a ditch (75) on its western side. Engulfing the bank and instrumental in its preservation was a deep (0.7 - 0.8m), rich, black soil which contained 1,263 sherds of pottery, 1,224 of which are of medieval date. The bank (81) lay over an earlier north-south bank and ditch (77) and sealed some of the western terminals of a series of east-west aligned ditches. These six east-west aligned ditches were sequentially located: the earliest (85) to the north, the latest (88) to the south.

In Trench 8, the six east-west ditches were found to be converging. An attempt to trace them further east, Trench 13, resulted in the discovery of a well-built wall (107)

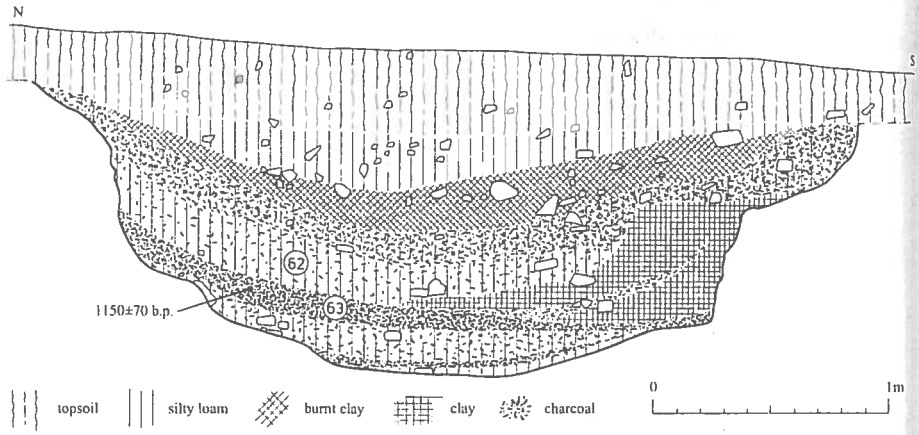


Figure 5. Section of pit 49, Trench 1 in Church Field.

on the same alignment as the ditches. It seems probable that the wall was built over the silted-up ditches though these lower levels were not excavated. Fifty-one sherds of locally-made medieval pottery were discovered in rubble (103) off the wall (Table 2).

The western north-south, boundary evidenced by an earthwork and a geophysical anomaly, was examined in Trenches 3 and 12. Trench 12 revealed a deep plough-soil with the putative remains of a buried soil suggesting a bank had recently been ploughed out. Although Trench 12 was placed directly over the earthwork bank it is clear, according to the geophysical survey, that the buried ditches begin to swing off to the east.

An east-west aligned ditch (4) was revealed in Trench 2, and a junction of an east-west/north-south ditch in Trench 7. Trench 15 came down upon a layer of rubble just below the surface of the turf. This rubble was not examined but may be associated with a building represented by wall 107 in Trench 13.

The resistivity part of the geophysical survey (data not shown on Fig. 4) recorded a large rectangular anomaly, possible the remains of a stone building, on the western side of the survey area. No evidence for such a building was discovered in Trench 6. Two shallow, north-south ditches (35) were, however, found.

Trench 1 was located over a very large geophysical anomaly. This was found to be a large pit (49) 1m deep and capped with a dense layer of burnt clay (Fig. 5). Beneath the clay were alternate layers of silty loam, charcoal-rich soil and dense charcoal deposits. Five body sherds of locally made medieval cooking pot were found in layer 62 (Table 2). A radiocarbon determination of 1150+70 BP (CAR-1441) was obtained from charcoal in layer 63. When calibrated, at two sigma, it gives a maximum date range of AD 680 - 1019 (calibrated using the University of Washington's calibration programme, Pearson and Stuiver 1986). Analysis of the charred plant remains from layer 63 (see below) revealed grain, much of which was oat. The presence of this and the burnt clay layer indicates, perhaps, that pit was filled with residue and demolition from a corn



drying kiln. The above quoted radiocarbon date is compatible with a twelfth- to fourteenth-century usage of the kiln, if the fuel were mature wood. The pit cut through three parallel gullies. A line of post-holes post-dates the pit.

Evidence of stone and timber buildings was found in Trenches 3, 4, 5, 10, 11, and 14. The continuation of the north-south bank in Trench 9 (81) was found in Trench 11 (104). Here it overlay east-west and north-south (111) aligned stone walls. The east-west wall and possibly the north-south wall was of sufficiently high quality to have formed part of a building. In Trench 4 two ditches lay beneath the east-west wall: the north-south one (11) cutting the wide east-west one (8). Associated with, or earlier than, these ditches was a series of post-holes and hearths (not shown on Fig. 2)—possibly the remains of timber buildings.

*Results of watching briefs*

The results of watching-briefs carried out during building work in Wiston are included here as the their evidence helps in defining the extent of the former borough, even though structural details of buildings were rarely observed.

During the construction of Eshowe (Fig. 2) salvage excavations (Williams 1979) revealed two gullies, possibly part of a building, which were associated with medieval pottery. A watching brief undertaken during subsequent building work failed to detect any building remains, though gullies, possibly the remains property boundary ditches were recorded (James 1991).

In 1994, the top of what appeared to be several conjoined pits were observed during the building of new Cawdor House (Murphy 1994c). Rubble, roofing slate and a large sherd of medieval local gravel-tempered ware were found on the surface of these pits. As the new building is set back from the road, it seems likely that these rubbish pits were in burgage plots behind houses on the street frontage. Gullies, possible property boundary ditches were also revealed by the building work.

Immediately to the north of St. Aidan's School, during construction work to extend the playground, a watching brief was undertaken (Murphy and Darke 1995), but nothing of interest was seen.

In addition to the above, numerous sherds of local medieval gravel-tempered ware were picked up from mole hills on The Green during the earthwork survey.

