INTERPRETATION

The stratigraphy and the contained finds suggest the following conclusions can be drawn:

Topsoil. The topsoil overlies the road. However, the upper surface of the NE feature, which is the pit dug for the flagpole, while it is overlain by topsoil, abuts the lower few centimetres. This suggests that there is an older and a younger part to the topsoil, the older part showing an imprecise boundary with the overlying topsoil. The upper of these two parts lies over all other features and probably dates to the landscaping that took place when the school was built. The lower part is likely to be the topsoil that existed before the school was built. It has an imprecise boundary with the underlying subsoil and is probably the soil that developed during the 200 years the Georgian rectory existed.

Finds in the topsoil were not differentiated between the upper and the lower layers. They include ware types such as transfer-printed Willow pattern earthenware, clear, re-enforced glass, clear bottle glass and coins including a1940 6d and an 1822 farthing. These are found only in the topsoil and the NE Feature fill. They clearly date from the 19th and 20th centuries. However, they occur with finds that can be dated from the medieval to late 18th century. There are some sherds in the topsoil that match finds from the underlying subsoil and may well be from the same vessel. These include the "unknown", unglazed post-medieval pot and the hard-paste porcelain. Thus it is inferred that the upper topsoil is probably derived from soil collected around the site, but close by and re-deposited during landscaping at the end of the building phase that gave us the school in 1965. Figure 15 shows the comparison between modern pottery content in the Topsoil and the Subsoil. What is striking is the abundance of the Staffordshire White Salt-glaze Stoneware throughout. This is a type of pottery that was made in Stoke on Trent and marketed with vigour in the period 1720 to 1780.

Burnt shale
No samples were collected from this layer. It was clearly a surface layer spread over the building rubble that was used to make the underlying road. While most of the fragments are red-brown, large pieces often have an unburned core of black or dark grey shale. Carbon-rich shale like this spontaneously ignites in colliery spoil heaps. The closest source of this type of material is Cotgrave colliery. The limit of this layer coincides with the edge of the underlying road, but because of disturbance caused by subsidence a pebbly apparent extension of this layer was evident in the section of the western face of the excavation.

Road. The roadway consists of a range of building materials but is dominantly Georgian brick. It is most likely to have been made using rubble from the demolished rectory. This puts the date for the road as early 1960s.The northern edge is orientated such that it would track back to the corner of the grounds where the western boundary wall meets the Church Street wall. This is where the original gate to the rectory grounds was and it is thought that the track unearthed in the dig is the access road built by the contractors after they demolished the old rectory (see Fig 16).

NE Feature. The NE Feature, like the topsoil contains a range of dated material that spans the medieval to the 20th century. The feature cross-cuts the lower levels of the topsoil, the subsoil and the underlying stone floor feature, but is overlain by the greater thickness of topsoil . The excavated shape of the feature is rectangular in horizontal section, reducing downwards and fits an interpretation of it being a pit into which the flagpole was set . A photograph exists of a group of peo-

ple in Edwardian dress around a flagpole roughly where the excavation is sited (Fig 17). The contained finds are mixed in age range and include transfer-printed ware types and clear glass charac-

