

# Norfolk Historic Buildings Group


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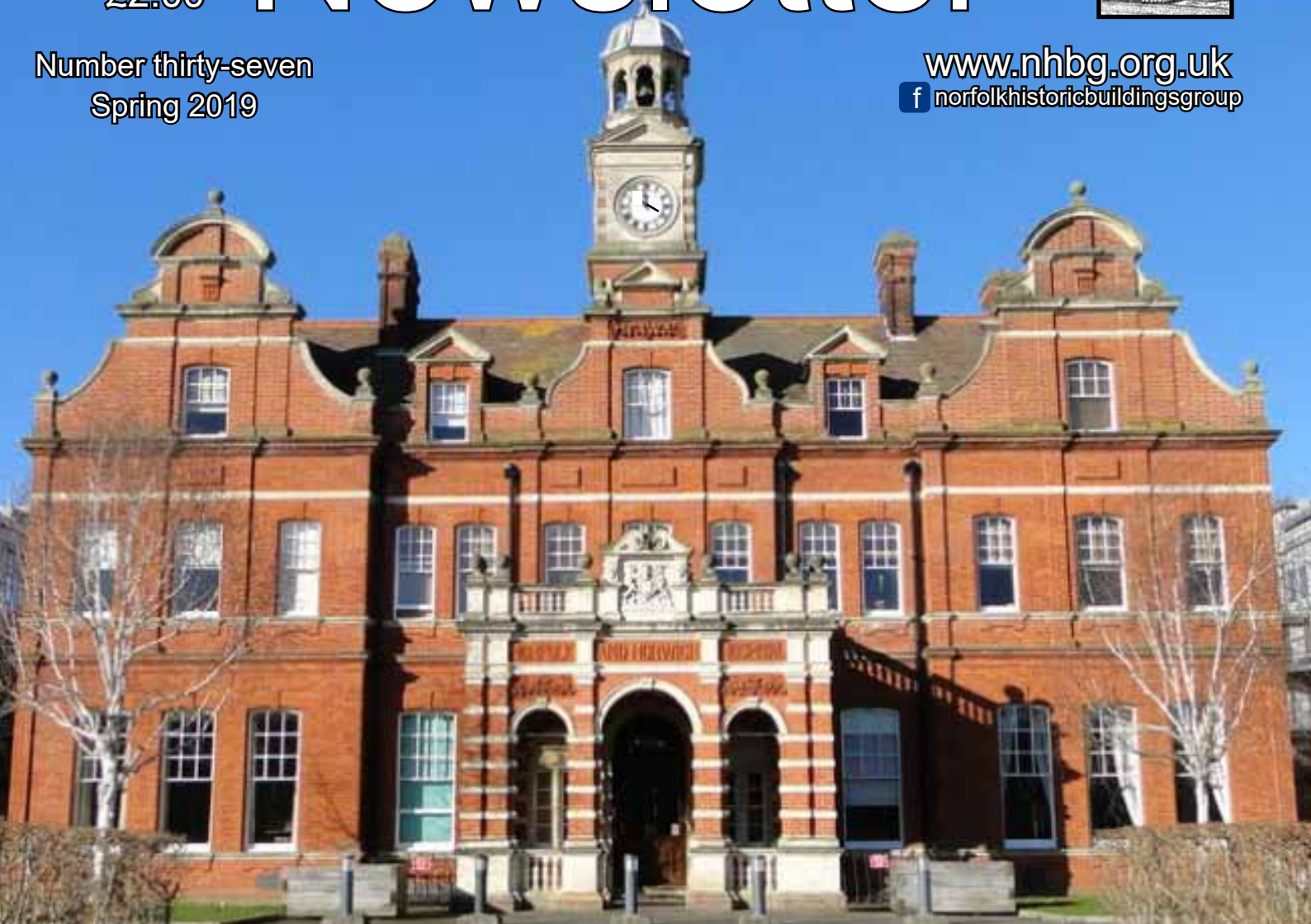
# Newsletter



Number thirty-seven  
Spring 2019

[www.nhbg.org.uk](http://www.nhbg.org.uk)

 [norfolkhistoricbuildingsgroup](https://www.facebook.com/norfolkhistoricbuildingsgroup)



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# CHAIR

Welcome to Newsletter 37, the NHBG's first full-colour edition. Since the Newsletter is one of the principal ways of announcing and promoting the Group's activities, the Committee felt that the small extra expense was worthwhile (it will also save me from having to produce two separate versions - a colour one for the web and a monochrome printed one).

The committee is still three members short of the full quota, and whilst the Group almost runs itself, none of us is getting any younger and gradually committee members move further away, so it is important to attract new committee members to ensure continuity, as well as at the same time introducing new blood with fresh ideas. Stagnation can be a problem when running a voluntary group - why not continue to carry on doing something that has worked in the past? There is comfort in habit but it is not necessarily the best way to move forward, either with planning future research, group visits and lectures, or in attracting new members.

It can be as involving and time-consuming as you want, there is no prescription as to what committee members should get involved in. No experience of running a group is necessary- only an interest in the activities of the Group! We meet roughly every six weeks in Norwich.

If you have a little free time, please consider getting involved. We **can** carry on without you, but as time goes on, this will become more difficult.

**Ian Hinton**  
**Chair, Norfolk Historic Buildings Group**  
**March 2019**  
*ian.hinton222@btinternet.com*

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3 Vacancies

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## Administration

### NHBG Accounts

The Group currently spends £330 (10% of the annual membership income) on having the annual accounts prepared by a firm of accountants each year for the AGM. This was started when the group began, as the then Treasurer used the same firm for other business. What is prepared for us is a Balance Sheet and an Income and Expenditure account, including asset values for unsold Journals etc.. This may reflect the true value of a small business, but it does not help us run the Group. In our case, once Journals have been printed they have no real value until they are sold, we do not need a "going-concern" valuation. Neither is it an audit of procedures which would be far more relevant to us.

Our constitution requires only that our annual figures are "examined" to ensure accuracy. Two other local groups of a similar size have arrangements with one of their members to audit the procedures used by the Treasurer, and to check the money trail for income and expenditure accuracy. This seems to be all that we need too. Our accounts are small and simple and are regularly checked in some detail at our six-weekly committee meetings.

The committee has discussed this issue and decided to present an option to the AGM that we follow a similar arrangement to our local colleagues. This will require a member who is numerate to volunteer to review the procedures (using a member who is an active accountant involves issues of insurance etc.).

In the interests of overall transparency, it would be ideal if a member volunteered, but if no-one feels able to do so, the committee will propose one or two committee members to undertake this process, assuming that the membership agrees with this suggestion at the AGM.

*Cover photos: Norfolk and Norwich Hospital - the work of Edward Boardman, and the plaque in Cosseyware outside the Old Bank of England Court in Queen Street. photos: Ian Hinton*

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# Summer Programme 2019

If booking by post, please use the forms provided to book, **with a separate cheque for each event**, even if going to the same person. IF YOU WANT TICKETS POSTED TO YOU, DON'T FORGET the SAE.

If you are happy to receive the tickets by email, DO NOT SEND AN SAE, the tickets will be despatched by email, but I am afraid that, until the Bank allows voluntary groups to have full access to phone or internet banking, the cheque is best for us as it is the only way that we know payment has been made until several weeks later.

We have attempted to avoid having limits on numbers attending, but at some venues we have no choice. Booking is on a first come, first served basis, but if there is considerable over-demand we will try and run a similar event in the future. *Dominic Summers*

## Church Day Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> May

*Time:* 10:30 - 3:30 pm  
*Meet:* Beachamwell church PE37 8BD  
*Parking:* on street  
*Cost:* £10  
*Limit:* no limit (members only)  
*Walking:* Churchyards  
*Food:* BYO picnic  
*Contact:* Ian Hinton  
01603 431311  
ian.hinton222@btinternet.com

We will be visiting four churches that were once part of rich west Norfolk's array of small manors, each with their own church - Beachamwell, Barton Bendish and Gooderstone. Barton Bendish still has two of its three churches standing, whilst the remains of two of Beechamwell's three are hidden away in the undergrowth away from the current village. The magnificent Gooderstone shows what a wealthy village church looked like in the fourteenth century without being too spoiled since - its screen and benches rival those anywhere.

## Discover Building Stones Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> May

*Time:* 10:00 - 4:00 pm  
*Meet:* Halvergate Church NR13 3AJ  
*Cost:* £10  
*Limit:* no limit (members only)  
*Walking:* Churchyards  
*Food:* BYO picnic  
*Contact:* Ian Hinton  
01603 431311  
ian.hinton222@btinternet.com

You will be surprised where the stones in the walls of Norfolk's buildings come from - old lava querns from Germany, erratics shifted by glaciers, stone culled from Roman remains, ballast stones and bricks brought over in ships from the Low Countries, as well as exotic boulders from rivers and beaches.

Local geologist Tim Holt-Wilson will show us all these and more in the walls of Norfolk buildings and show us how to recognize them for the future.

## Great Yarmouth Town Walk Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> June

*Time:* 2:30 pm  
*Meet:* to be arranged  
*Cost:* £10

*Park:* Public Car Parks  
*Limit:* no limit (members only)  
*Walking:* Pavements & a little distance  
*Contact:* Maggy Chatterley  
01603 431311  
maggy6@btinternet.com

One of Yarmouth Historical Society's guides will show us round Yarmouth's unique early landscape of the Row Houses, along with The Tolhouse - a first-floor hall of the 12C and one of the earliest secular stone buildings in the county - the well-preserved ruins of Grey Friars and the merchants' houses of South Quay.