## THE ROMAN ROAD

A Roman road west of Carmarthen has been recently investigated by Fenton-Thomas and Drew (forthcoming), and its course has been plotted from aerial photographs by the author as part of a Royal Commission on Ancient and Historical Monuments (Wales) project. Its route to the west of Carmarthen has been confirmed to a point about 0.5km east of Wiston. Fenton-Thomas and Drew suggested that the road bifurcated immediately to the west of Wiston, with one branch heading due west, passing to the north of Haverfordwest, and the other running north-west, apparently heading for St. David's, although the evidence for this is slight. At Wiston the projected line of the road runs some 50-100m north of the castle.

## The charred plant remains from layer 63, pit 49

*by A E Caseldine*

A sample was taken from layer 63, a charcoal rich context, in pit 49 to determine if residues from some sort of industrial activity or food processing were present. A radiocarbon determination of 1150±70 (CAR-1441) was obtained for charcoal from this sample.

### *Method*

The sample was processed using a simple wash-over technique. The flots and residues were retained in sieves with 2mm, 1mm, 500 micron and 250 micron meshes. The remains were identified by comparison with modern reference material and standard reference texts.

### *Discussion*

The sample is largely dominated by oat (Table 1). The size of the grains is comparatively small and tends to suggest either wild oat, bristle/black oat or grain from the secondary or tertiary florets of common oat. The lemma bases of wild and cultivated oat are almost equal in number but the pedicels of *A. strigosa* are clearly most abundant with those of *A. sativa* and *A. fatua* much less frequent. The oat may therefore primarily represent a crop of bristle oat with wild oat present as a weed. The former is also known as 'sand' or 'black oat', and in Wales as 'ceirch llwyd' and 'blewgeirch' where it is grown in places which are unfavourable for the common oat, particularly mountainous districts (Hubbard 1968). It is also widespread as a weed in cornfields in such areas. The occurrence of wild oat with cultivated oat is not uncommon. Godwin (1975) suggests that, while wild oat may have behaved as a weed in some instances, it may have been grown in mixed crops to a considerable extent, though not reaching the status of a true crop. Oat is recorded as an important crop in historical records for medieval Wales (Jones 1981) and is well represented in the plant macrofossil record (Caseldine 1990), as it is also in the plant macrofossil record from other parts of Britain (Green 1984, Robinson and Wilson 1987) and Ireland (Monk 1985/6). Oat was commonly grown in the medieval period both for animal fodder and for human consumption as, for example, at Stafford (Moffet 1987).

The sample may be interpreted in a number of ways. Generally the oat grain was poorly preserved and only a few of the grains were still enclosed by their husks. On close examination, a number of grains were found to have fragments adhering which would suggest the grain was not yet ready for milling. In addition the presence of chaff, weed seeds and straw fragments indicates either that the sample was only partially cleaned or that the sample contained a mix of material including waste used for tinder or fuel. It is also likely that the chaff and straw are under-represented as they are more susceptible to complete combustion than grain. One possible interpretation of the sample is that it represents oat that was being dried prior to storage or parched prior to removal of the husks when it became accidentally charred. Particularly after a wet harvest it is necessary



Table 1. Charred plant remains from context 63 in pit 49.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| CEREALS | *Triticum aestivum s.l.* (bread/club wheat) | grain | 7 |
| | | rachis | 11 |
| | *Triticum sp.* | grain | 4 |
| | | rachis | 4 |
| | *Triticum/Hordeum* | grain | 5 |
| | *Triticum/Secale* | grain | 3 |
| | *Secale cereale* (rye) | grain | 1 |
| | | rachis | 12 |
| | cf. *Secale cereale* | grain | 2 |
| | | rachis | 2 |
| | *Secale/Hordeum* | rachis | 5 |
| | *Hordeum sativum* (hulled barley) | straight grain | 2 |
| | | twisted grain | 1 |
| | | indet. grain | 6 |
| | cf. *Hordeum* sp. | rachis | 1 |
| | *Avena sativa* type (common oat) | pedicels | 29 |
| | *Avena sativa/strigosa* | lemma bases | 101 |
| | *Avena strigosa* type (bristle oat) | pedicels | 132 |
| | *Avena fatua/ludoviciana* (wild oat) | lemma bases | 106 |
| | *Avena* sp. | grain | 706 |
| | | lemma bases | 58 |
| | | awns | 296 |
| | cf. *Avena* sp. | grain | 17 |
| | Cereal indet. | grain | 495 |
| | Cereal/Large Gramineae | culm nodes | 22 |
| | | culm bases | 1 |
| | | culm frags. | 4 |
| | Cereal/Gramineae | panicle nodes | 13 |
| | | culm frags. | 15 |
| OTHER | *Agrostemma githago* L. (corn cockle) | frags. | 1 |
| | *Stellaria media* ( L.) Vill. (Chickweed) | | 18 |
| | *Cerastium sp.* (Chickweed) | | 3 |
| | Caryophyllaceae | | 2 |
| | *Chenopodium album* L. (fat hen) | | 16 |
| | *Chenopodium cf. album* L. | | 4 |
| | *Atriplex sp.* (orache) | | 10 |
| | *cf. Atriplex* sp. | | 4 |
| | Chenopodiaceae | | 1 |
| | cf. Chenopodiaceae | | 3 |
| | *Ulex* (gorse) | spines | 29 |
| | cf. *Ulex* | spines | 3 |
| | *Potentilla* sp. (tormentil) | | 2 |
| | *Polygonum cf. aviculare agg.* (knotgrass) | | 1 |
| | *Polygonum persicaria* L. (persicaria) | | 2 |
| | *Polygonum lapathifolium* L. (pale persicaria) | | 2 |
| | *Fallopia convolvulus* (L.) A Love (black bindweed) | | 1 |
| | *Rumex acetosella* agg. (sheep's sorrel) | | 7 |
| | *cf. Rumex acetosella* agg. | | 8 |
| | *Rumex sp.* (dock) | | 12 |
| | *Rumex sp.* | perianth tubercle | 1 |
| | *Calluna vulgaris* (L.) Hull (heather) | shoot | 1 |
| | *Galeopsis* sp. (hempnettle) | | 6 |
| | *Plantago lanceolata* L. (ribwort plantain) | | 5 |
| | *Tripleurospermum inodorum* (scentless mayweed) | | 30 |
| | *Chrysanthemum segetum* L. (corn marigold) | | 40 |
| | *Lapsana communis* L. (nipplewort) | | 10 |
| | *Leontodon* sp. (hawkbit) | | 3 |
| | Compositae | | 1 |
| | *Juncus* sp. (rush) | | 1 |
| | *Juncus* sp. | capsule | 1 |
| | *Carex* sp. - trigonous (sedge) | | 1 |
| | Cyperaceae | | 1 |
| | Gramineae small (grass) | | 1 |
| | Buds | | 34 |
| | Flower buds | | 2 |
| | Thorns | | 3 |
| | *Pteridium aquilinum* (L.) Kuhn (bracken) | frags. | 17 |