Figure 15

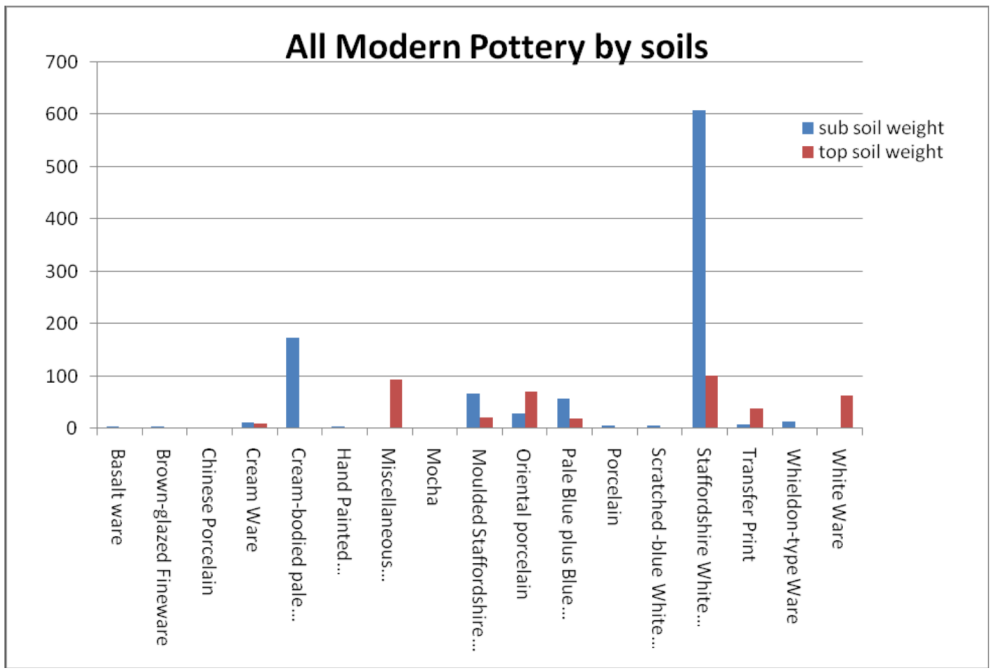

Figure 15a Comparison of the Modern pottery types found in the Topsoil with the Subsoil.

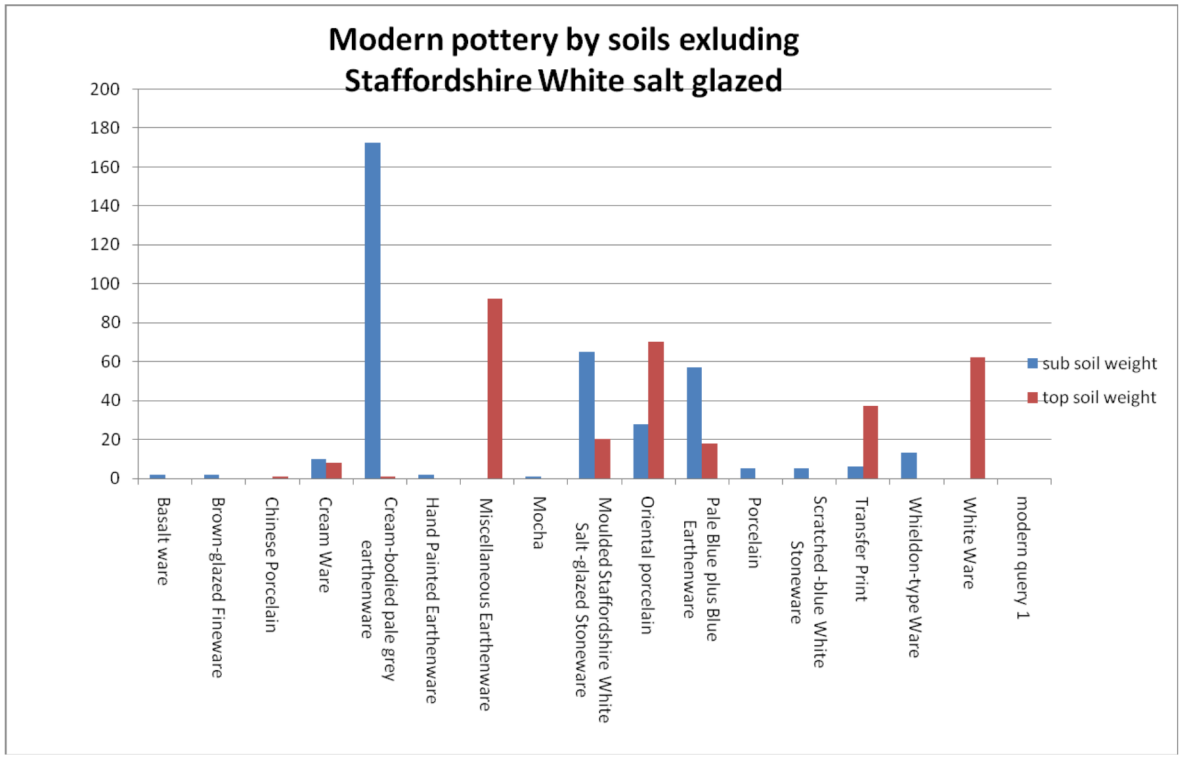

Figure 15b Comparison of Modern pottery types found in the Topsoil and the Subsoil with the Staffordshire White Salt-glaze Stoneware removed.