If you are not an English Heritage member, you may have to pay to see inside the Row House

## Bungay Town Walk Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> June

*Time:* Walk starts at 11:00 am  
*Meet:* Bungay Butter Market  
*Parking:* Public car parks in Bungay  
*Cost:* none  
*Limit:* none  
*Walking:* Mostly roads and pavements  
*Contact:* Dominic Summers  
07709 028192  
d.summers1@btinternet.com

We will be shown round Bungay by local historian and author Chris Reeve. Bungay Castle was one of Bigod's castles and the town has two magnificent churches, one with a round tower with possible Saxon masonry and the other attached to remains of a Priory. The town has a number of timber-framed buildings, some of which survived the catastrophic sixteenth-century fire.

We should have access to one or two of the buildings in the town centre, owned, and being renovated, by the Bungay Society.

## followed by the AGM @ Bungay Community Centre, Upper Olland Street NR35 1BE

*Time:* 1:00 pm - soup and bread rolls, 1:30 pm AGM  
*Please return ticket, or email Dominic, for catering numbers*  
*Contact:* Dominic Summers,  
d.summers1@btinternet.com  
AGM Papers to follow nearer the date.

## Dyson's Farm, Tibenham & Summer Party (NR16 1PD) Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> July

*Time:* 2:30pm  
*Meet:* Dyson's Farm  
*Cost:* £15  
*Limit:* no limit (members only)  
*Walking:* Stairs  
*Contact:* Lynne Hodge  
01263 741950  
lynne@walknorfolk.co.uk

Mark Ribbands - a new NHBG member - has invited members to have a detailed look at Dyson's Farm. He has been repairing this magnificent sixteenth-century timber-framed house for the last twenty years. It has a jettied gable end and a probable first-floor hall. It also has an early, almost original, stair tower/porch over the cross-passage door. Many of the doorways have carved spandrels. (SEE PAGE 19)

We have been invited to have drinks and nibbles on the lawn afterwards (in the house if wet).

## The Priory, Magdalen (PE34 3AZ) and St Mary Magdalen Church Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> August

*Time:* 2:30pm  
*Meet:* The Priory  
*Cost:* £10  
*Limit:* 30 (members only)  
*Walking:* Stairs  
*Contact:* Mary Ash  
01603 616285  
mary.ash@ntlworld.com

We have been invited by NHBG members Nick Balaam and Liz Pye to have a detailed look at The Priory. The listing text says "Originally a timber framed, T-plan, hall house of around 1500, it was remodelled with an inserted floor around 1525 when encased in brick. It has a projecting jettied service wing which was later truncated to match the porch. The doorway has wave-moulded jambs and a lintel of moulded brick under a square hoodmould".

Nick and Liz are not so sure this is accurate, neither are Susan & Michael Brown. There are lots of stunning original features to see - a screens passage, roll-moulded joists and the fanciest carved joist we have ever seen. All right next to the stunning church of Wiggenhall St Mary Magdalen.

## The Old Courts and Yards of Norwich: a brief history

(October 4<sup>th</sup> 2018)

Frances & Michael Holmes

In Norwich a typical old yard or court (the terms are interchangeable) was located behind an ancient building which fronted the street. It was entered through a narrow opening, often tunnel-like which led to a cul-de-sac. Around its perimeter were shoddy dwellings, often formed out of larger houses, which shared inadequate water supplies and toilets. Occupants living in yards suffered from both a lack of ventilation and dismal light. At the turn of the twentieth century the yards were notorious for containing the City's worst slums, sadly they also they provided accommodation for around 10% of the City's population.

### Origins

To understand how and why the yards developed we need to go back to the middle ages when Norwich was a rich trading centre. Its citizens lived within a protective wall. As time progressed and the population increased rather than build in the open spaces that proliferated within these walls speculative builders put up inadequate buildings behind the properties that lined the main streets, thus the courts and yards made their appearance. This pattern of infilling behind old houses lining the street continued through the nineteenth century, such that even in the twentieth century many courts and yards were located behind ancient houses. Such accommodation was in high demand by low-paid workers looking for cheap accommodation. The position deteriorated in the latter decades of the nineteenth century when the City's population increased threefold. Expansion was so great that by 1900 there were around 650 yards within Norwich.



*Thoroughfare Yard c1920*

### Conditions

The major problems experienced in yard properties arose from the fact that they had been shoe-horned into small spaces. When combined with their narrow entrances and cul-de-sac formations it is no wonder that two major problems of the yards were the lack of light and ventilation. Often there was no water supply to the houses, the only water available to families was by means of a single pump in the yard. Toilets were communal, many did not flush consisting of a 'bin' covered with a toilet seat, which were emptied weekly by scavengers. As such it is no wonder that when we asked people who lived in the yards if they knew of an item that characterised them, they simply said 'the smell'.

Despite such problems the interior of houses would often be exceptionally clean and neat. This involved a huge amount of work, normally by women, who would spend all day doing simple tasks, such as the weekly wash. To keep the house spotless some would even whitewash the kitchen walls as part of the weekly clean.



*The ladies of Globe Yard c1916*



*Woods Yard, Mariners Lane 1938*

### Demise of the Yards

Early programmes designed to improve living conditions in the old courts and yards failed to address a basic issue: people lived in the yards because they could not afford to live anywhere else, and until a viable alternative could be provided this is where they would continue to reside. To break the stalemate the government needed to intercede, but without the support of their electorate they were reluctant to act. However, the First World War was a catalyst for change. Following the conflict, the country demanded 'Homes Fit for Heroes'. In response Norwich City Council began a council house building programme, building houses of exceptionally high quality e.g. the Mile Cross Estate. Unfortunately, rents for such properties were unaffordable for many yard dwellers, but in 1930 this all changed. For the first



*Beckwith Court c1930*



*Lowe's Yard 1937*

*Photos:*

*Thoroughfare, Beckwith, Globe & Lowe's - Norfolk County Council Library & Info Service*

*Wood's Yard - Philip Armes*

The book of 'Old Courts and Yards of Norwich' by Frances & Michael is published by Norwich Heritage Projects, an independent non-profit-making organisation

time, council house building programmes were linked with slum-clearance activity. In the following decade Norwich City Council undertook an extensive house building/ slum clearance programme. From 1930 until the outbreak of the Second World War slum clearance programmes undertaken in Norwich affected around 3,300 houses and 10,000 people: approximately half of both the people and properties affected were located in the yards. By the outbreak of the war although the worst of the yards had been cleared, many remained. However, after the war work recommenced.

### The Yards Today

There are still numerous examples of old yards around the City. These take many forms. Some are ancient yards that have been renovated and refurbished e.g. Swan Yard (King Street) elsewhere new yards have been erected in the same area, sometimes on the same footprint, of an old yard. Some of the most poignant examples are where the old yards have been demolished but the names live on in modern social housing schemes where residents live in comfort and security beyond the dreams of the original residents of the City's old yards.

And so, next time you wander around the City keep an eye out for the many narrow entrances and alleyways above which a sign indicates the existence of an old court or yard, and bear a thought for the communities that once called them home.

## Members Contribution

### VAG Winter Conference 5/6 January 2019 (Vernacular Landscapes)

#### Rosemary Forrest

This year the conference looked at Vernacular Landscapes thereby taking a much broader, contextual view of buildings. It aimed to explore the relationship between the house and its curtilage, settlement, community and wider landscape or 'Pays'. Many questions had been posed before the conference began. Twelve speakers from around the country attempted to answer them. This was not easy as many of the responses involved complex answers drawn from a wide range of, sometimes suspect, evidence, including landscapes themselves.

On the question of evidence, there was much reliance on maps and different forms of mapping: old maps did not necessarily have the authenticity of the Ordnance Survey and very often had one specific purpose in mind; distribution mapping could help with regional and national variations. Landscape itself is, as W G Hoskins remarked, a palimpsest which has to be stripped back before it discloses features such as hidden roads and lost buildings. Buildings themselves may hide their original orientations in subsequent alterations to form and function.

Landscapes from the Castle elite to the Durham Coalfield in the 17th and 18th Centuries, a rural village under threat to a single house in the High Weald, settlement to individual farms and the changing arrangement of their ancillary buildings were probed. It became obvious that the landscape was viewed from two aspects: the approach and from the interior of a building. It was debated that the approach, certainly in elite landscapes, had a designed element to show power and wealth which, due to the

spatial and social constraints, in time became more discrete or non-existent. Increases in tenurial holdings and in the coalfield a sudden rise in population meant that there was little or no scope for display in and around houses. Adam Menuge used maps to reconcile the approach of buildings of the elite landscapes to those lower down the scale. He felt that buildings responded to their landscape: they channel and display landscapes, act as beacons on wealth, and receive and transmit messages.

Another aspect of evidence when looking at vernacular landscapes was the number of references made to Continental art and building practices. This was particularly so when Edward Martin talked about glass and windows. Windows frame the landscapes from the inside and help to communicate the function of buildings when viewed from the landscapes around them.

