

Eaton Synopsis

'..... and the Fields of Eaton'

Or to give the full quote 'The Manors of East Hall and West Hall and the Fields of Eaton' In Domesday the Manor of East Hall was the manor of Gnatingdon and that of West Hall the Bishops manor of Sedgeford but why were the fields so Eaton so singled out. There is no apparent mention of the place in Domesday, but is there? The entry for Sedgeford is long and complicated with Bishop Aylmar making berwicks of various freemen's holdings in both Sedgeford and Fring. The usual details of land, persons and stock are there and at the end like most other entries comes the line 'and it is worth X and it pays a geld of four shillings in the pound'. Four shillings was the geld payable for a leet in the Smithdon Hundred. The Sedgeford geld payment also included Gnatingdon, then held by Godwin Haldane, a freeman originally of Gyrth, Harold's brother, and by 1086 of the Bishop. In every other entry in the Norfolk Domesday this is the last matter before the line is drawn and another vill is named. Not so Sedgeford. It starts again. "And there are eight freemen who hold by commendation only and the whole pays a geld of seventeen and a half pence in the pound'. This is totally unprecedented.

The second clue comes from much later; a field map of 1631. On this the whole of Sedgeford and Gnatingdon is divided into eight Precincts. Six lie north of the Heacham River and two South. Of the southern ones the Seventh stretches from the Peddars Way on the Fring Border in the east to the old Snettisham Road, which ran somewhat east of the present one, in the west, and from the river in the North to the Snettisham Border in the South. Like the first six it was composed of large areas of land, one as large as forty-eight acres, (19.4ha) much of which were Brecks and demesne pasture land owned by the Lord of the Manor, interspersed with some strips belonging to individual free or copyholders. There were also areas of strips of mostly arable infield land held by the various copyholder tenants of the manors and some freeholders.

The other southern precinct, the Eighth, was totally different. North to south it stretched from the Heacham River to the Snettisham Border with a long neck running northwards along the river to a point just below the present road bridge on the Heacham Road. Its eastern boundary was on the old Snettisham Road and its Western boundary somewhat indeterminate. Certain of the western furlongs were found on both the Sedgeford and Heacham early seventeenth century L'Estrange estate Maps and their descriptions in the Sedgeford Field Books of 1546 and circa 1610 also the Heacham Field Book of 1596 - where its section begins with an Eaton as ornately inscribed as the Heacham at the beginning of the book - are just as indeterminate - certainly in 1546 some furlongs/quarentena paid Town Charges to Heacham and some to Sedgeford. However it is the layout and status of the lands in this eight precinct which makes it so very different from the first seven. A high proportion of the parcels were held by freehold tenure, and whereas in the rest of Sedgeford these would have been held of either the Manor of West Hall, The Manor of East Hall or another small manor known as Sedgefords;¹ in the eighth precinct they were held of no fewer than ten manors, mostly local but some as far away as Wymondham Abbey. Furthermore there were few large parcels of land, one of the two largest was a seven acre plot called Le Wong,² but most were a little under one acre and a half on average. (1.4a equalling 0.56ha) and of four hundred and three parcels of land in the Eighth Precinct only fifty-two contained more than two acres. (0.89ha) and none more than seven acres (2.83 ha)

¹ Formerly a half knight's fee granted to the De Sedgeford family by the Bishop of Norwich before 1166

² Wong being from *vangr*, Old Norse for an enclosed garden or field.

'and the Feilds of Eaton' Evidences for separate identity of Eaton pre Domesday and after.