Fig 16 Topsoil removed to show the track of the contractor's road (left) and the test pit. The red-brown colour of the road is burnt shale.

teristic of the late 19th to 20th C. It is suggested that the flagpole was planted in the second half of the 19th century and was removed no later than when the rectory was demolished.

Subsoil. All the soil above the stone floor feature and below the topsoil has a common set of characteristics. This part of the succession consists of layers of stones, clay, crushed Mercia Mudstone, loamy soil and the demolition layer of building material. Nothing in the content of any of these layers enables any level of stratigraphical resolution and it is concluded that the whole sequence was put in place during a single event.

Fig 17 Flagpole in the front lawn of the garden. The clay wall between the school grounds and No 7 Church Street is behind the tents at the top of the picture.

Although the colour and texture of the subsoil contrasts markedly with the topsoil, the boundary between the two is not sharp. This suggests that the topsoil may be a derivative of the underlying subsoil, supporting the conclusion that the lower part of the topsoil is a remnant of the 19th century soil level.

The included finds range in date from the medieval to the 19th century, but there is a significant difference in proportion. There is some uncertainty about the identification and dating of the small number of 19th C finds, which may actually be from the boundary zone between topsoil and subsoil.

Early history

There are no more than a dozen medieval sherds, but there is, in addition, a small number of early post-medieval Cistercian Ware and Sandy Coarse Earthenware finds. The presence of all of these older finds could be explained as accidental, either because they were present on the contemporaneous land surface or as a result of upward and downward movement because of rodent or worm action. However, their presence may be of greater significance. There is documentary evidence of a house at or near this site in the late Tudor period and circumstantial evidence that there was a rectory in Bingham from 1220 when building began of the present church.

Figure 18 shows the relative abundances of the post-medieval pottery some of which have long production ranges. These include:

- Midland Purple Ware 1400 to 1550

- Sandy Coarse Earthenware c1500 to c1650
- Midland Yellow Ware 1550 to 1700
- Coarse Black Ware c1550 to c18th C
- Midland Black Ware c1575 to c1725

None of these ranges is known well and more research is required to fit the fabrics to precise date ranges, but all except Midland Purple extend into the late 17th C or beyond and it is possible that that is when they were in use and broken. However, knowing that there was a building on this site from the medieval period it is possible that the early part of the date range of these fabrics is being represented. Coarse Black Ware, for example, displays a range of fabric types including some sherds with a pitted, brown glaze that strongly resembles Cistercian Ware and may be from coarse ware vessels contemporaneous with it. The Midland Black Ware is generally from the early post-medieval period, following on from Cistercian Ware in the mid to late 16th C. Its apparent abundance here is difficult to explain if the sherds were from the end of the date range when Mottled Ware, the most abundant fabric type of all from this period was in use. The medieval fabrics (Fig 19), though few in number, are interesting in that they are dominated by Shelly Ware, which is hard to date and may be late medieval, and Midland Purple Ware, which is late medieval to early post medieval. There were very few green glaze sherds, from the 13th-14th centuries.

It is possible, therefore, that although these finds are accidental inclusions they give an indication of the presence of a rectory here from as far back as late medieval times.

Later history
The great majority of finds can be dated to the period late 17th to mid/late 18th century. Good dates are available from the Nottingham stoneware, clay pipes and the Staffordshire White Salt-glaze Stoneware. The two wine bottle seals found, with the Brunsell coat of arms also provide a good date. Reverend Samuel Brunsell was rector here from 1662 to 1687 and his son Henry from 1688 to 1708. This and one clay pipe bowl dated as likely to be 1650 to 1660 provide the earliest firm dates for the major elements of the content of the subsoil. The best reliable late date is provided by the Staffordshire White Salt-glaze Stoneware, which was made up to around 1780.