The conference gave a very broad look at changing landscapes and how buildings and settlements nestle or stand out within those landscapes. The speakers were excellent and all shared clear photographs describing their points. It was obvious that the VAG is taking a wider view of buildings beyond scarf joints and in so doing opens the subject to continuing discussion.

Norfolk Historic Buildings Group is an associate member of the national Vernacular Architecture Group and its members are entitled to attend VAG Conferences and Meetings. Do go. You will meet fascinating people who are very happy to share their knowledge and experiences.

## Building a Modern City: the work of Edward & Edward Thomas Boardman (December 7<sup>th</sup> 2018) David Bussey

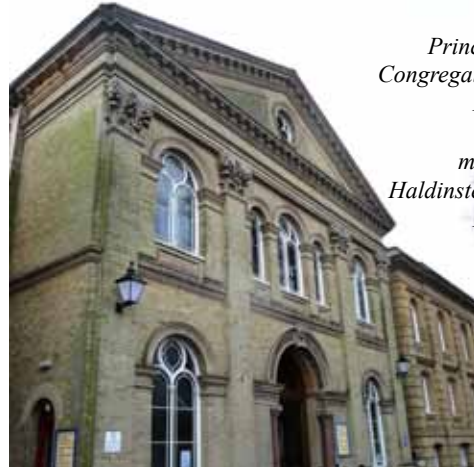
Edward Boardman (1833-1910) began his architectural practice in Norwich about 1860. Together with his son, Edward Thomas Boardman, who joined the firm twenty years later, he had a huge impact on the urban scene, designing all kinds of buildings required by an expanding Victorian city. He was a shrewd businessman of course but his nonconformist background also gave him a strong belief in the virtues of hard work and public service. Indeed links with the powerful group of nonconformist entrepreneurs that dominated nineteenth-century Norwich were behind many of his commissions.

Boardman was a Deacon at Princes Street Congregational church, as was his father, and not surprisingly was called upon to extend the building and add a new frontage to accommodate its growing congregation. Later he added schoolrooms, today forming the architectural department of Norwich University of the Arts. His work here and in other nonconformist chapels, for example on Chapel Field and Queens Road, seems deliberately to adopt an architectural vocabulary that sets it apart from the many Gothic Anglican churches in Norwich. He gave Princes Street a Classical temple front - a Christian temple, with a quotation from the Book of Psalms carved over the main entrance and lambs and cherubs incorporated into Corinthian capitals.

The architects were responsible for several of the large factories that used to dominate the centre of Norwich. Much has been lost of course. Of Norman & Beard, which claimed to be the largest organ makers in Europe, only the pipe-making workshop remains, a chapel-like building in St Stephen's Square converted into flats. Caley's works in Chapel Field were destroyed by enemy action in 1942 and just one part of Haldinstein's shoe factory in Queen Street can be seen now, next to Boardman's office, with an elegant cornice. The most substantial survival is the impressive long frontage of Howlett & White's shoe factory on Colegate. Boardman was called in first to double and then to redouble the building. It illustrates his ability to use brickwork and gentle Classical ornament to moderate an essentially utilitarian works. For nonconformist employers such as Caley and White, these factories embodied the sterling values of temperance and hard work.

New prosperity fostered demands for shops, and Edward Boardman was appointed architect to the London Street Improvement Committee. He prepared nineteen designs, several in a fashionable polychromatic Venetian Gothic manner, but of those that were built few survive. The most striking of these is a lively and eclectic building on the corner of Castle Street and London Street, originally Mr Beatley's Hat Shop, and now Whittard. In contrast Howlett's Piano Warehouse, on the corner of the Market Place, has been cut down and overpainted so that its original splendour can only be seen in Boardman's drawings. In this part of Norwich he was also commissioned to design offices for the Nonconformist law firm of Cozens-Hardy & Jewson, conforming to the profession's self-image by producing an elegantly restrained Classical town house in yellow brick and terracotta.

Boardman's most substantial public project was rebuilding the Norfolk and Norwich Hospital which had too few beds for a growing city. The jumble of existing buildings were ill-equipped to deal with industrial injuries and stop infection spreading. Working at first with the older London architect T. H. Wyatt, he developed a project that incorporated modern practices,



*top:  
Princes Street  
Congregational Church,  
1869*



*middle:  
Haldinstein's Factory,  
1872*

*all photos:  
David Bussey*



*Mr Beatley's Hat Shop 1880*



*Drawings for Howlett & Sons, London Street, 1876*

most notably the widely spaced wards advocated by Florence Nightingale. It was the first major 'Queen Anne' building in Norwich, a style that used red brick and white woodwork to revive the elegance of 17th and early 18th century England. The result was a huge achievement, entirely paid for by public subscription, and Boardman's work cleverly expresses civic pride without suggesting unnecessary extravagance.

Such civic-mindedness also lay behind his proposal to convert the Castle, empty once the County Gaol was relocated behind Britannia Barracks, into a public museum. Boardman had been involved with the local museum for some time, which was at first just a meeting place for local antiquarians but with this move could fulfil the deeper aim of giving social and educational opportunities for the growing industrial classes.

The last major project of the firm, at least before the First World War, was the Royal Hotel, mainly the work of Edward Thomas Boardman. It was built in 13 months, opening in November 1897 in time for Cattle Week at the market opposite, a grand castle in red brick, terracotta and stone, with turrets and pinnacles in the style of Alfred Waterhouse's Prudential Offices around the country. It was to be a modern hotel for the railway age at the top of the hill leading from Thorpe Station, and despite having no provision for the motor car remained a hotel until the 1970s.



above and left:  
Castle Chambers, the Classical town house designed for Cozens-Hardy and Jewson in 1877



The grand entrance to Boardman's rebuilt Norfolk & Norwich Hospital, 1883



The Royal Hotel, by Edward Thomas Boardman, 1897

David Bussey is a local art historian, retired from teaching english and art history at St Pauls School in London.

## Plea for research assistance

### Carpenters' marks using Arabic numerals

Bill Hardy has recently joined the NHBG Facebook Group and is now requesting help from NHBG members in his research into carpenters' marks using Arabic numerals.

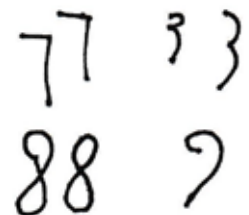
Bill writes:-

I have an extensive database of Roman style carpenters' assembly marks recorded mainly in Hertfordshire and Essex. Presently, I am undertaking the compilation of a new Airtable database of the occurrence of early Arabic carpenters' assembly marks in timber-framed buildings. My study is at the instigation of dendrochronologists Dr Martin Bridge at UCL and with the encouragement of Dr Daniel Miles at the Oxford Tree-Ring Laboratory. I am a member of the Essex Historic Buildings Group.

As you may be aware, only some 25 buildings with these comparatively rare carpentry marks are known in England and those found usually have royal, ecclesiastical or manorial patronage who employed 'educated' master carpenters. Last year I was able to locate and record other recordings in ecclesiastical buildings in Kings' College Chapel, Cambridge, (1508 / 1515), the Central Tower in Durham Cathedral (1510 / 1517), as well as a cloth merchant's house in Colchester (c.1600) and a vicarage in Herefordshire (1530 / 1540).

If any of your members should visit a building with sequences of carpenters' marks that don't seem to fit the common Roman style I would appreciate a call and an opportunity to record them. The earliest Arabic marks were recorded by dendrochronologist Dan Miles in Salisbury Cathedral and date from 1222 and 1251.

Kind regards, Bill Hardy billhardy88@gmail.com



examples from Eastern Trinity Chapel

## The Development of Sash Windows from 17th-20th century

(November 14<sup>th</sup> 2018)

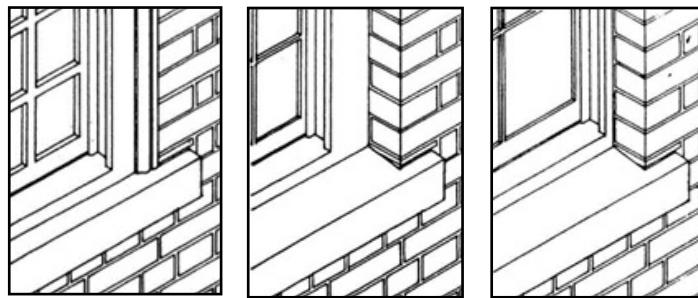
Ian McKechnie

Ian McKechnie's talk discussed the British sash window; a vertical two sash sliding windows with a counter balancing device invented in the early 1670s by Wren or Hooke but more probably by Thomas Kinward, Charles II's master joiner.

A missing link window based on the typical seventeenth-century mullion and transom window, but with a lower framed panel of leaded lights with counter balancing weights dated 1671 was discovered at Palace House Mansions in Newmarket built for the King by William Sansom.

However, attributing a date to subsequent sash windows is difficult, because they were subject to fashion as well as rot, the sliding sashes themselves were altered to bring them up to date but could remain in their original frames. Their design was subject to local tradition, fashion lag, the building's status or even the status of the part of the building in which they were installed.

The first windows had their frame fully exposed and were placed close to the external wall face, which is where they remain in timber-framed buildings; the sashes had small multiple panes with thick glazing bars. Often only the lower sash was operable, but the double-hung sash became the standard after 1700. Following the Great Fire of London in 1709 the London Building Act ordered that windows should be set back 4 inches from the face of the wall and in 1774 called for the frame to be set behind the masonry.