Domesday Book

Charters - Lewes Priory Heacham & Eaton

Charters - Norwich Cathedral Priory, Sedgeford & Eaton

- Bishops of Norwich

Family/surnames witnessing the charters being 'of Eaton'

Will of John Acre 1444 of Eaton in Sedgeford

DCN survey of Estate of John Wroxham of an estate with foldcourse in Eaton Sedgeford & Heacham (inc. Chapelgate & possible remains of chapel in 1915)

DCN Sedgeford, Gnatingdon & Eton Rentals 1455 & 1490

Surveys of the Leased manors of Sedgeford, Gnatingdon and Sedgefords by the LeStrange tenants/owners are all surveys of East Hall (Gnatingdon), West Hall (Sedgeford Norwich Priory) Sedgefords, and the Fields of Eaton

The 1631 LeStrange Estate Map of Sedgeford and field book of the same date

Copyhold Surrenders and freehold land charters to trace the progress of LeStrange engrossing of the land of Eaton

The 1797 Enclosure Award granting all of the Eaton land to Henry & Armine Styleman (LeStrange)

1840 Tithe Award

Sale of Eaton Game Farm, & Hill Farm to Sir Lycett Green 1915 - Sale catalogue with maps

1940 Agricultural Survey - 3 holdings in Eaton

A-S Eaton

Certainly as late as 1546 much of the land was freehold and there were no fewer than 10 manors holding land in Eaton. The Domesday scenario seems to suggest that Eaton was at that time a somewhat anomalous hamlet, very loosely under the umbrella of the Bishop of Norwich, but otherwise held by eight freemen and their tenant's. The editor of the Lewes Priory Heacham Charters suggests that part of Eaton may have been a hamlet in Heacham in the C13/14, certainly as late as 1441 the testator of a will describes himself as being John Acres of Eaton in Sedgeford. C16/17 field books and C17 maps of both Sedgeford and Heacham overlap, as they include the western most part of Eaton on their maps and in their descriptions; rather as though they had never quite decided where the boundaries ran, though after the Reformation in C16 they had decided to which parish the various lands paid their dues. By that date considerable engrossing had and was taking place, this increased, until by the Enclosure Award of 1797 most of the land was in the hands of the Le Strange family. At that date the east boundary of Eaton was swept away. (Ever since then, boundary changes have seen Heacham taking several furtive nibbles along the western boundary).

The layout of these fields on the 1631 L'Strange Estate Map show an extremely different pattern to those of the rest of the village of Sedgeford. Closer examination of the 1546 Field Book of Sedgeford, which enumerates every strip of land in the village with the information as to whether it is demesne land, copyhold or freehold and to which manor it owes 'feod' (feudal dues), shows that whereas with few exceptions the rest of Sedgeford owed dues to the Norwich Priory Manors of Sedgeford and Gnatingdon, the half knights fee of Braydestone which was also owned by the Priory or the half knights fee of the de Sedgeford family, known as Sedgefords manor and by the mid C16 in the hands of the L'Strange family, the feudal dues from Eton were split between several manors situated in surrounding villages, the main ones were Ingoldesthorp Hall, Lewes Priory Manor and the Manor of Heacham, but Shernbourne and Snettisham Rustons Manors both had land owing dues to them, even the Manor of Barret Ringstead was overlord of two small pieces

Icknield Way Lewton Brain gives two possible routes through Sedgeford for the Icknield Way, (Norfolk Archaeology Vol 33 p 408 et seq)

Route 2. Comes along the back road from Sandringham & Dersingham to Ingoldisthorpe. This appears to be the road described as Ykenildestrethe and Ikelinge Stret in the Binham Priory Cartulary of land donated circa 1250. It leaves Ingoldisthorpe by St Thomas Way and at the five way junction of that way with the Snettisham/Sherneborne Road forks left to pass just East of the church, it then follows the wide Eaton Drove to Eaton Farm. From the farm to the Heacham Road the present private road follows the medieval Heslestie which crossed the river at The Ould Mille Brigge - the site of which is just south of the present road bridge - and then carried on north through the fields of Heacham to join up with Route 1 at Stump Cross. Lewton-Brain prefers Route 2 because south of Sedgeford it runs through, and close by, far more sites than does Route 1.