These dates provide an indication that the most likely source of the material was somewhere where domestic rubbish dating from the hundred years from the mid/late 17th to the mid 18th centuries was collected and that it was laid down in its present site before 1780.

Demolition layer. The demolition layer within the subsoil succession revealed in the northern part of the excavation is significant. The part revealed consists of mainly roof tiles. The feature forms a fan thinning to the south, which suggests that there is a greater thickness to the north of the limits of the pit. The tiles are mostly red clay roofing tiles, but some are thought to be clay floor tile. With them are pieces of narrow brick, some as thin as 2 inches and likely therefore to be Tudor/Stuart in age. Numerous pieces of limestone used as roofing are also present. It has been found elsewhere in Bingham in a mid 14th century demolition layer and is considered to have been used as a medieval roofing material on houses belonging to the wealthy. One piece of Swithland Slate, complete with a hole suggests another source was used, possibly for repairs. Glass found in this layer includes thin, flat, green glass used in leaded windows. Some pieces of plaster were collected from this layer. It has a whitewash cover on one side and reed imprints on the other. This was common throughout the pit.

The evidence of these finds indicates that this demolition layer contains rubble from a building that was possibly medieval in origin, but which had been extended or improved during later periods. The only record of such a building on this site is the rectory noted in the 1586 manorial survey, though it is not located in those records. The hearth tax returns for 1674 indicate that Dr

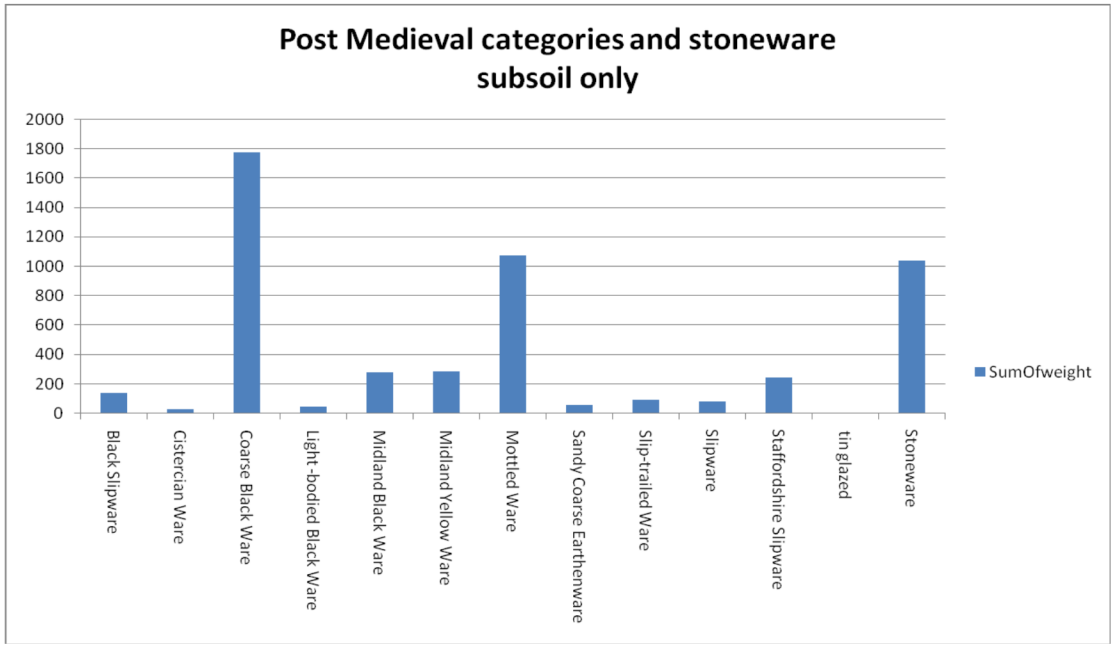

Figure 18 Relative abundance of the different types of post-medieval pottery.