to dry grain in a drying kiln to stabilise it. Furthermore, to help the removal of the lemmas of oat which fit tightly around the grain, it was frequently dried prior to milling (Monk 1988). It is possible that the Wiston sample represents material accidentally charred during this process. The wheat, barley and rye could be weed contaminants, though another possibility is that they could reflect earlier use of the kiln used to dry the oats, which may be supported by the poor state of preservation of all the grain. Alternatively the sample could represent waste fuel or a mix of both accidental and deliberate charring.

There is plant macrofossil evidence from a number of sites (Veen 1988) in England, Wales and Ireland which suggests that medieval corn-driers were used to dry free-threshing cereals. In Wales, oat is the dominant cereal from a fifteenth-century corn drying kiln at Collfryn (Jones and Milles 1984, 1985), but it is uncertain whether it was part of a crop being dried or being used as a fuel. Oat also predominates in samples from thirteenth-century pits in Rhuddlan (Holden forthcoming a, b) where it is concluded that they represent a partly cleaned crop that became charred while being dried prior to storage or parched prior to dehusking. Two medieval corn-drying kilns in Scotland have produced charred grain assemblages containing *A. strigosa* and *A. fatua* (Fairweather 1989). At Capo, Kincardineshire, oats dominate the sample and it is deduced that the crop was *A. strigosa* with *A. fatua* present as a weed. Many of the grains were 'unshelled', i.e. the lemma and palea had not been removed. Quantities of light chaff were also present but no large straw nodes or fragments, as at Wiston, were found. This is interpreted as indicating processing by raking or sieving prior to carbonisation.

The presence of gorse (*Ulex* sp.) spines in the Wiston sample may be attributable to the use of gorse as a fodder (Tansley 1968) or may indicate the use of gorse as a fuel, possibly in a kiln. A nineteenth-century account of a field kiln at Llansawel, Carmarthenshire, refers to the fire being generally of gorse and brushwood (Price 1898). The occurrence of a shoot of heather (*Calluna vulgaris*) may also indicate fuel, as may the wood charcoal. Bracken (*Pteridium aquilinum*) remains may reflect its use as dry litter for cattle (Tansley 1968) and another possibility is that all the remains could represent waste from animal fodder and bedding. However, the presence of burnt clay in the pit strongly supports the interpretation of the evidence as the demolished remains of a corn drying kiln with the charred plants a crop accidentally charred during drying or parching, or fuel for the kiln.

## The pottery from church field and the rubble fill of the keep

*by D. F. M. Brennan*

A total of 2,212 sherds of pottery was found in the excavations at Church Field. A detailed list of fabric types by context and a catalogue of vessel forms is housed with the site archive. Information in this report is collated from the archive and presented in tabular form (Tables 2, 3 and 4) with a short note on each fabric present.

Eighteen sherds of pottery were found during the rubble clearance in the keep - 13 sherds of type 21, 2 of type 3, 1 of type 8 and 2 of type 20. In addition, a fragment of

Table 2. Pottery from Church Field. Numbers of sherds: vessels of fabric types 2 - 11 (local and English medieval wares) by trench and context

| fabric types | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| trench & context | | | | | | | | | | |
| T1-15 topsoil | 1493:143 | 252:74 | 1:1 | 75:16 | 2:2 | 3:2 | 27:8 | 23:10 | : | 2:1 |
| T1 62 fill of pit 49 | 5:1 | : | : | : | : | : | : | : | : | : |
| T2 3 fill of ditch 4 | 7:3 | 2:2 | : | : | : | : | 1:1 | : | : | : |
| T3 9 fill of ditch 11 | 2:1 | : | : | : | : | : | : | : | : | : |
| T3 10 fill of ditch 11 | 3:1 | : | : | : | : | : | : | : | : | : |
| T4 6 fill of ditch 8 | : | 1:1 | : | : | : | : | : | : | : | : |
| T4 7 fill of ditch 8 | 5:1 | : | : | : | : | : | : | : | : | : |
| T5 28 hedgebank | 1:1 | : | : | : | : | : | : | : | : | : |
| T5 29 layer beneath 28 | : | : | : | 1:1 | : | : | : | : | : | : |
| T6 34 fill of ditch 35 | 7:2 | : | : | : | : | : | : | 1:1 | : | : |
| T8 39 fill of gully 50 | 1:1 | : | : | : | : | : | : | : | : | : |
| T8 40 fill of ditch 55 | 3:1 | : | : | : | : | : | : | : | 1:1 | : |
| T8 41 fill of ditch 59 | 2:2 | : | : | : | : | : | : | : | : | : |
| T8 42 fill of ditch 60 | 14:4 | 3:2 | : | 1:1 | : | : | : | : | : | : |
| T8 56 fill of ditch 58 | 2:1 | : | : | : | : | : | : | : | : | : |
| T9 71 fill of ditch 78 | 7:1 | : | : | : | : | : | : | 1:1 | : | : |
| T9 72 fill of ditch 85 | 1:1 | : | : | : | : | : | : | : | : | : |
| T9 73 fill of ditch 88 | 7:1 | : | : | : | : | : | : | : | : | : |
| T9 74 fill of ditch 75 | 15:4 | 5:3 | : | 1:1 | : | : | : | : | : | : |
| T9 76 fill of ditch 77 | 1:1 | : | : | : | : | : | : | : | : | : |
| T9 81 bank | 1:1 | : | : | : | : | : | 1:1 | : | : | : |
| T11 104 bank | 1:1 | 2:2 | : | : | : | 1:1 | : | : | : | : |
| T11 110 fill of ditch 111 | 37:2 | : | : | : | : | : | : | : | : | : |
| T11 112 fill of ditch 111 | 14:1 | : | : | : | : | : | : | : | : | : |
| T13 103 wall tumble | 22:1 | 27:3 | : | 2:1 | : | : | : | : | : | : |
| T14 108 layer | 1:1 | : | : | 1:1 | : | : | : | : | : | : |
| Totals | 1652:177 | 290:87 | 1:1 | 81:21 | 2:2 | 4:3 | 29:10 | 25:12 | 1:1 | 2:1 |

