

## GORE END, MINNIS BAY, BIRCHINGTON

from "Gateway Island" by The Isle of Thanet Archaeological Trust  
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Medieval and later remains from the lost village are occasionally uncovered by winter gales, when the 'storm beach' of flints is scoured away to reveal the 'Thanet Beds'. Medieval features take the form of pits filled with brown loam. From the surface of these infills can be obtained pot sherds in Tyler Hill fabrics of the 13<sup>th</sup> century. A demolished building of Tudor and Georgian bricks and with complete roof thatch was exposed in 1986\*.

\* The details on this discovery can be found in the T.A.U.'s records

I am puzzled as to the insistence of this 'lost village' idea. It appears to have been begun by Philip Symondson (1596) and continued by Thomas Hill (1688), but it was formulated on the misunderstanding of the ruined church at Shuart. For many years this was thought to have been at Minnis Bay and it was suggested that the stones from this had been used in the construction of All Saints Church in Birchington Square, see the cartouche on Hill's 1688 map. Since the excavations at Shuart in 1978, it is now known that the two churches were both in full use at the same time, so Thomas Hill's suggestion that there was a 'lost village' proved totally unfounded. It would appear that there has been a community at Gore End as long as there has been one in the heart of the village, but we have yet to find any evidence that there was ever a church down there, or that it functioned as a separate unit.

The statement that Gore End was sometimes mentioned first, while at other times Birchington was mentioned first in the Cinque Port Documents, is again very ambiguous. Birchington paid the dues to Dover because there had originally been a small haven or 'gore' inlet at Gore End, but the majority of money needed for this toll was raised in the heart of Birchington.

Incidentally, the gore-shaped inlet can clearly be seen on the 1840 Tithe Map, showing it still filled with water at this date, albeit now trapped by a bank of earth.