Eaton Lane formerly Whipplegate als the King's Way

A hedge count in 1976 indicates Eaton Lane existed by 1472, documentary evidence may well take this figure back 200 years more since Geoffry Quipel, who could well be either the cause of the road name or named from it, is mentioned in documents of the late C13. The lane, together with the drive from the Heacham Road to Eaton farm (Heslestie), an east-west length of the Snettisham Road (also part of Whipplegate), the track through Sedgeford Hall Park (The King's Highway*) and Fring Lane (Fring Way), was until the 1797 Enclosure one of the two roads from Heacham Haven on the coast through Sedgeford to the inland villages. Following the river valley through Sedgeford & Fring towards Bircham, it passes close to more known Romano British, Middle and Late Saxon and Early Medieval sites than the present 'main road' through Sedgeford and on to Docking, and could well be the oldest east-west road through the village.

*The forerunner of the present Heacham Road was described as 'the King's Highway leading from Hitcham to Docking.'

Eaton SMR References c 2000 (Further information in Sedgeford & Heacham SMR files)

1403	TF 6865 3675	H -1953	N	Chipped flint flake & flint axe - Chalkpit field
1410	TF 6884 3646	H 1957	N	Flint flakes near Round O Plantation
1413	TF 6830 3569	H 1951	N	Polished flint axe (N Gravelpit belt E side rd from
1413	TF 6830 3569	H 1952	N	2nd found same spot(Heacham Bottom Cottages
1417	TF 6910 3680	H -1949	N	Flint axe polished at tip N Round O on 100' contour
1417b	TF 6910 3680	H -1949	N	This is same axe as 1483 - which is correct?
1430	TF 6948 3733	H 1953	RB/M	Med glazed sherds - footings & lump? N of river
1430	TF 6948 3733	H 1987	Med	Approx site H III long cross cut halfpenny. Moneyer Nichole, mint Lynn/Lond
1436	TF 6931 3670	H 1954	RB	pottery inc Samian & part puddingstone rotary quern
1436	TF 6931 3670	H 1988	R	coin Valens Securitas Reipublicae 364-378AD
1456	TF 6928 3727	H 1955	U	Small embanked enclosure
1463	TF 6865 3723	H 1952	U?	Calcined flints & charcoal at 15" depth also 1 sherd indistinguishable pot.
1469	TF 6951 3641	1952	RB	sherds, roof tiles & oyster shells
1470	TF 6992 3663	1953	R	coin AD 61-69
1471	TF 6979 3619	?	RB	pottery