Table 3. Pottery from Church Field. Numbers of sherds: vessels of fabric types 1 and 12 - 20 (Roman pottery, continental medieval wares, post-medieval wares) from topsoil of Trenches 1 -15.

| fabric type | 1 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| T1-15 topsoil | 5:5 | 1:1 | 1:1 | 65:45 | 6:5 | 6:6 | 2:2 | 1:1 | 9:5 | 29:24 |

Table 4. Pottery from Church Field. Numbers and percentages of sherds from all contexts.

| PERIOD | SOURCE | SHERDS | (% OF TOTAL) | VESSELS | (% OF TOTAL) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Roman | Non-local | 5 | (0.2) | 5 | (1.3) |
| Medieval | Local | 2024 | (91.6) | 286 | (69.8) |
| " | Non-local Eng | 63 | (2.8) | 29 | (7.0) |
| " | Continental imp | 2 | (0.1) | 2 | (0.4) |
| Post-med | All types | 118 | (5.3) | 88 | (21.5) |
| TOTAL | | 2212 | (100%) | 410 | (100%) |

locally produced ridge tile was found, three clay pipe stems and a sherd of a ceramic puzzle. The last object is dealt with in greater detail below.

In a recent survey, the dating and distribution of medieval fabrics found in the Dyfed region, are summarised (Papazian and Campbell 1992). The broad dates given here are based on that survey.

*Roman*

1. Miscellaneous coarseware fabrics, first/second century AD.

*Medieval, local:*

2. Local cooking pots. Dyfed gravel-tempered ware (O'Mahoney 1985a, 20-24), thirteenth to fifteenth century or later. The start (possibly twelfth cent) and terminal dates for Dyfed gravel-tempered ware are uncertain.
3. Local glazed vessels, mainly jugs. Dyfed gravel-tempered ware, thirteenth to fifteenth century or later.
4. Local unglazed fabric with stamped decoration. Only one sherd of this fabric was found, coming from the topsoil. The fabric and decoration can be compared with Cardigan Castle type fabric 6 (O'Mahoney 1985b, 211-212 and fig.X.13, no.45). Date uncertain.
5. Llanstephan glazed jugs. Carmarthen estuary, mid/late thirteenth century with uncertain terminal date (O'Mahoney forthcoming).

*Medieval, non-local English imports*

6. Minety-type ware. Wiltshire. Thirteenth-century here. Sherds of this fabric were recovered from unstratified levels in association with thirteenth- to fourteenth-century Saintonge and Llanstephan wares.
7. Vale ? cooking pot fabric. Glamorgan. twelfth to sixteenth century date range (Papazian 1990, 30), probably thirteenth-century here.
8. Ham Green cooking pots. Bristol. twelfth to early thirteenth-century.
9. Ham Green glazed ware. Bristol. Late twelfth to mid-thirteenth century.
10. Bristol fabric ?, similar to No.9. Twelfth/thirteenth century.
11. English/French green glazed fabric. Thirteenth century or later.

*Medieval, continental imports*

12. Saintonge green-glazed ware. South-west France. Thirteenth to fourteenth century.
13. Saintonge polychrome ware. South-west France. Thirteenth to fourteenth century.



*Post-medieval, non-local and continental imports*

14. North Devon wares. These comprise sherds of gravel-free, gravel-tempered and sgraffito ware. Seventeenth to eighteenth century.
15. Black and brown-glazed red earthenwares. Seventeenth to nineteenth century.
16. Staffordshire/Bristol type slipware. Late seventeenth to eighteenth century.
17. Tin-glazed earthenware, probably English. Late seventeenth eighteenth century.
18. Westerwald stoneware. Late seventeenth early eighteenth century.
19. English stoneware. Nineteenth early twentieth century.
20. Miscellaneous finewares. These include plain and transfer-printed whitewares and some hard-paste china. Late eighteenth and nineteenth century.

## A ceramic puzzle from Wiston Castle, Pembs.

*by Sarah Jennings*

A single rim sherd from one vessel was found on the site (Fig. 6). The distinctive characteristics of its form and construction raise questions as to its function. There are two main possibilities, either some form of puzzle vessel, or a mortar. The most common of the ceramic puzzle vessels is a hollow ware which, if used in the usual way, will drench the holder with whatever liquid it contains. Most of these puzzles are applied to jugs, both medieval and post-medieval in date, although a few cups are known, including a complete late medieval Humber ware one, from York (McCarthy and Brooks 1988, 391-2, no. 1660). As a puzzle the example from Wiston Castle is something of an enigma in that the rim diameter of 26cm is too large for a jug; it is also too large size for a cup or mug, as well as being rather too substantial. The reconstruction as a bowl, by John Hudson, based on replicas of the surviving fragment, is certainly a possible, if unusual, form (Plate 3).

