

A Miscellany of Findings from the 1580 Long House at Orchard Barn part 3

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A Selection of Ancient Nails



Nails as fixings were used in ancient Egypt and in the UK by the Romans and during the bronze age. During the Tudor period Iron nails were hand wrought and hammered into a square shape. In about 1600 a machine was created to automate the production. Round wire nails were produced from about 1890. Many examples have been found in the remains of the 1580 Longhouse.

<http://www.glasgowsteelnail.com/nailmaking.htm>

https://www.designingbuildings.co.uk/wiki/The_history_of_nails

Thatching Crooks



Many of these were found in the composted cottage. Originally a single layer of thatch, ideally 6 to 8 inches, was secured directly to the timbers of a house using a hooked steel spike known as a crook. When a thatch is repaired it becomes multi-layered and the new layer is held in place using a pointed wooden stick known as a spar. Thatched roofs in East Anglia are the longest lasting in the UK and the replacement of a high quality thatch is required after about 50 years. This has been attributed to the quality of Norfolk reed but more likely to be due to East Anglia having the driest climate of the UK.

thatchadvicecentre.co.uk/thatch-information/thatched-roofs/fixings
thatchinginfo.com.

A Flintlock Weapon Firing Mechanism



Flintlock or Firelock pistols and rifles were invented in France around 1610 and were used until the 19th century. They were used militarily or for self-defence. The term Flintlock refers to any weapon that uses a spark from a flint to ignite powder in a barrel and fire a projectile. The mechanism consisted of a hammer with a flint held between two jaws by a jaw screw. A steel frizzen, or striker, was held in place by a spring and when the trigger was pulled the spring action caused the frizzen to strike the flint on the hammer which created sparks igniting gunpowder in a priming pan. This in turn ignited the main charge in the weapon and fired the projectile. This example was found behind the fireplace at the north end of the house. This mechanism is very similar to, and could be from a Brown Bess rifle in use with the British Army from 1722 to 1838.

www.bbc.co.uk/radio4/history/making_history/makhist10_prog8d.shtml

www.britannica.com/technology/flintlock

royalarmouries.org/stories/our-collection/brown-bess-musket-or-mistres

A Georgian Half Penny Coin



Imaged by Heritage Auctions, HA.com



www.alcoveonline.com

The very worn and corroded coin at top left was found at the North West corner of the 1580 Longhouse. The coin is 29mm in diameter and is assumed to be made of copper. It is thought to be a half penny. Careful examination through a lens revealed the letters G plus ORG, and on the opposite rim E and X, (Georgius Rex). On the reverse side there is the outline of the date box and the legs of Britannia. No conclusion about the age can be determined apart from that it is from the early Georgian era. It is shown alongside photographs of representative samples of George I, George II and George III half penny coins of better quality and it is left to the reader to decide. The date will be between 1714 and 1820.

A Van Den Bergh Bottle



Van Den Bergh was a Dutch company that had a local presence in Needham Market where they produced Elmlea cream. They were absorbed into the giant American conglomerate Unilever. Production in Needham Market ceased in 2006 and transferred to Purfleet in Essex. Unilever's product portfolio is huge and includes several beverages. The product sold in this bottle has not been identified. When the Needham Market site was demolished, evidence of a Bronze Age cremation site was found along with a collection of Neolithic flints and pottery.

Gracesguide.co.uk

Unilever-archives.com

heritage.suffolk.gov.uk/Monument/MSF30071

A Thomas and Evans bottle



William Thomas and William Evans Founded a business selling groceries, general provisions and mineral water in Porth, South Wales in about 1890. One of their most well-known products was the Corona brand soft drink popular from the early 20th century. The Original name of the company was Welsh Hills Mineral Waters and the Corona brand was created in 1920 as the business expanded. The roots of the company were in the 19th century Temperance Movement where an alternative to alcohol was sought in order to control drunkenness in miners during the Rhondda Coal Rush. The business was acquired by The Beecham Group in 1958. Thomas Beecham (1820-1907) was a chemist and the Grandfather of Sir Thomas Beecham the conductor (1879-1961). They were absorbed into the world's sixth largest pharmaceutical company GlaxoSmithKline in 1989.

bbc.co.uk/blogs/wales/entries/53135141-8859-367f-b037-5a5919741e52

Gracesguide.co.uk

A 'Gin' Trap



These are the remains of a Gin Trap, a device, the use of which is now illegal, for trapping animals. These were used by farmers and gamekeepers until their use was outlawed in 1958. In the 17th century mechanical devices were known as engines, and it is thought that through illiteracy or mishearing the word became the noun Gin. Traps were widely manufactured in the UK and legislation very gradually limited their use. Man traps became illegal in 1827 and in 1904 elevated traps to catch birds were banned.

qsl.net/2e0waw/gintraps.htm

vintagetraps.co.uk

A Golden Wonder Potato Crisp packet



Also a part of social history! This bag was found buried in the debris of the house. The Golden Wonder food company was founded by William Alexander in Edinburgh in 1947 and was named after the Golden Wonder potato. It has been owned by several companies and has produced many snack products. Cheese and Onion crisps were launched in 1962 and the estimated post-decimal day date of this packet is the mid 1970's.

www.goldenwonder.com