Traditionally, sashes were placed close to the outer surface of the building, with architrave to disguise the joint

The London Building Act of 1709 required sashes to be set back 4 inches from the surface to improve fire resistance

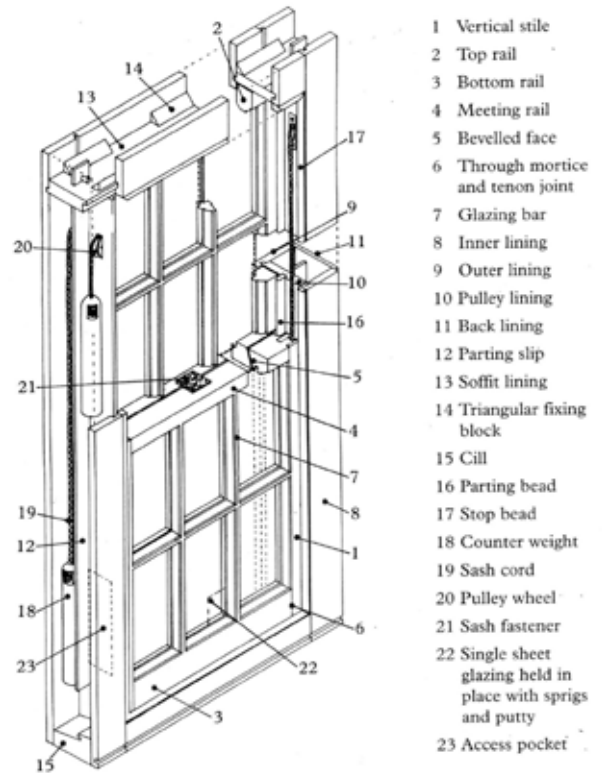
After the London Building Act of 1774, sashes had to be set in a rebate behind the masonry

The key element discussed in considering sash window development is the attenuation of the glazing bar, from the square ovolo, common up to the mid 18<sup>th</sup> century, after which bars became thinner (in different profiles and materials) till they reached their most elegant proportions in the 1790s. But as increased glass sizes became available, glazing bars became redundant. The holy grail of ultimate transparency (no bars) was achieved in the mid nineteenth centuries.

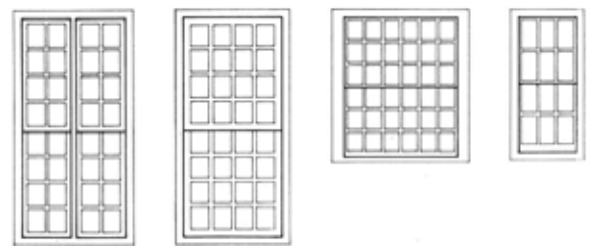
However at the end of the century fashion changed and the Queen Anne revival and the Arts and Crafts movement bought a return to the multi-pane window and the square ovolo section.

Each part of the sash window has its own development; the sash frames along with the glazing bars got thinner including the meeting rails, the lower sash had a groove which eliminated the glazing rebate to take the glass.

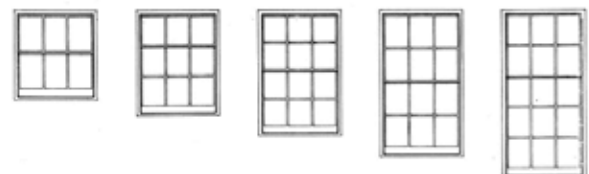
In the nineteenth century with increased glass sizes the frames were strengthened by mortice and tenon joints, which required 'horns' for added strength at the meeting rail.



drawings and photos: Ian McKechnie



Late 17th to early 18th century - small panes and thick glazing bars



Later 18th century window proportions, larger panes and refined glazing bar sections





The frame and pulley styles were originally hollowed out of the solid before they became a boarded box; the beading was developed to reduce draught, driving rain and modify ventilation.

Pulley wheels were originally boxwood, but in great houses always brass, which later in various guises became standard, followed in cheaper work by cast iron.

With the frame behind the masonry Ian considered the 'perfect' sash window was achieved about 1800, pine, painted a white stonework colour, 6 over 6 panes glazed in lustrous 'Crown' glass, in the golden section proportion 1:1.412 (the square root of 2), the thickness of timber exposed at the jambs = the thickness of the meeting rail = the thickness of the glazing bar. The window splayed on the inside to bring more light into the room, with beautiful folding shutters giving security and insulation.

Today the sash window is at the mercy of the inexperienced tradesman, the heavy handed DIYer and of course the replacement window salesman who is pushing plastic.

Ian asked "would you destroy a beautiful piece of antique furniture because one of the drawers was stuck and there was woodworm in one of the legs?"

No, he answered! Consider the detrimental effect on our towns and cities - **SAVE THE SASH!**



*Regent's Park - John Nash - perfect window proportions*

Ian was Chief Housing Architect at the London Borough of Ealing. One of his early commissions after retirement was from English Heritage - to produce an archive of sash window information to inform EH's campaign 'Save the Sash'. He has produced "Eavesdropper", the Suffolk Historic Buildings Group's Newsletter, for several years.

## Winter lecture synopsis

1 & 3-5 Castle Street, Thetford

(members evening - January 17<sup>th</sup> 2019)

Susan & Michael Brown

These three addresses are all parts of the same original building, a tripartite late medieval house of which the hall (3 & 5) and the service cross wing (1) survive. It is probable that the modern brick building to the east occupies the site of the former parlour cross wing.

The street wall of the hall section presents an array of heavily weathered timbers to the street with three doors and sash windows under a roof of eighteenth or nineteenth century pantiles. Inside the ground floor is open with two posts supporting transverse principal joists. The area of ceiling to the east has an axial principal joist with sunk quadrant mouldings supporting flat-laid common joists with chamfers and miniature shield stops, probably seventeenth century. Much of the rest of the visible construction seems to be of re-used historic timbers.

The exception to this is the west wall which is composed of full-height studs of large section, disappearing past the ceiling level. In this wall are two contiguous doorways with shouldered heads. This wall therefore seems to be the Inner wall of the service end. Through a modern partition to the north is a durn doorway, evidently the rear end of a former cross-passage. This doorway was originally of similar form to the service doors but was narrowed during the restoration of the house to form a two-centred arch.



*above:  
1 (white) & 3-5  
Castle Street*

*left:  
the service  
doors*

*photos:  
Michael Brown*

*drawings:  
Susan Brown*

At the south end of the cross passage a section of the doorhead, decorated with florets, appears to survive on the outside. The later inserted stairs rise against the north wall and from these can be seen the northern brace for the central tie beam. Both brace and tie beam are large, with surviving spandrel tracery.



right:  
rear cross-passage  
"durn" door

below:  
Elaborate spandrel tracery



The companion brace and tracery are found at the south end of the tie beam. This southern tracery is a modern reproduction of the original. From the present bedroom to the east the entire tie beam assembly with its moulded and 'castellated' crown post is visible.



The principal crown post in situ  
and the brattished head in detail

right:  
The similar crown post from the  
Woolpack, Coggeshall  
(illustration from Hewett, C.,  
English Historic Carpentry, p308)



In the bedroom to the west and below the tie beam can be seen more tracery related to the service doorways below, extending above them as far as would be unobscured by the former hall screen. In an attic space the soffit of the collars can be seen and they have lightly scribed carpenter's assembly marks. The rafters of the roof appear to be sooted, suggesting that the hall originally had a central open hearth before the construction of a lateral chimney stack which partly survives in the north-east corner.



Quatrefoil  
tracery above the  
service doors  
- see also recon-  
structed view  
from the hall,  
next page

The floored area to the east, with its sunk-quadrant moulded principal joist, appears to be of seventeenth century date. The passageway at the east end, accessed by the eastern of the three front doors was presumably to give access to the rear when the property was divided. The decorative treatment of the doorway with its nailed brattishing may come from within the house, perhaps from the lost hall screen. The east wall within this later passageway includes an original pegged doorway at the south end which presumably opened into the former east (parlour) wing. The studs of this wall have a row of peg holes, presumably for the supports for a high end bench and in the north post of the door is the mortice for a draught screen to terminate the bench. The parlour wing may have been the property destroyed by fire on 28 September, 1796, Bury and Norwich Post, (information supplied by David Osborne) replaced by cottages subsequently demolished.



The burnt  
external wall  
in the 1980s

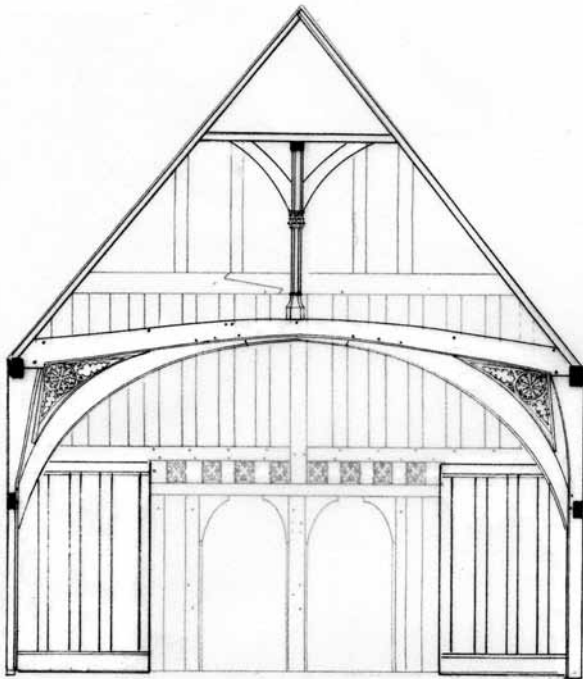
The crown post may be compared with that from 'The Woolpack' Coggeshall, Essex, as belonging to the mid-fifteenth century. Long (24 inch) splayed and undersquinted abutments and face keys visible in the north and south wall plates and within the west tie beam indicate a similar date.