The fabric is a light buff in colour and is heavily gritted with small quartz and sparse red iron ore inclusions. Occasional larger rounded quartz grains up to 2.5 mm in length are visible, as are a few larger angular inclusions up to 3mm in length. The suspension lead glazed has an even copper colorant on the flat top of the rim and on the outside. The glaze on the inner surface is pale yellow with green spots. I am grateful to Duncan Brown for identifying the fabric as Saintonge gritty ware. As the probable origin for this vessel is the Saintonge pottery industry in the Bordeaux region of France (pers. comm. Duncan Brown, Southampton), it would date to the late thirteenth or fourteenth century. Its identification as a Saintonge product does however introduce another possible interpretation for this fragment as the rim of a mortar. Some mortars, including waster fragments from the kiln site, have hollow rims and moulded faces (Thomson and Brown 1991, 68 and no. 19) and nearly all of these were made in the gritty fabric.

The surviving fragment is from a wheel-made vessel with subsequent additions, and is pierced in two places. The hollow in the rim is nearly square and gives the appearance of having been thrown round something with a reasonable amount of substance. Usually this is some form of vegetable matter and is left in place to burn out during firing. The two circular holes were both pierced from the exterior of the vessel and one of these

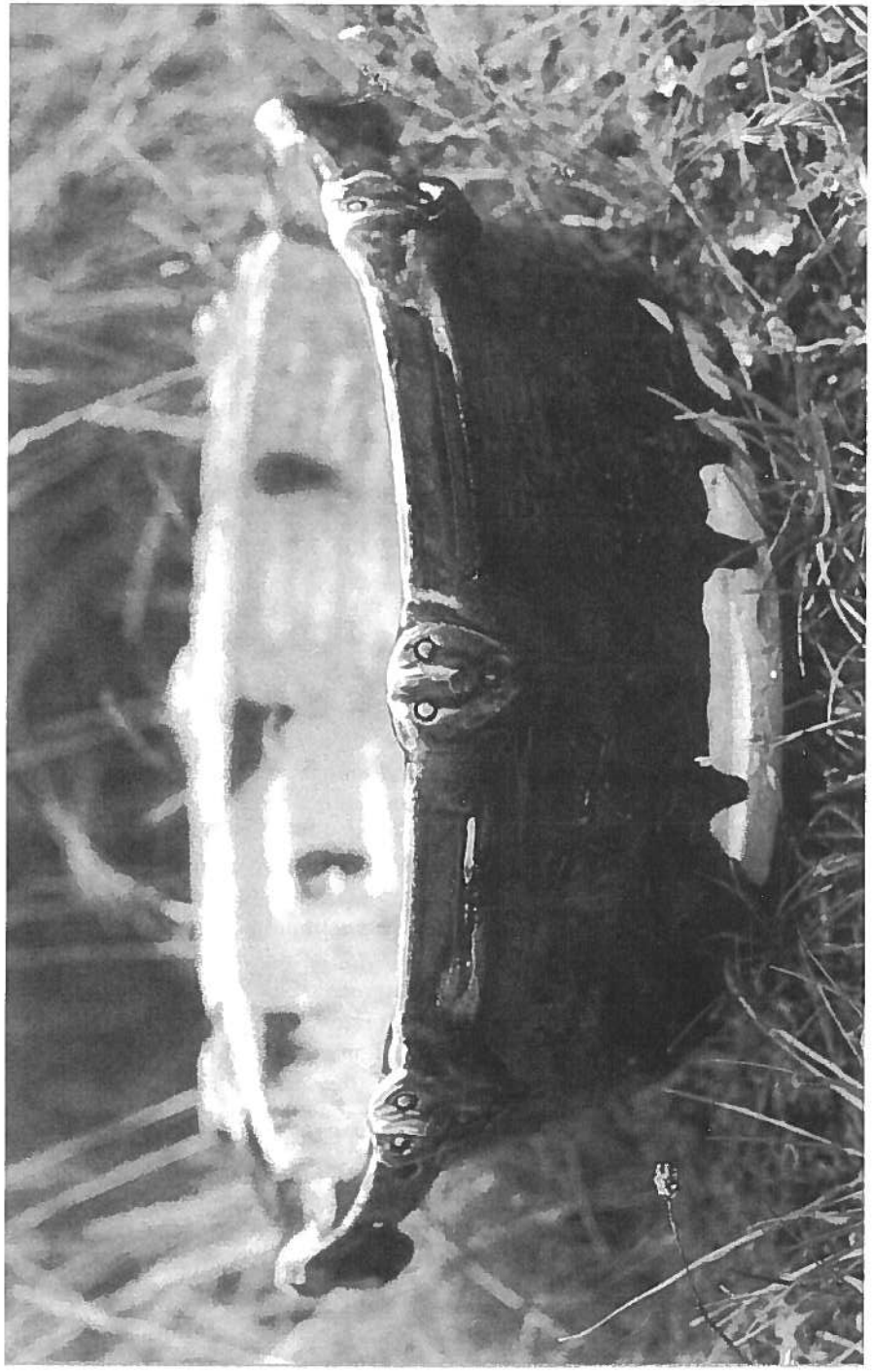

Plate 3. Reconstruction as a bowl, by John Hudson, based on the surviving puzzle fragment.