1472	TF 6982 3595	1952	M/RB	(1 Ipswich ware) 800ft SE farm buildings at TF 6982 3623 - see also 18237
1473	TF 6993 3608	1932	PSax.	Iron Socket spearhead 150ft SE benchmark 62.7
1474	TF 69780 3651	1954	Med	Water Mill - Kyme Mill decayed 1546
1474	TF 6976 3641	1996	med	Water Mill - Kyme Mill / Clowsen Bridge standing 1546
1481	TF 6929 3747	H 1953	Med	pott and Niedermendig lava
1481	TF 6929 3747	H 1987	R	Approx site Antonnius of Carausius 287-293Ad
1483	TF 6924 3716	H -1949		"Flint axe" apparently a confusion with site 1417
1596	TF 7015 3578	1953	N	polished flint axe head (450' NW Eaton Farm)
1598	TF 7055 3626	1953	misc	BA sherds, IA pott, RB Pottery roof & flue tiles, LS pott
1603	TF 7004 3640	1944	R	SAM 350 Roman site ?villa PS & MS sherds
1619	TF 7018 3610	1963	LS	Early med rim sherds from post hole (Thetford ware
1620	TF 7006 3609	196?	Med	Site Med building - pottery
1622	TF 7016 3587	1946	U	& 1961 Crop mark of chalk circle apparent in grass sign in plough
11263	TF 6987 3627.	1974	LS/M	sherds in rabbit burrow upcast - not Gnatyngdon as claimed
11312	TF 7035 3604	1946	U	Cropmark of enclosure on RAF air photograph (7th June)
14714	TF 6940 3640	H -1963		Chipped flint axe exact site unknown
14714	TF 6940 3640	H -1963?		Another chipped flint axe same site
14880	TF 6951 3633	?	N	Chipped flint axe and rechipped polished axe Eaton Farm Snettisham
14880	TF 6951 3633	?	N	Eaton Farm Ho at grid ref
16480	TF 6855 3691	H 1955	PS?	"Pot Saxon? Harrod, Grammar School" East of Lynn Rd
16481	TF 6910 3740	H c1967	M	handle in bone shaped like hawk's head - S of river
16482	TF 6928 3744	H 1967	N	Stone axe. Bones, stones , base of stoneware jug.
16492	TF 7030 3615	1976	M	pottery
16493	TF 7068 3627	1963	LS	sherds
18237	TF 6980 3580	1980	U	Pos.cropmarks 3 rectangular or sq. ditches one inside the other.
19279	TF 6832 3561	H 1977	U	& 1983 Ring ditch and linear feature
20409	TF 6877 3724	H 1984	P?MS	Human bones on allotment ?"Burial urn"? found 1942.
20409	TF 6877 3724	H 1984	P?MS	K.L Museum can't trace it.
22894	TF 6949 3695	1986	M	Silver half penny of Richard II - metal detector
22895	TF 6935 3690	1986	R	Antonius mid C3 - 340-6 AD
22895	TF 693 368	1986	M	Henry II penny, decorated lead object, Bronze gilt & niello buckle
22896	TF 6930 3661	H 1986	R	coins Faustina 138-161: Victorinus 268-70; Valens 364-378 Arles Mint
23108	TF 7030 3580	1986	R	coin VRBS ROMA wolf & twins - 330-40
23110	TF 6930 3630	H 1986	R	Coin Gratian 367-375
23320	TF 6940 3650	H 1986	R	coins (3) 330-40, 367-78, 364-78.
23320	TF 6940 3650	H 1986	M	Henry I penny, cross fleury type 1100-35
*24149	TF 6930 3680	H 1987	PS	Reliquary? buckle, copper alloy, niello, gilded, silvered, stamped ornament.
25070	TF 6950 3620	c1986	RB	coin c367-78
28702	TF 6979 3639	1991	R	pot - red oxidised ware base w footring & solid kicked up base

*24149 cont: stamped ornament and confronted style. Tongue plate may have been enamelled - site changed from parish of Sedgford to parish of Heacham 1989.

Further sites - no SMR Number

TF 7045 3645	1980	Med	Kyme Bridge and Causeway
TF 6950 3662	1996	Med	Millstone - at Otterhole - possibly New/Brendmill
TF 693-5 362-372	"	PM	Floated water meadows
TF 698-702 362-3	"	PM	Floated water meadows
TF 6950 3710	"	C17	The Ould Mylle
TF 7015 3530	1976	16/17C	Eaton Windmill site - Ingoldisthorpe fee.

Serendipity -or Salute to a Seventeenth Century Surveyor

Janet Hammond

It is axiomatic that when historians are searching for one thing they may well find the answer to another that has been puzzling them, often for years. So it was with the seventeenth century LeStrange Estate Map of Sedgford.¹

This large and wonderfully detailed map and I first met about 1974. Drawn in three parts on separate parchment sheets, it had neither date, surveyor's name nor scale written upon it, but it did record the holder and size of each strip of land, however small. From examining a list of the landholders against other documents, including the parish registers, it was clear that the map could not be later than 1635 nor much earlier than 1627, so for convenience it has been described as 'of about 1630'. By measuring lengths still identifiable against a 6in Ordnance Survey map, the scale seemed to work out at about 15.5 inches to the mile - there the matter rested for many years.

The first break through came in 1997, when I was given photocopies of what appeared to be a copy of part of the map. This showed the river valley between Eaton Farm and the Heacham road, with a plan for a drainage system on the reverse.² This map had a scale marked showing 1 inch equalled 20 perches, not very convenient, but better than nothing; after all the Sedgford Enclosure Award and Tithe Maps were measured in chains, so obsolete measurements were not new to us and, at last, we could calculate the correct scale -16 inches to the mile or 1:3960.