Splayed and undersquinted scarf joint

# Winter lecture synopsis

Such a large, expensively built (large timbers and twenty-two foot tie beams) and elaborately decorated building at a mid-fifteenth century date could be the house of a very prosperous person, with the service wing to the west used for trade given the location next to the market.



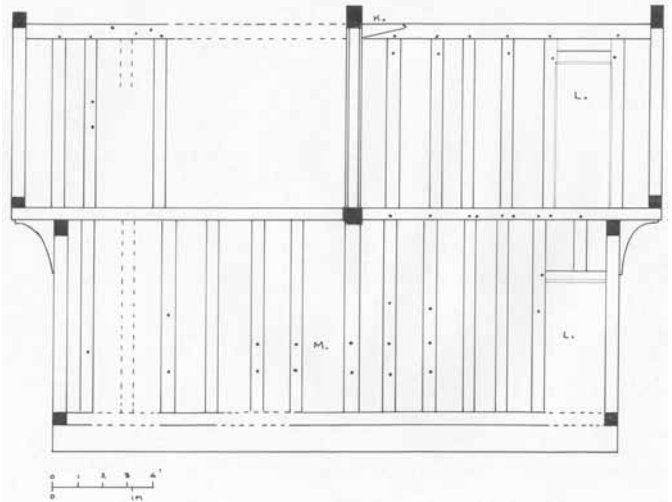
*A conjectural view of the central truss, screen and service wall from the hall, showing the quatrefoil tracery*

## No 1 Castle Street

The two storeyed service end of the house (1, Castle Street) is jettied to the front and rear, with originally two rooms to the ground floor accessed from the hall cross passage by the two doors seen in the service wall. The frame of number 1 is largely intact, formed of timbers of large section, and showing similar carpentry characteristics to the hall section of the house.

The principal joist dividing the two ground floor rooms has the mortices for a stud wall, chamfered to the front and not the rear, presumably to indicate a difference in status between the two rooms. Given the building's situation at the top of the market place this front room may have been a shop, but no evidence of a shop front is visible in the rebuilt lower front wall. The east wall is dominated by the chimney stack, a seventeenth century insertion from the evidence of the shield and notch chamfer stop to the mantle beam. To the rear of the room is a half-height screen wall of re-used timbers. This wall defines a

raised area above the cellar, probably a creation of the eighteenth or nineteenth centuries. In the north-west corner of the ground floor is an original doorway and a similar doorway above this on the first floor suggests the possibility of an external stair or stair tower.



*The west wall of the crosswing showing both jetties and the two doorways to the right, indicating a probable stair tower*

The first floor, originally a single room open to the roof, is dominated by the central tie beam truss with thick arched braces and splayed heads to the posts of the same character as seen in the hall. The gun-stock heads of the corner posts are similar to those seen at the eastern corners of the hall and like those have been cut back to limit their projection into the room, apparently an original feature. It is probable that the front window to the street was an oriel, matched by a window in the same position in the rear wall. Both of these windows have grooves for sliding shutters. Next to the central truss there is a splayed scarf joint in the west wall plate, similar to those seen in the hall. It is possible that this chamber served a ceremonial purpose such as a market court, as it could be accessed from the outside using the stair. Access from inside the hall may have been by a stair door, not now visible, to the north of the service doors.

Unfortunately the crown post and original roof structure above the tie beam are missing, replaced by a nineteenth or early twentieth-century roof in softwood in the opposite orientation to the original roof.

The NHBG hopes to be able to obtain an accurate date for the timber in this building, via dendrochronology, in the future.

## Vernacular Architecture Group Spring Conference 2021

The sub-group of the NHBG committee (Ian Hinton, Lynne Hodge, Mary Ash, Anne Woollett and Jess Johnston) are in the early stages of discussions with the VAG about the possible hosting the VAG Spring Conference in Norfolk in April 2021. As its name implies it is an annual conference and it is held in a different part of the country each year. It presents the opportunity for the hosts to show their work and the specific vernacular architecture of their county.

The attendees of the conference visit various vernacular buildings around the county. This could provide you, as a house- or building-owner, with the chance to have the top experts in the country assess your house or building - all free of charge.

The planning is at a very early stage, so if you would be prepared for the conference attendees to visit you, please let one of us know - the contact details are on page 2 of this newsletter.

## Martin, Mathew and a putative lost market

(members evening - January 17<sup>th</sup> 2019)

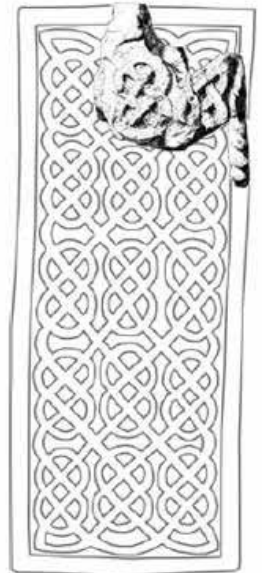
Brian Ayers

The Medieval Churches of Norwich project entails examination of all 59 of the known parish churches in the city, exploring such topics as dedications, earliest references, location and topography, parish boundaries, archaeological evidence, architectural details and images. In so doing, much evidence is being uncovered and, along the way, some curiosities. One such curiosity relates to the choice of dedication for certain churches and to their topographic location.

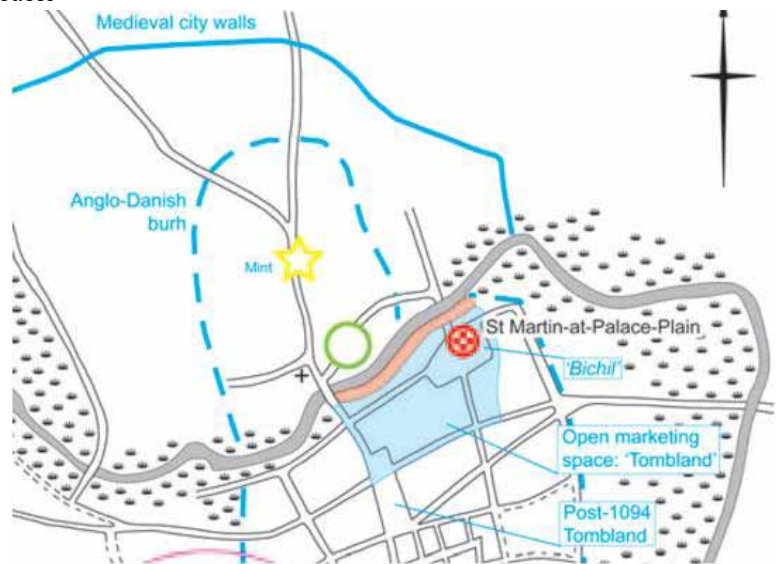
This talk owes its origin to observations published in 2015 by Paul Everson and David Stocker in the British Archaeological Association's volume on the medieval art, architecture and archaeology of Norwich. Their paper explored the context of some carved stone fragments located in excavations at the church of St Martin-at-Palace in 1985 and concluded that they were monuments erected by an alien merchant community to mark burials in distinctive fashion, the "aliens" being merchants from Lindsey in Lincolnshire. Similar monumentalisation has been observed at other pre-Conquest major trading centres of northern and eastern England such as Lincoln, York and Thetford. In all three of these locations, burial and memorialisation was initiated close to the strand (or landing place) for merchant goods.

Going further, the suggestion was made that the area north of the Roman road, which passes beneath Norwich cathedral, was an open commercial area prior to imposition of a probable - and now lost - later street pattern. These streets were lost because of the creation of the Cathedral Close in the late eleventh and early twelfth centuries. Stocker & Everson's suggestions are backed up by other details, such as the place-name Bichil, in use for Palace Plain at an early date but also used for the area of the trading settlement in York off Skeldergate. Brian pointed out the possible significance of a neighbouring (lost) church with its rare dedication of a church to St Mathew - the only pre-Reformation one in Norfolk. Topographically, it lay on marginal land, a gravel terrace, the high point of which is occupied by the still-surviving church of St Martin-at-Palace. Could St Mathew in Norwich owe its establishment to the location of an early fair site on the fringes of the Anglo-Scandinavian borough?

At the moment, evidence is lacking for any suggestion of a mercantile community associated with St Mathew, in contrast to those proposed for the churches of St Martin and St Vedast - several commentators have pointed out that the obscure (for England) Vedast dedication may well imply the location of a mercantile Flemish community in the pre-Conquest period. However, a further mercantile community can perhaps be proposed for association with another lost (and early) church, that of St Cuthbert. While widely used as a dedication for churches in Northumbria (which included southern Scotland), Cuthbert, like Mathew, is a rare dedication in Norfolk. Indeed there were only two pre-Reformation churches so dedicated, one on Tombland in Norwich and the still extant church on the Market Place in Thetford. Coupled with the St Cuthbert in Lincoln and the lost one in York, it is notable that all four large Anglo-Scandinavian boroughs in Eastern England had one and each stood adjacent to a market.