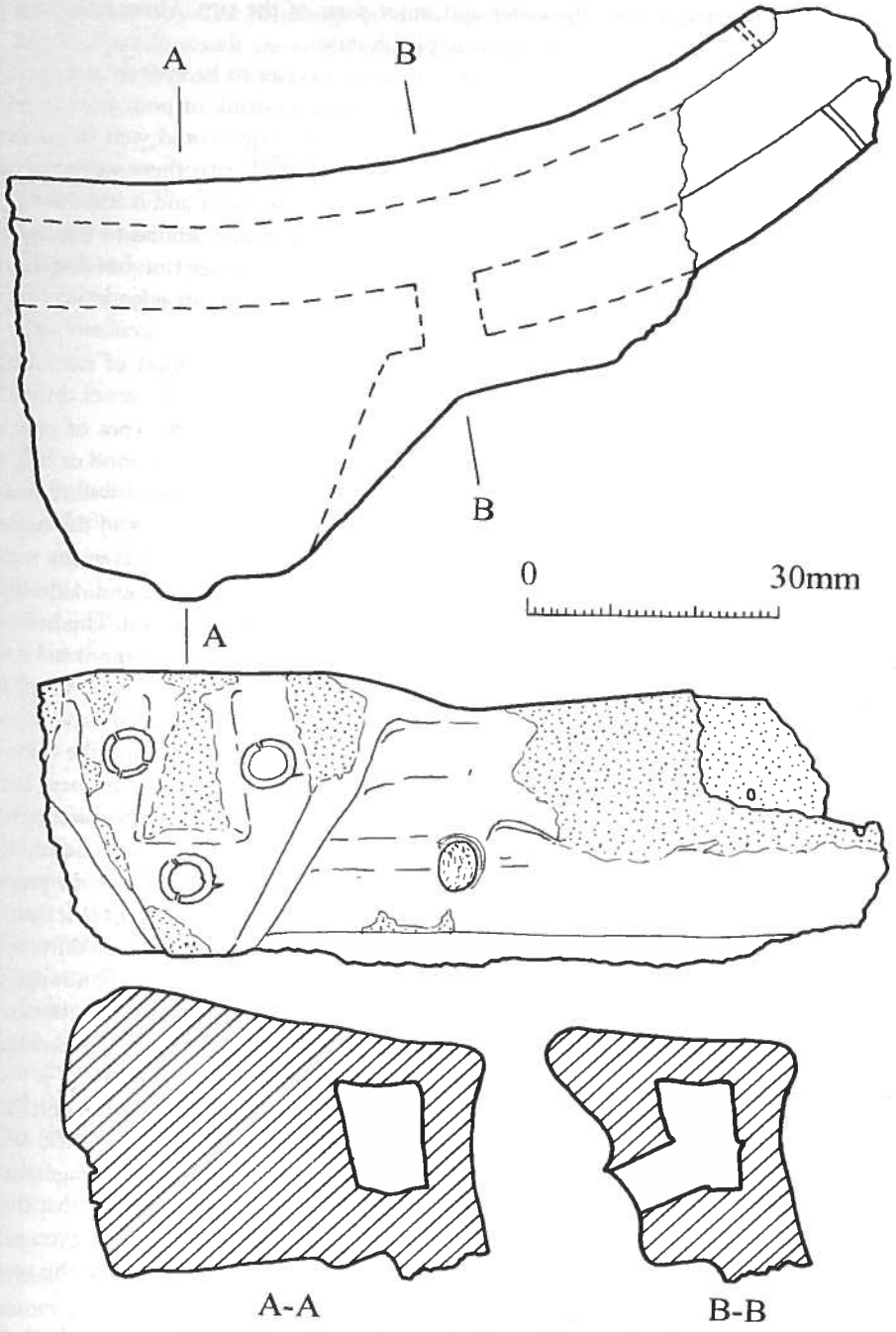


Figure 6. Ceramic puzzle from Wiston Castle.

circular holes penetrates both the outer and inner parts of the rim. These holes wer made when the clay was still in a reasonably plastic state.

If this is the rim of a puzzle vessel insufficient of it survives to be entirely sure of it configuration, or of the way in which the puzzle of how to drink or pour from it wa achieved. The surviving moulded head applied to the rim edge could well be in th position of a spout, but given the size of the rim, it is probable that there were sever such heads. The larger of the two holes measures 7 mm in diameter and is immediatel to the right of the head, with the other hole some 6.2 cm further around to the right Only part of this second hole survives in the broken edge of the outer rim, but it appear to be smaller in diameter. The corresponding hole in the inner rim edge is less tha 2 mm at its exit point.

A 'puzzle' can be created in one of two ways, although the method of extractin liquid is the same. The 'puzzle' is solved by sucking liquid stored in the vessel throug a hidden or camouflaged tube whilst the vessel is held upright. Both types of puzzl vessel usually have hollow handles and are usually pierced at some point around or belo the rim. In the first type a number of small areas are cut out of the vessel wall, usuall in the region of the neck, so that when the vessel is tilted liquid runs out of the hole This form has a hollow rim with one or more openings. Jugs with cut-outs in the nec area and hollow rims usually date from the fourteenth century onwards and, althoug they are always rare vessels, are more common in the post-medieval period. The hollo rim communicates with a hollow handle which is attached to the body of the vessel we below the cut-outs in the neck; a hole is made through on the inside of the vessel t give entry into the hollow at the base of the handle. The vessel is held upright and liqui is sucked up through the hole in the base, up the hollow handle and around the hollo rim to the mouth piece. The holes in the rim act as an additional puzzle as these hav first to be found and blocked by the fingers to ensure an airtight passage for the liqui In the second type there are two chambers, one either above, or formed around, th other; liquid is stored in the hidden space, even though the vessel appears to be empt (Cherry 1985,15-16). The well-known puzzle jug from St Aldgates, Oxford (McCarth and Brooks 1988, 284, fig. 170) is constructed in this way, and is dated to the thirteent century. This may be a copy of the Exeter puzzle jug which was made in Saintonge i the highly decorated polychrome ware (*ibid.* p.15 fig.4) and which has two chambe separated by three rows of cut-out arches. In this type the 'puzzle' is solved by suckin liquid out of an apparently empty vessel.

Unfortunately insufficient of the Wiston Castle vessel survives to reveal with certaint which of the types it might be, but the likelihood, given the two surviving holes, is fo the pierced variety rather than one with a hidden chamber. However, the fragment broken so near the rim, and so little of the circumference of the rim survives, that ther could be plenty of room for additional holes or cut-outs, or for the necessary extra tub needed either for a hidden chamber or to allow liquid to be sucked up while the vess remained upright.

Puzzle jugs can date as early as the thirteenth century, and examples from both th thirteenth and fourteenth century are known although they are more common after th



fifteenth century. The Saintonge industry produced both types of vessel, but both mortars and puzzle vessels are rare; perhaps the most surprising issue is the presence of this fragment at Wiston Castle.