In November 1999, a visit to the Norfolk Record Office to follow up the summer=s research on West Hall Farm, led to answers to the remainder of the questions. Who did it and when? Looking through the index of a fat volume containing two books bound as one - the 1615-1645 LeStrange Household Accounts³ - for information towards her own thesis, the friend I was with drew my attention to the words 'Sedgford Surveyed by Mr Fisher.' We could hardly believe our eyes and hastily turned to folio 8 of the second book 2. There it was! Probably the last piece of information we had expected to find that day, if ever:-

July 1631 To John Fisher for Survey of Sedgford £10.

That wasn't all. From the next three entries we learned that Ralph Hargate was paid £1.10s (£1.50p) for '22 days going with John Fisher at the surveying' and 'Lawes his boy'. (Hargate's) 13s 4d (67p) 'for 20 dayes carrying the chayne.' William Guybon, the tenant of West Hall Farm received £1 10s 'for John Fisher's dyett 6 weekes'.

So there it is, our map was probably made between April and June 1631, the surveyor was John Fisher, who spent six weeks in Sedgford, lodging at West Hall Farm with William Guybon, while he surveyed the estate and drew the map. Ralph Hargate, member of a local yeoman family, who knew the parish intimately, together with the boy Lawes, went with the surveyor to help with the measurements and carry the chain. The result was a map of Sedgford unequalled until the Ordnance Survey maps of the nineteenth century. Neither the Enclosure Map of 1797 nor the Tithe Map 1840 match it for accuracy, and of all the documents relating to Sedgford in the Dean and Chapter and LeStrange archives in the Norfolk Record Office, it is **the** one which helps us to put all our other findings into place on the ground; particularly as we are now able to make copies of it at any scale in transparency form which can be overlaid on the appropriate Ordnance Survey Map to ascertain and mark positions. Sedgford historical research owes an immeasurable debt to Mr John Fisher and his employers, Sir Hamon and Dame Alice LeStrange.