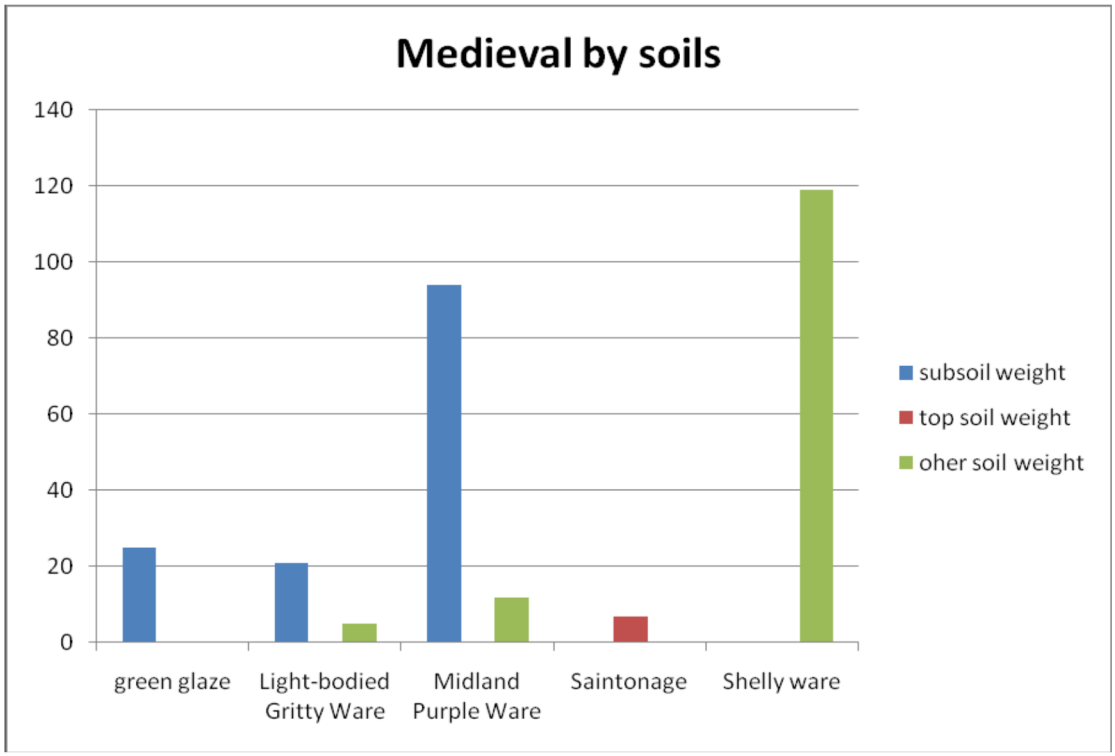

Figure 19 Relative abundance of medieval pottery types

Brunsell (probably Samuel, 1662 to 1687) paid tax on five hearths, which was a significant building (See Bingham Back in Time p 62). It is suggested that this rubble is from the rectory that preceded the Georgian building that Reverend Walter built in 1770. This agrees with the youngest date for the finds in the subsoil. The Rev Walter took over from Rev Henry Stanhope in 1764, and probably caused the existing rectory to be demolished so that he could build one that was more to his taste. The rubble arising from this demolition, inter-layered with soil from elsewhere on the

site and the rubbish tips that may have accumulated near the building was used for landscaping this part of the grounds and was laid on the stone floor of a structure that was no longer needed.

Stone floor. The material used for the stone floor is mainly local skerry, but there are pieces of brick and tile among the stones. Two iron pins are set in it. The floor seems to have been resurfaced once so that there are two layers to it in parts. The quality of the floor is not high and it is not thought to be a house floor, but either a yard or a barn. In most places where it could be examined the floor is laid on sand. The date it was laid can be assessed from the pottery finds collected beneath it. There are several medieval sherds, but significantly, there is one sherd of brown-glazed coarse earthenware. Little research has been done on the dates for coarse earthenware, but it is usually considered that the red-bodied and pink-bodied varieties came into production in the late 17th century when they replaced the Midland Yellow Ware. The evidence, therefore, suggests that the floor might have been laid in the second half of the 17th century and was in use until it was covered by rubble during the building of the new rectory in 1770.