*The Lindsey stone fragment from St Martin at Palace and its context  
Stone photo courtesy of Norfolk Archaeological Unit.  
Drawing - NAU/Everson & Stocker*



*The suggested open marketing space by Everson & Stocker*

A Flemish community has long been suggested adjacent to the southern side of the later Cathedral Close. More recently a Lincolnshire mercantile presence has been postulated for the area around St Martin-at-Palace together with an extensive market. There is slight but enticing evidence to suggest Mercian and Northumbrian interests to the south-east of the Close. The Close itself was claimed by the monks of the priory to have been part of the manor of Thorpe - and thus royal - in the pre-Conquest period. St Martin, St Mathew, St Helen and probably St Mary-in-the Marsh, bordering The Close, were all within this

royal area. The centre of the area, bisected by a crossroads formed by the east-to-west Roman road and a north-to-south road from St Martin's bridge, was occupied by Holy Trinity church. This putative market would have been bigger than that suggested by Everson and Stocker, essentially covering the entire area between the river north and St Vedast south, with modern Tombland west and the river again east.

There is growing archaeological evidence for diverse manufacturing and commerce in this area; much of it north of the Roman road may have been relatively open; most importantly though it would have prefigured the mercantile pre-eminence of Norwich in later centuries. There are suggested traces of Northumbrians, Mercians, representatives of the area of the Five Scandinavian boroughs, and of Flemings - plus burgesses of Norwich itself. Royal patronage would be probably be needed to foster such a commercial hub, but the area was known as Upper Conesford (from *cunying* meaning 'king'). Research elsewhere on the churches project is suggesting an important royal manor in Nether or Lower Conesford south of Mountergate. Just as Bichil at Skeldergate in York seems to have marked the riverine edge of a royal trading enclave, could Bichil in Norwich, with the churches of St Martin and St Mathew, have also marked the edge of a major royal trading community?

### Patronage - earliest references

- ◆ Holy Trinity (secular pre 1066)
- ◆ St Martin (clerical 1066)
- ◆ St Mathew (? royal 1066)
- ◆ St Vedast (clerical 1157 but prob secular 1066)
- ◆ St Cuthbert (clerical 1157)
- ◆ St Ethelbert (poss secular 1066)
- ◆ St Mary in the Marsh (? royal 1066)
- ◆ St Helen (? royal 1066)



Brian was County Archaeologist for Norfolk until 2008. He has written widely on the history of Norwich and is now a researcher within the Leverhulme-funded project 'The Medieval Churches of Norwich: City, Community and Architecture'.

## Winter lecture synopsis

### The Sixhills Project - Lincoln Lane Farm

(March 21<sup>st</sup> 2019)

Jenne Pape

Lincoln Lane Farmhouse is a sixteenth-century open-hall house in Sixhills, a small village on the western edge of the Lincolnshire Wolds. The Building Recording Group of the Society for Lincolnshire History and Archaeology (SLHA BRG, known as 'RUBL') have been studying the building for the last three and a half years, as a community engagement project.

The building, dendro-dated to 1530-1555, has a design which is common in many parts of the country but is unrecorded in Lincolnshire outside the towns. Lincolnshire has a long history of timber construction, but the vast majority of these buildings are in 'mud and stud', a technique which uses relatively slight timbers, where the panels are filled with nailed-on laths, and the entire building is then daubed in a mud and straw mix. This creates low, organic-looking thatched buildings with rounded corners, generally built as single storey but with attic rooms squeezed in later.

Lincoln Lane Farmhouse by contrast has a central hall, open to the roof, flanked by parlours with chambers above, the northern of which is jettied out over the cross-passage. The house is clearly from a different tradition, although executed in a distinctly Lincolnshire manner. It was built in the years around



*Lincoln Lane Farmhouse, eastern elevation*

the Dissolution of the Monasteries (in a village with a Gilbertine Priory, founded in the mid-twelfth century), apparently by the Heneage family. They had owned a manor in the village since 1529, and were granted the dissolved Priory's lands in 1545. The family were very powerful; Sir Thomas Heneage was Henry VIII's Groom of the Stool, and Lincoln Lane Farmhouse reflects this cosmopolitan perspective. However, the construction was

clearly executed by carpenters unfamiliar with the techniques required for a building of this size and complexity, and in the mid-seventeenth century the entire structure was encased in stone to prevent the frame from collapsing.

This encasement ensured the survival of the house's most noteworthy feature; a floor constructed from timbers originally felled in the mid-twelfth century. The floor had been assembled in the mid-sixteenth century from a green spine beam, into which were morticed 20 or so joists of reused twelfth-century timber, and was moved to Lincoln Lane Farmhouse from another building (probably on the Priory site) during the alterations.



*Twelfth-century timbers reused as sixteenth-century floor joists*

Also incorporated in the renovations were many fragments of twelfth-century decorated stonework. While the timbers were clearly contemporary with other surviving ecclesiastic structures (a *t*-value of 16.5 with Lincoln Cathedral's St Hugh's Choir roof is a close enough correlation to indicate the same source - Sherwood Forest - and therefore the same donor, the King), the first phase of carpentry has few similarities to known techniques.

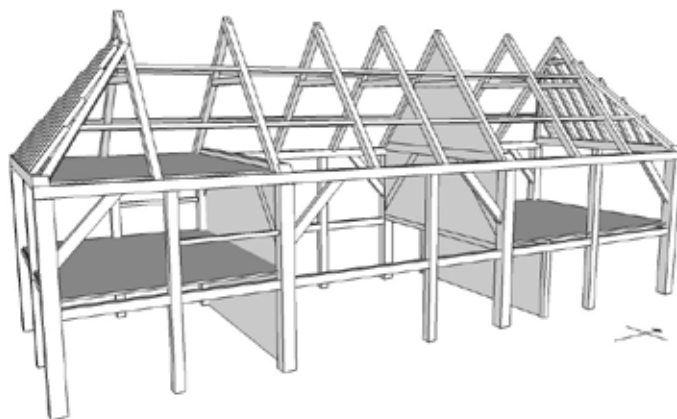
Each timber is roughly 250mm x100mm in cross-section, and c.2.6m long, but there is just one type of 'joint' visible; round holes in the narrow edges, 30mm in diameter and 70-100mm deep. These 'peg-holes' (if that is what they are), some of which retain their fill sawn off flush with the surface, are generally in opposing pairs, with most timbers having either a single pair about half way along the narrow edges, or two pairs of holes, averaging 1.3m apart and roughly centred on the surviving length of the timber. Unfortunately it is not clear how much timber has been lost at either end; the ends which escaped being converted into tenons all exhibit significant rot where they rest

in the stone walls.

It is very difficult to say with any degree of certainty how these holes were used. Two possibilities seem most likely; either that the timbers were laid horizontally, on edge, with the pegs anchoring them together (fig. A below) in the manner of dowels in modern flat-pack furniture, or that they were mounted vertically, either as a solid timber wall with 'dowels' in a similar style (fig. B), or further apart and with panels of infill, with the holes perhaps receiving longer 'rods' to which was attached a lath and daub structure (fig.C). What manner of building this formed is as yet unclear, but suggestions include a watermill or granary. Whatever the building was it was sufficiently high status for the King to donate some of his trees from Sherwood Forest towards its construction, and solid enough to still be standing, remarkably unweathered, 400 years later.

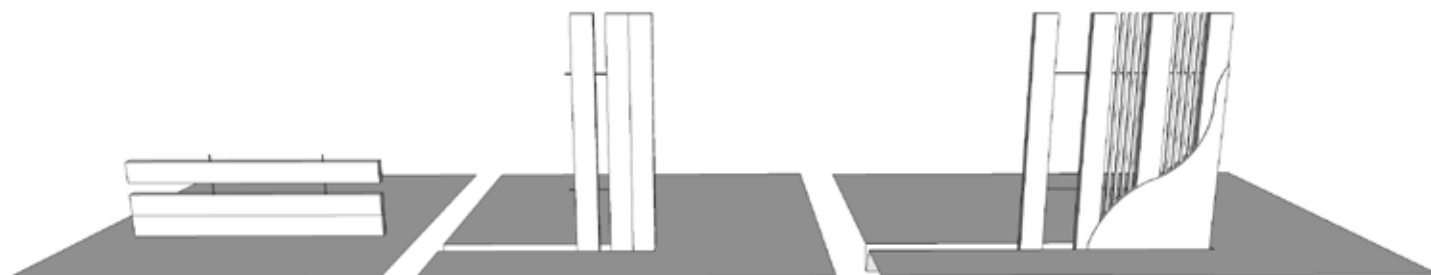
RUBL's final analysis of the buildings (both standing and evidenced by the C12th timbers) is not yet finished, although the fieldwork is fundamentally complete. We hope to finalise our report in the coming months, but any insights into or suggestions of possible parallels to these timbers would be most gratefully received!

Jenne's email is [b\\_17flyingfortress@hotmail.com](mailto:b_17flyingfortress@hotmail.com)



*Reconstruction of the mid-sixteenth-century open-hall house*

Jenne left the RAF in 2009 and completed a PGC in Buildings and Landscape Archaeology at Leicester while her son was tiny. She now specialises in Lincolnshire vernacular buildings, with a particular interest in 'Mud and Stud' houses, and marrying the documentary sources with the physical evidence.