Footnotes

1 Norfolk Record Office (NRO), LeStrange Map OC1

2 NRO, LeStrange Map NR

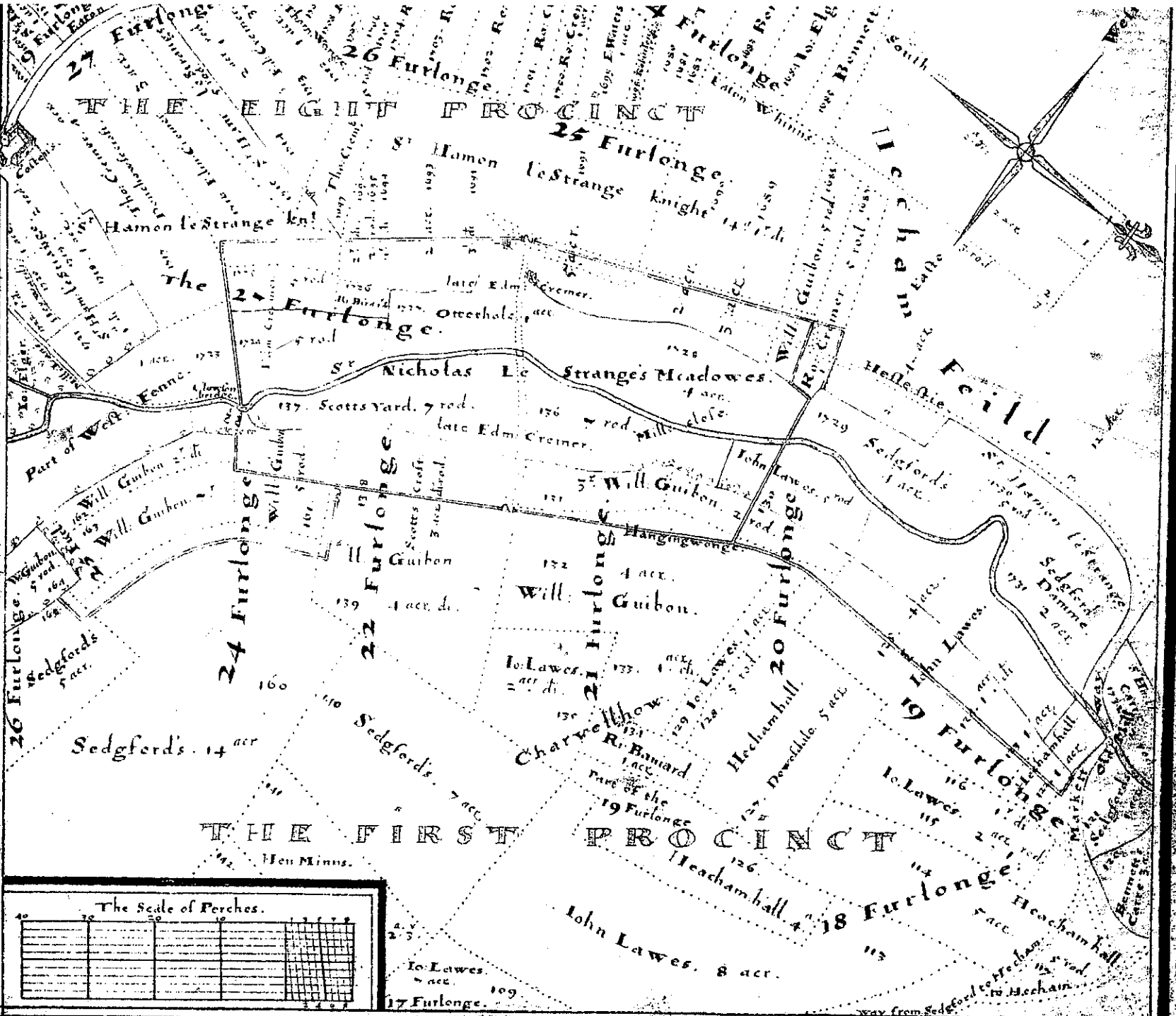
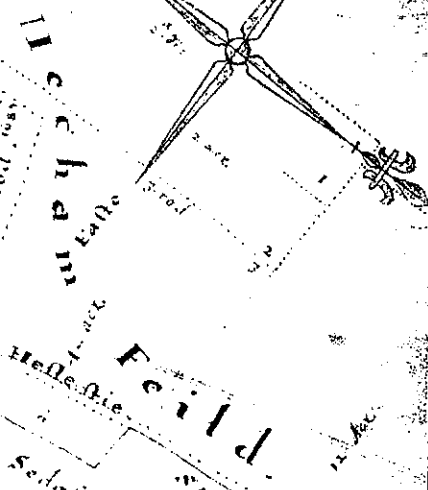
3 NRO, LeStrange P7. Household Accounts 1615-1645 - Book 2 (1630-45) folio 8

Acknowledgements.

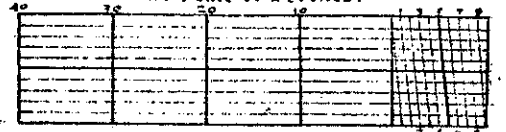
I would like to thank all the staff of the Norfolk Record Office, particularly Susan Maddock who has given much assistance to me and other members of the SHARP team. David Yaxley for introducing me to map LeStrange OC1. Peter Carnell for finding Map NR with scale and Linda Nudds who drew my attention to the index of the 1615-1645 Household Accounts; without their sharp eyes we might never have known the answers. JH March 2000