Post hole.
The post hole was reopened during this dig, but nothing more was taken out of it than when it was first revealed.

Subsidence
A slot dug in the area of subsidence along the western side of the excavation revealed rubble made up mainly of local skerry piled up against a near vertical sand face over a metre thick. Colour variation and bedding features in the sand suggest it is a natural deposit. In test pits throughout Bingham red-brown clay till and orange sand, probably Anglian in age (c450,000 years old), were encountered, which suggests that the sand here was possibly a glacial deposit. It appears to have been dug out here and the pit filled with stone rubble before the floor was laid. The presence of medieval pottery among the stones, including a large piece of shelly ware, might suggest that the backfill was medieval, but the brown-glazed coarse earthenware found near the top questions this and makes it more likely to be late 17th C. The area of backfill coincides with the subsidence noted in the floor. In the north face of the excavation the demolition layer is faulted (shows a downstep) at the eastern edge of the subsidence and there is a disturbance in the overburden visible in the western wall coincident with the southern edge of the area of subsidence. This suggests that the subsidence occurred after the subsoil was laid on the stone floor. If a shallow hollow was created at the surface by this subsidence, it was probably filled in to keep the lawn surface level. It is implied that subsidence was caused at some time after 1770 by the stone rubble settling.

SEQUENCE OF EVENTS PORTRAYED
The following sequence of events is postulated for this succession, starting with the oldest:

- The original rectory was built at some time after 1220, the date of the church.
- Sand pit was dug out in the medieval or post-medieval period probably to use the sand in construction work
- The sand pit was back filled with stony rubble in the late 17th C and a layer of sand, lime-mortar and brick pieces was put over the rubble.
- A stone floor was laid on sand and the lime-mortar mix in the late 17thC.
- At some time after the original floor was laid it was repaired and a new surface was laid on it.
- A building of unknown type was erected requiring either the sinking of a timber structure through the floor OR this was done before the floor was laid. It is not known what function this building served, but it is almost certainly an estate building attached to the rectory which was to the north.
- This old rectory was demolished and the rubble together with material dug out during building

work around the new house was used for landscaping the grounds on completion of the new rectory in around 1770.

- At some time after the demolition rubble was laid down the stone floor subsided in the west.
- Two hounds were buried possibly in the late 18th C.
- A pit was dug for the flagpole in the late 19th or early 20th centuries.
- The Georgian rectory was demolished in the early1960s and an access road built across the site of the excavation by the contractors.
- Either then or later a new pipe line was laid to the west of the excavation.

The current topsoil was laid over the road, possibly using material brought in from elsewhere in the grounds during landscaping on completion of the school

LIFESTYLE

The artefacts recovered from this excavation can be used to draw some conclusions about the people who lived here.

The content of the subsoil reflects on the period prior to the construction of the new rectory by the Rev Walter in 1770. The date range is from the mid to late 17th C when the stone floor was laid and covers the period from the arrival of Samuel Brunsell in 1667 to 1770. In this time he, his son, Rev William Browne and the Rev Stanhope were the rectors. A number of facts can be deduced:

- According to the tax returns for the period, the house they occupied had five hearths. There was a limestone roof possibly of medieval origin and a later pantile roof. Evidence is found of whitewashed plaster walls and glass leaded windows. The rectory was built in part by brick including 2-inch Tudor/Stuart brick, but there are stones in the demolition layer suggesting that the walls may also have been stone. Red clay tiles were used for the floor. Further details would require excavating to the north of this pit to examine the remainder of the building debris, but this all indicates a substantial house.
- Rectories of this period were set in glebe land that would have been farmed by the rector or his farm manager. In the 1586 manorial survey over 60 acres are shown as glebe, though 52 acres are arable strips. In the 1776 survey there are 38 acres. In both periods, however, the rector would have had access to the common grazing to the north in an area that is now north of the railway line. Evidence from the bones suggests that they farmed cattle, pigs, sheep and had goats and chickens. A single tooth is all the evidence for them having horses. Pets included dogs and cats.
- It seems likely that the rector was interested in modern breeding techniques for both his beef cattle and his sheep. The large size of the beef thigh bones and the curvature of the lower leg bones suggest that the rector was up to date in breeding beef cattle with a heavy upper body and short, poorly developed lower legs, typical of the period. One sheep jawbone with perfect teeth hints at a prize animal, possibly used for breeding and for show.
- The range of bones found covers the whole skeleton and shows that animals were probably slaughtered on site. There are butcher's cut marks on nearly every bone and on some leg bones there is a hole used for hanging the meat.
- The eating habits of the rector and his family can be inferred by the bones, the pottery and other artefacts found. The wine bottles containing a seal with the Brunsell coat of arms gives some indication of the tastes and wealth of the family. A large amount of beef was eaten and there are bones that appear to have been discarded with meat still on them. Marrow was extracted, but not thoroughly. Mutton and pork were also consumed, but little lamb. Whole jawbones suggest that sheep's head was eaten. This is usually meat for the poor and may have been part of the servants' diet. Discarded bones were given to the dogs but the kitchen rubbish was left in a place where rats could gain access to it.
- There is evidence of fine tableware. The Staffordshire White Salt-glaze Stoneware was produced in vast quantities for the middle class in the middle 18th C. The very rich used imported ori-

ental porcelain in the late 17th and first half of the 18th centuries. There is no evidence of this having happened here. Fragments of one bowl of oriental porcelain and a single sherd of a hand-painted, possibly Chinese ware have been found, but the date range is uncertain. High quality Whieldon-type ware, Scratched-blue stoneware and Black Basalt are also rare.

- Instead there is a good range of Mottled Ware, Slipware and Nottingham stoneware for the late 17th and early 18th C period. The Nottingham stoneware sherds are mostly mugs, cups and some jars. There were no sherds of plates or other tableware. The slip-trailed wares, though common, are not plentiful, but they are indicative of the earliest decorative wares produced in England. There is also a limited range of combed slipware, mostly from dishes, possibly baking dishes and generally considered to be utilitarian. Mottle Ware, however, showed a wide range of vessel type including mugs, cups, bowls and chamber pots. There were no Mottled Ware flatware sherds. It seems that the household continued to use pewter for the table until the appearance of the Staffordshire White Salt-glazed Stoneware in or after 1720.

The large quantity of coarse wares almost certainly originated in the kitchen and dairy. The rims of many pancheons were found, some over 50 cm (20 inches) diameter. These would have been used for separating cream from the milk in the dairy. Large upright vessels would have been for storage in the kitchen. A good deal of vitrified ware was found. These sherds nearly always are from upright vessels in the size range 20 to 30 cm (8 to 12 inches). These were probably butter-pots and were often used by farmers to store and sell butter. While most of the coarse ware is red-bodied or pink-bodied with a black or brown glaze some early ware types are represented by Midland Yellow Ware. This went out of fashion in the late 17th C in the East Midlands when it was replaced by the red-bodied and pink-bodied wares. Most of the Midland Yellow Ware sherds were of coarse ware most likely to be used in the kitchen or diary, but there were some fine ware sherds, glazed on both sides that may have been from cups or candle sticks used in the big house.

The most puzzling finds are Midland Black Ware. There is sufficient for it to have been in contemporary use, even though it is generally considered to be most widely used in the late 16th and early to mid 17th centuries. It is all fine ware, some pieces with handles suggesting cups. In this period it would have been used mainly by the wealthy, because pewter was more commonly used for drinking vessels.

When the Reverend Walter came to Bingham in 1764 he was known to be wealthy and a hunting man. A few finds, such as the buried hounds and the stirrup found with one of them confirm this. Household rubbish from his period, however, is absent. The content of this excavation is dominated by rubbish generated during the period prior to his arrival in Bingham and seems to suggest that his household rubbish was deposited elsewhere in the grounds.