## Lead object from Church Field

*by D. F. M. Brennan*

Spindle whorl (Fig. 7). Cast with raised pellet decoration. Diameter: external 23mm, internal 11mm. From posthole associated with timber buildings in Trench 3. A similar lead spindle whorl with wooden shaft surviving was found at the Austin Friars, Leicester, from a late medieval context (P. Clay in Mellor and Pearce 1981, 140, Fig. 51, no. 71)

## Stone objects from Church Field

*by D. F. M. Brennan*

1. Spindle whorl (Fig. 7). Fine-grained sedimentary rock. Diameter external 35-38mm, internal 7-9mm. From topsoil, Trench 9.
2. Eleven roughly-shaped circular discs in varying sizes, possibly pot lids. The discs are fashioned from various types of stone, all of which probable occurs locally in glacial deposits. Diameters vary from 46 to 140mm and thicknesses from 16 to 46mm. Ten of the discs came from topsoil, the eleventh from ditch 55 in Trench 8.

## Animal bone from the rubble fill of the keep

*by Susan Johnson*

The assemblage of animal bone from the clearance of the rubble comprised 89 identifiable fragments and about 50 small unidentifiable pieces. The identifiable assemblage comprises: 39 cattle bones, 36 sheep bones, 4 pig bones, 2 horse bones, 1 fallow deer bone, 2 dog bones, 4 cat bones and 1 bone of a domestic fowl. Some of the bones from the smaller species and smaller bones from the larger species were complete, but many have articulations and other diagnostic features missing.

Some of the bones had clearly been cut (e.g. cattle femur), and others appear to have been gnawed. Most of the bone is from domestic animals, mostly cattle and sheep (roughly equal numbers of identifiable fragments) with a few pig and horse fragments and also a few bones of cat and dog. Most of the bone was from adult individuals (where this could be determined) but at least one of the sheep mandibles was from a juvenile.

## DISCUSSION

by Kenneth Murphy

Several problem areas, open to speculation still, exist when attempting to set out the history and archaeology of Wiston in a continuous narrative, despite the results of the detailed research described above. One such area is concerned with the castle. Superficially there appears no problem; according to historical records the castle was founded

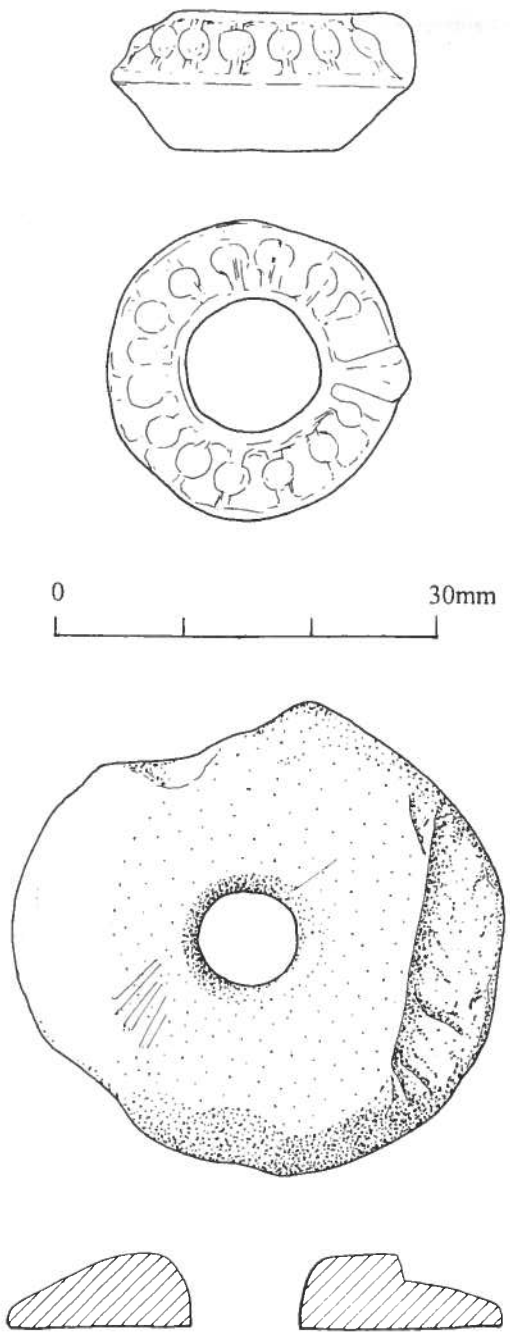


Figure 7. Lead spindle whorl and stone spindle whorl from Church Field.



in the early years of the twelfth century by Wizo the Fleming, suffered from several attacks, experienced development culminating in construction of a stone keep, and was abandoned in or soon after AD 1220. The documentary record does not provide a date for the building of the stone keep. It may well have been modelled on the great circular keep at Pembroke which has been dated by Ludlow (1991, 27) to *c.*1204. In which case, a date between 1204 and c. 1220 (when Henry III commanded William Marshall II to repair the castle) for the construction of the keep at Wiston seems most likely. Three phases of keep construction, the discovery of pottery low in the rubble fill of the keep - albeit one sherd of a ceramic puzzle of a date probably later than the thirteenth century - and the presence of window glass are all strong indications that the keep and castle continued in use after 1220. The keep was clearly of at least two stories, but its large original diameter may have militated against it being contained under one roof. Reducing the internal diameter of the keep by the building of an inner skin wall may have been in response to attempts to provide a single roof across the keep; even so, a central pier would have been required.

