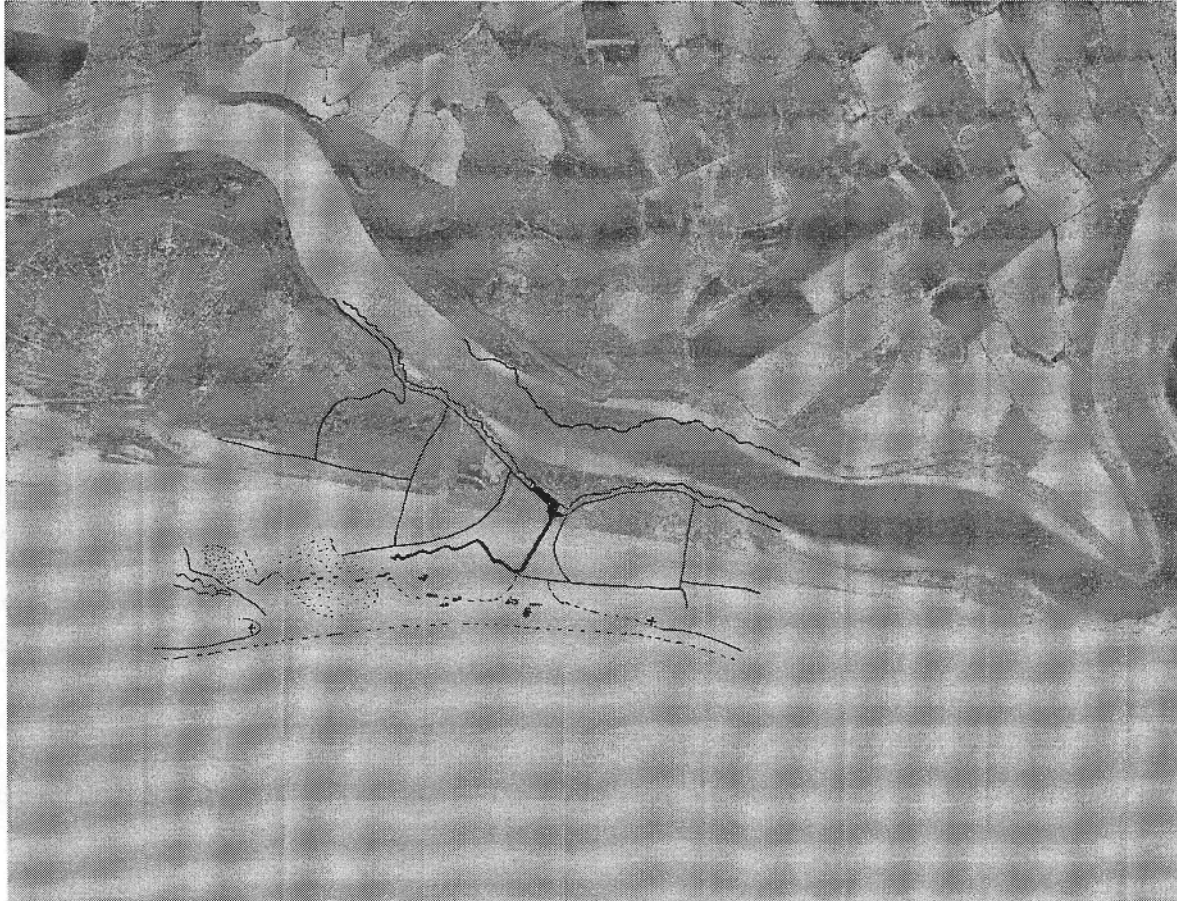


They are merchantmen: the smart three-master has a white ensign on its mainmast, a long blue pennant on its foremast and a red and white pennant on its lengthy bowsprit, a spritsail billows beyond its beak head. This is very much a 'Mayflower' ship⁷. The other vessel is in the damaged area, and is single-masted with a flag flying from the head. It flies a long pennant and clearly has a spritsail controlled by vang, a foresail, a beak-head and a raised stern cabin with another pennant above it. No bowsprit is apparent.

Finally, it is possible to measure retreat on this section of Orford Ness during four centuries. Using Getmapping's *Suffolk from the Air* photographed in 2000 the relevant area may be scaled to provide 'best fit' on the Norden survey and the differences measured by means of the computer program.



Aerial photograph with an outline of the 1600 survey superimposed to show varying amount of erosion (Getmapping plc & author)

Loss of land is most severe to the south - in the region of 560 m; in the centre it amounts to about 406 m and to some 270 m at its northern end. The mean amount of land lost over four hundred years is thus 1.03 m per annum⁸. In 2000 the line of walls and mudflats along the east bank of the river appeared to be unchanged with the exception of a triangular area of salt marsh about 140 m across where the breach occurred in 1600. Despite this, the river has not become wider here because a corresponding area on the west bank has been eroded.

This map could not provide a greater contrast with the luminous neatness of Norden's survey of the Stanhope estate - harsh reality as opposed to gentle perfection. It highlights the advisory role played by the best land surveyors in the Tudor period.

Valerie Fenwick