THE EIGHT PROCINCT

THE FIRST PROCINCT



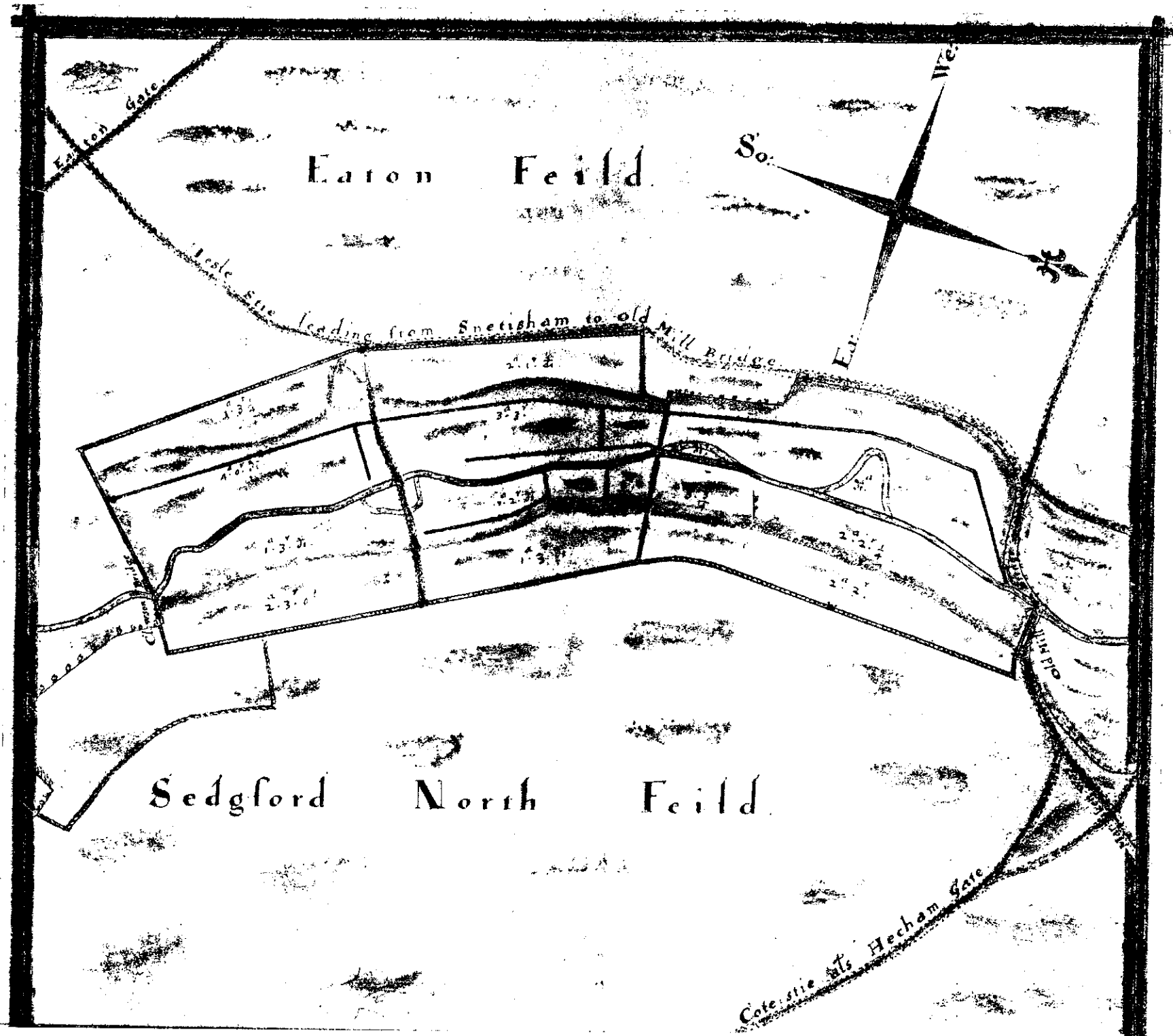
The Scale of Perches.



10. Lawes 2 acc.
17 Furlonge.

John Lawes. 8 acc.

Heacham hall
way from Sedgferd to Heacham



LEST/NR 41. Single map.