**A**

**B**

**C**

Possible explanations for the 'peg-holes': (A) 'Log cabin style'

(B) Stave construction

(C) Posts and infill

# Winter lecture synopsis

## Church Houses

(February 20<sup>th</sup> 2019)

Ian Hinton



*Crowcombe, Somerset -  
opposite the church*



*Crowcombe first floor interior. The large timber across  
the end is the old smoke-bay beam raised up*

photo from [www.churchhousecrowcombe.org.uk](http://www.churchhousecrowcombe.org.uk)

Church Houses had a brief life as an important local resource and communal meeting place. Most parishes had one, usually in, or next to, the churchyard, but due to lack of space in crowded town centres some were further away on donated land.

The nave of the church itself had functioned as a secular meeting-place for medieval parishioners, as well as a religious one, for centuries. However, the Church Powers began to frown upon the revelry of such gatherings, and, coupled with the introduction of pews in the nave in the late Medieval period, the nave could no longer act as a parish hall. Consequently, they were forced out of the nave of the church for their fundraising parties known as Church Ales (see box below). Church Ales raised money for the church fabric, materials for the services such as candles, the salaries of the officers, the support of the poor of the parish and as a way of maintaining a community spirit. Many parishes built a Church House in the late 1400s or early 1500s. Some of them going out of use permanently in the mid 1500s during the reign of Edward VI, others restarted under Mary, but all had disappeared by the Civil War in the 1640s. It wasn't the Civil War that caused their demise, but the Puritans.

In addition, the official transfer of the remaining responsibility for the poor from the church to the State in 1603, reduced the need for Church Houses even further and many disappeared from the record. When disposed of by the church, some remained as communal resources: village halls, guild halls, schools or almshouses, others continued their use as a house for brewing beer and convening local gatherings – i.e. a pub - in some cases the churchwardens even continued as the brewers.

Spread across the country, with examples identified in Devon, Somerset, Cornwall, Dorset, Kent, Shropshire, Clwyd, Suffolk and Norfolk, other examples remain but are much disguised and some remain in plain sight but unrecognized (such as Give Ale Cottage in Fordwych, Kent), but many disappeared completely.

In areas where building in stone was the norm, more Church Houses survive - some of the Devon and Somerset church houses that were built in Granite will probably last another thousand years. Areas where building stone is not so readily available produced timber-framed Church Houses which differ little from all the other buildings in the village - such as The Long House in Hemphall and York House in Reepham. In some parishes it is thought that the local guilds, both secular and religious, shared the building.

Characteristically, the Church House consists of a large undivided first floor with direct access from the outside to enable the large gatherings to take place, with enclosed rooms on the ground floor used for brewing and food preparation.

In Morebath in Somerset it was located on the southeast side of the churchyard. It was originally a chapel located in the hamlet of Bury on the northern border of the parish, and was purchased in 1542 - presumably it was monastically owned - for use as a church house, and rebuilt. It features extensively in Eamon Duffy's *The The Voices of Morebath*:

After the church, the most important building in the parish was the church house, also called the church ale-house. It was sited in the cluster of ten or eleven dwellings that made up the village centre or 'Morebath town' and was the parish's place of public entertainment, a two storey building furnished with a fireplace and spit, with cups and platters and trenchers of treen [turned wood] and tin and pewter: its trestle tables and tablecloths were sometime loaned to parishioners for events like weddings. Visiting merchants could hire a 'sete' or stall there to sell their wares, like William the merchant who had a 'standing' in the house in 1535, or the Tiverton ciderman John Walshman, who sold cider there for four weeks in 1538. The 'pleers' [players] who paid 12d to the wardens to perform in Morebath at Easter 1533 may well have been hiring the church house. Above all, the fund-raising banquets known as church ales, organised by the churchwardens and by the Young Men of the parish (the 'grooming ale'), and which between them provided the bulk of the parish's income, were held here. Beer brewed or bought by the wardens and food cooked in the church house itself were sold and served at these ales. In 1527 the menu at the high wardens' ale included a roast lamb from the church flock, which had accidentally bled to death after being castrated. By Elizabeth's reign and perhaps before, minstrels and a local man, John Timewell the harper, were being paid to entertain the drinkers. Parishioners were expected to attend and spend their money, and official representatives came and supported from surrounding parishes, a favour which had to be returned when the parishes concerned held their own ales.

Sadly, the building at Morebath no longer exists, unlike the buildings in so many other parishes in the west country.

South Tawton (Devon) Church House (shown below) is an outstanding example of one that still exists. The community of the Parish of South Tawton has used Church House for over 500 years and remarkably it is still owned by the Incumbent and Church Wardens, as Trustees on behalf of the Parish, and is run by the Church House Management Committee. Local documentary evidence (which begins in 1524) has produced data about the building and its history and management.

Several of these buildings still reveal their medieval past with evidence of the original smoke bays at one end of the hall (most have had chimneys inserted in the centre of the building later as their use was changed, particularly those that were converted to almshouses). The church house at South Tawton has had timbers dated through dendrochronology to 1480-90, with an inserted chimney dated to 1699, and other church houses display date stones varying between 1490 and 1520.

There must be many that are still waiting to be identified - although some are easier to spot than others - the pub next to the isolated church at Cockley Cley in Norfolk is called the Twenty Churchwardens - although a Victorian joke!

## Some Local Examples

*Laxfield, Suffolk  
(The Royal Oak)*

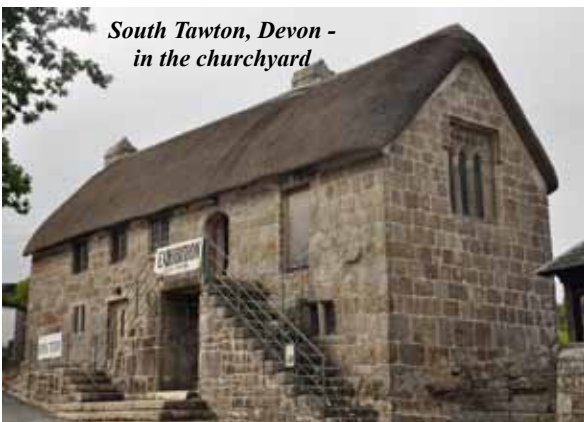


*Reepham*



*photos:  
Ian Hinton,  
unless noted  
otherwise*

*South Tawton, Devon -  
in the churchyard*



*Derwen, Clwyd -  
in the churchyard.  
Datestone 1505*



*Hempnall (adj churchyard)*



*Cockley Cley (The Twenty Churchwardens)*



Ian's doctoral thesis was on the location and alignment of rural churches - the use and integration of church houses became part of the study

### Church Ales - Not every parish had all of these:

Whitsun ale	A party during warm weather and at an agriculturally quiet time of the year between weeding and haymaking
Patron Saint's day	Fund raising for the church fabric – altered for all churches by Henry VIII to October
Lamb ale	At sheep shearing time
Scot ale	On rent payment (quarter) day – an old fixture
Plough ale	On or after Plough Monday (Jan 6th) to bless the plough (twelfth night)
Bid, Help or Give ale	To raise money for the poor
Clerk ale	To pay the Parish Clerk's salary
Leet ale	On manor court day
Bride ale	To pay for a wedding for a poor family (late 15 - early 16C)
Grooming Ale	Usually the parish young men to raise money for maintaining the lights for the saints' images
Harvest Home	Not church related but often held in the church – in West country some carried on until the mid 19C, although generally on the larger estates such as Cricket St Thomas. Church Harvest Festivals in modern times are the Victorian replacement for the previously often drunken and bawdy gatherings.



## A Digest of Buildings Visited Since March 2018

This is a digest of the Norfolk houses which the NHGB has been invited to look at and to prepare brief reports on. These are ALL private houses and NO contact may be made with the owners in any way except through the Committee. These summaries of those reports are to inform members of the work undertaken on behalf of the Group.

Lynne Hodge

### Ford End, Hempnall

An eighteenth-century, brick-built, pair of one-and-a-quarter-storey cottages, extended westwards in the early nineteenth century (pre title map of 1842) by adding Corner Cottage and another at rightangles, now demolished.



The lower part of the front wall consists of soft red bricks in an irregular flemish bond which has been extended upwards by 12 courses in flemish bond with harder red bricks and darker headers. The same 12 courses extend across Corner Cottage to the west, but the lower courses of Corner Cottage appear to be of different bricks from Ford End with fully regular bonding which have also been repointed. At the rear, a tiny window, now blocked, which sits below the eaves-raising courses, was used to illuminate the upper floor

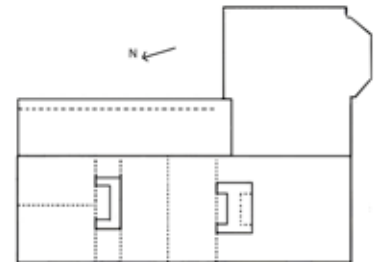


All photos: Ian Hinton  
(except where noted)

removed above first-floor ceiling level. The other has hearths either side and sits between the hall and the 1820s extension. Both appear to have been part of the original build as the bay spacing reflects their sizes, however, it would have been structurally simpler to add a second stack to the gable end to heat the third room, as in so many other houses in the area.