The main problem area with Wiston Castle concerns the size of the bailey, which is exceptionally large for south-west Wales and, given the length of the circuit, would have been almost impossible to man during attack: two possible explanations are offered to explain this size. First, Wizo may have founded his castle on a pre-existing defensive site. Iron Age defended enclosures comparable in size to the bailey of Wiston Castle are common in this part of south Pembrokeshire (Williams 1988), some with defensive circuits surviving to a considerable height. Wiston Castle may have been such a site. Also, some form of Romano-British occupation in the vicinity of Wiston is evidenced by the possible Roman road and the Roman pottery from the Church Field excavations. It may be that the postulated iron age fort continued in use in the Romano-British period and up into the Dark Ages, where it may have functioned as a pre-Norman high-status site, though it must be stressed that there is no historical or archaeological evidence for this latter suggestion. Second, the bailey of Wiston Castle encloses an area of just over one hectare, a size that could accommodate a small town. It is comparable with the defended areas of some other small towns in south-west Wales: Laugharne, 1.4ha; Kidwelly, 1.3ha and St. Clears, 1ha (Murphy forthcoming). Wizo clearly intended to found a colony at Wiston and, as it is inconceivable that this would not initially have been defended, its only possible location is in the castle bailey. The church built by Wizo lies outside this original defended area; this seems to be a common feature of the new towns of medieval south-west Wales and can be parallelled at Laugharne, St. Clears, Kidwelly and Llandovery, all in Carmarthenshire. Wizo's foundation of a settlement in the bailey does not exclude the suggestion that the a pre-existing iron age fort was reused. The hypotheses that the later castle was built on the site of an iron age fort and that the bailey was the site of Wizo's colony could be tested by excavation.

Wiston became a borough, if only by prescription; a status that was removed following the Commission on Municipal Corporations in the 1830s. The early colony may have lain within the bailey, but by at least the thirteenth century the main elements of the borough seemed to lie outside it. As described above, the borough may have been laid out to a plan. Figure 8 shows a schematic plan of the borough as it may have been

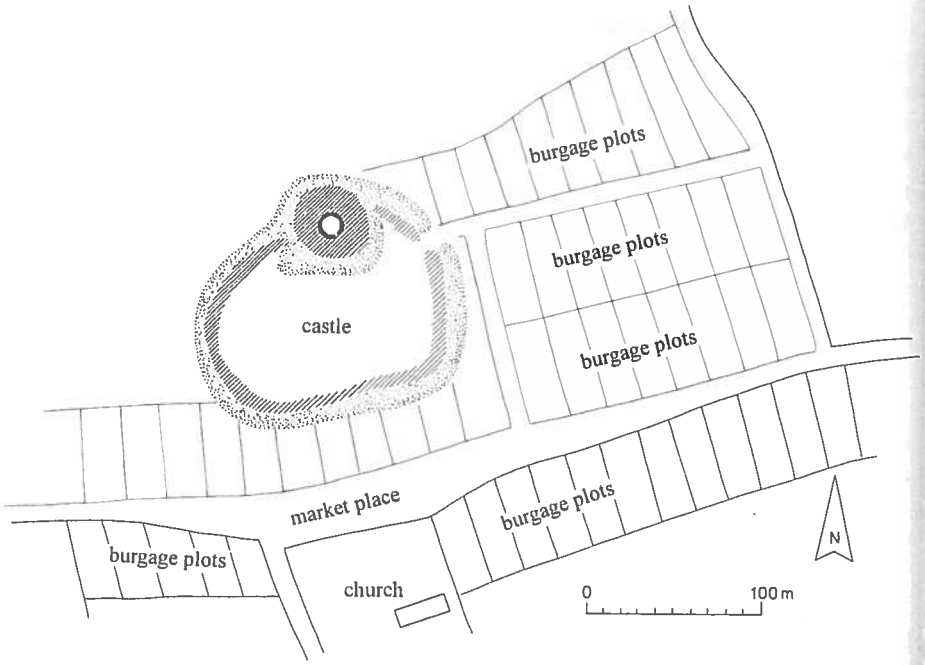


Figure 8. Schematic plan showing a suggested layout of the borough of Wiston.

in the thirteenth century based on topographic and excavated evidence. The comparative lack of later medieval and post-medieval pottery from the excavations in Church Field and from watching briefs is strong evidence for the abandonment of burgage plots and the decline of the borough from the mid-fourteenth century. A decline from which the borough never recovered. The absence of medieval and later documentary records such as rentals and surveys may be interpreted as supporting the archaeological evidence for this decline, though there are many other possible reasons why such documents have not survived, or were not discovered by the writer. It does, however, seem probable that when the first clear documentary records to burgage plots appear in the late sixteenth century Wiston was little more than a village. The twelve and a half burgage plots purchased in 1577 by John Wogan may not have been occupied and had possibly been vacant for a considerable period of time. Whatever their status, the plots were probably acquired by John Wogan in order to create a park and garden around the Manor House on The Green.

The combined evidence of the earthworks, geophysical survey and excavations revealed boundaries which divide Church Field into regular plots. The exact size and nature of these plots is not easy to ascertain. Their length of about 45m is defined to the north by the road and to the south by the ditches excavated in Trench 9. The eastern and western boundaries of one plot seem to be marked by the earthwork banks examined in Trenches 9/11 and 3. The western boundary of a plot to the west of this is represented by ditch 35 in Trench 6. It is probable that two further plots lie between



these two and the hollow-way to the east. The total width of these four plots is 76m, an average of 19m. The area of each plot being 855 sq. m. Burgages would have varied in size from town to town and within towns according to many factors, not the least being topography. It is, however, instructive to note that three excavated burgage plots at Newport (Murphy 1994a), 20km to the north of Wiston, were of a size comparable to these at Wiston; 815 sq. m on average as opposed to 855 sq. m.

Wiston therefore provides a good example of what a twelfth-century Flemish settlement may have appeared like: a substantial motte with a bailey large enough to have contained Wizo's colony and provide a defence against a hostile, displaced population. Welsh attacks though prompting the construction of a stone keep on the motte seemed to have had little affect on the colony, for at some time in the late-twelfth or thirteenth century a settlement, possibly with borough status, was established outside the confines of the bailey. Initially successful, Wiston never developed a sufficiently large enough economic base to challenge Haverfordwest, and suffered economic and population collapse in the fourteenth century, though the last vestiges of burghal office and ceremony limped on into the twentieth century.

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