Apart from both stacks being original, there are two other possible interpretations of this house, and a full recording may indicate which is correct:-

- 1) The narrow stack was inserted to create a third heated room on the ground floor, replacing the service rooms at the northern end and moving them into the outshut or ancillary buildings. At a later stage, the 1820s brick range was built replacing the original parlour at the southern end.
- 2) The narrow stack was the original stack, perhaps timber framed and heating only the hall, with an unheated parlour to the north. The larger stack was inserted, converting the service rooms at the southern end into a parlour, whilst rebuilding the timber-framed chimney as a narrow brick stack and turning the hearth around to heat the old parlour. At a later stage, the converted service rooms were replaced by the 1820s crosswing.



### The Old Rectory, Woodton



A part seventeenth- and part nineteenth-century house with an early outshut and later extensions. Many internal and external changes have been undertaken over the centuries which have disguised some of the original build. A brick-built crosswing replaced the southern end of the house in the 1820s, but it lacks the typical Regency-period overhang of the eaves. The timber sizing is substantial throughout and some of the original oak floorboards on the first floor have sequential scratched Roman Numerals on their face.

There are two internal stacks in the house, both brick-built. One of which is narrower, has a single hearth and has been

### Grove Cottage, Neatishead

There have been several phases to the building of this house. The large axial chimney with mantle beam and the principal joist with a lamb's tongue stop suggest origins in the seventeenth century with a lobby entrance plan. The hall and services have survived. The eaves of this range were subsequently raised using brick, probably in the eighteenth century, with the roof structure of that date having shaved pegged purlins and pine rafters. The lower tie beam by the stack also indicates the height of the earlier wall plate.



photo: Lynne Hodge

To the west of the stack the two bays of the parlour end have all been rebuilt in brick, probably in the nineteenth century, reusing some older timbers internally. For a modestly-sized house it is particularly wide - almost 6 metres wide internally.

## The Old Hall, Fritton

Located at the north end of the large common at Fritton, The Old Hall consists of two two-celled buildings at right-angles to each other. The earlier range, with the brick gable, was originally an open hall with service rooms and a spectacular screen. The second wall defining the crosspassage has been removed, but the mortices still exist. The later, but probably at least early seventeenth-century, range contains the parlour which has large timbers with elaborate decoration. Both roofs are now of in-line butt-purlin construction, that over the original range appears to be a later replacement with a single row, the later range has two rows of purlins.



Adjacent to, and parallel with, the main house is a "barn" which has an inserted brick stack with a queen-post roof and elaborately carved jowls on some of the wallposts. There are internal hinged shutters downstairs, although they may be later.



*The screen adjacent to the crosspassage, seen from the hall, with its elaborately carved panels and a doorway, blocked to match the panelling*

## 35 Langley Green

Located right on the edge of Langley Green, this house was originally a one-and-a-half storey, three celled building with an off-centre axial stack, built with material from nearby Langley Abbey. The ground floor walls to window-head level are entirely of freestone, flint and medieval brick. The eaves were raised in Flemish Garden Wall bond in the eighteenth century and the roof replaced and covered in pantiles, probably at the same time. At some point there was a westward extension of one-and-a-half storeys which retains a steeper roof, again now pantiled. The sequence is difficult to determine - if it was post the eaves raise, why did it have a steeper roof angle, if it was before the roof raise, why was it not raised too?



photo: Lynne Hodge

Little diagnostic timber is revealed inside, but the principal joist in the parlour has an odd stop to its chamfer, which has a large degraded pyramid in its centre. Dating is difficult, but it must be post 1530s and probably around 1600.

## Krons Manor, Hempnall



According to Mo Cubitt's documentary research, the name Kron's Manor dates from the 1930s, and this was not the manor house. Prior to this it was known as Fairstead Farm and was drawn by Messent in his 1920s book of Norfolk farmhouses.

The main range is of one and a half storeys with an off-centre axial stack, probably of the late sixteenth century. The parlour (west end) has been raised to two storeys plus attic and the roof re-arranged to appear as a cross wing, but is almost the same width as the remainder of the range. The south face of the main range has been extended further south several times - to include a stair turret and a first-floor corridor.

Also on the south side at the eastern end is a single-storey, two-celled building that is earlier than the main range, with a later external stack on its eastern wall containing a large brick hearth with chimney jack and a bread oven. A narrow smoke bay occupies the centre of the two cells, with considerable smoke blackening at the top of the wall and the adjacent rafters and could date to around 1500. A floor has been inserted later.

Many of the rooms in the main range have ornate brick fireplaces with sunk quadrant moulding.

## Chestnut Tree Farm, Hempnall



This house is one of a number of farms located close to the common edge of Silver Green.

It consists of two sections - the western end is of two storeys plus attic and is built in brick with some diaper work. The eastern end was a hall open to the roof which consists of three queen posts and large purlins set parallel with the rafters. A probable timber smoke bay was revealed in photographs taken during renovation in the 1980s, which later had a brick stack inserted into it. A floor had been inserted in the hall at some point but was removed during the 1980s works. Dating is very difficult, but Edwin Rose felt that the hall was originally a building of a single cell and could possibly date from the beginning of the fifteenth century. Some pargetting was discovered on the west wall of the hall-house part, preserved by the building of the two-storey section against it.

The two-storey section seems to date from the seventeenth century with a gable end stack with a large fireplace with substantial mantle beam and two salt cupboards.

## 1 -3 Upper Olland Street, Bungay



Located at the junction of Upper and Lower Olland Streets. No 1 now appears to be a crosswing to No 3 Upper Olland Street, but probably predates it by 150-200 years. The crosswing is in a prominent position, looking

north towards the castle and Priory. No 3 has yet to be inspected internally.

The moulding of the principal and common joists in the ground floor of No 1 could easily be as early as 1500 and firmly indicate a grand house of quality. It was jettied at both ends which have been subsequently underbuilt in brick. The western face contains a replacement oriel window

An additional range was built to the north of the crosswing and has a seventeenth century butt-purlin roof as does the crosswing now.

Perhaps No 3 was built at the same time - it is parallel with the street but is at an odd angle to the crosswing.

No 3 has a mixture of early sash and casement windows set in an almost symmetrical Georgian-style facade of decorative bricks. The rear wall is of red brick in English Bond.



## Dyson's Farm, Tibenham



Set back from Long Row, Dyson's Farm is one of many that run along the old common edge.

A fine early sixteenth-century tripartite house with what appears to have been a first floor hall open to the roof. An early stair turret/porch is built in front of the cross-passage door opening on to a screened passage, but now contains no stairs. The hall contains four windows - 2 with roll-moulded mullions and were glazed (now blocked) and 2 with diamond mullions were unglazed. The downstairs walls are very close studded with large-section timbers. The parlour has had the principal joists plastered up to resemble Georgian decoration. An unusual, mostly brick, stair winds to the south of the stack and splits to access the upstairs rooms. The parlour chamber has crossed ceiling beams with deep, acutely-angled chamfers.

The roof has been much repaired to deal with the variations in the height of the walls due to wall-post degradation, but the central truss above the hall chamber has enormous arched braces which indicate that it was probably open to the roof. One of the gable end windows has carpenters marks made with a gouge.

## Wilfred's Cottage, Hempnall

This house has the appearance of an eighteenth- or nineteenth-century cottage from the outside.

It has yet to be visited as it is operated as a holiday let, but several photographs taken by Mo Cubitt in the 1980s, as part of her history research, have been analysed for the NHBG Journal on the Buildings of Hempnall. This has revealed a much earlier building underneath. Refurbishment meant that the building was stripped back to its frame (behind the brick cladding). Analysis shows that this is the hall, services and smoke bay of a medieval open-hall house, with the parlour to the west now lost (demolished in the 1970s) to provide access to the engineering works behind. The eaves have been raised, the floor inserted and the brick chimney stack on the current gable end was built within the medieval smoke bay.

Other features, such as the frames for a crosspassage and an all-flint plinth to the other gable wall, also indicate a much earlier date - perhaps the first quarter of the sixteenth century.



*The brick stack built within the medieval smoke bay. Support for the inserted floor is behind the arched braces (photo: Mo Cubitt)*

## Hill House, Binham

The house would seem to have started as a single room, single storey (probably open to the roof) house with perhaps a timber-framed chimney, constructed on the roadside waste. In the first half of the seventeenth

century the northern extension was built with a separate stack against the chimney of the original house and the roof was raised, incorporating an upper cruck, to provide upstairs accommodation. The steepness of the roof indicates that it was almost certainly thatched then. The joists are flat laid and the principal joist's chamfer is terminated by a bar, shield and notch. In the nineteenth century the southern end was rebuilt and extended and subsequently served as a shop (the shop window survives). Two nineteenth-century doors to the west reflect its former division into two cottages.

It is worth noting that the timber-framed chimney, a relatively rare feature to survive, may still exist in part above the mantle beam in the central room.



*photo: Michael Brown*



## Modern Stained Glass

Norfolk unless otherwise noted  
(photos: Ian Hinton)

Hullavington  
(Wiltshire)

Frettenham

Reedham  
(inc. an etched  
O.S map)

Toft Monks

Edrich  
(Sussex)



Potton  
(Beds)

Fordingbridge  
(Kent)

Steeley  
(Derby)

Rye  
(Sussex)

