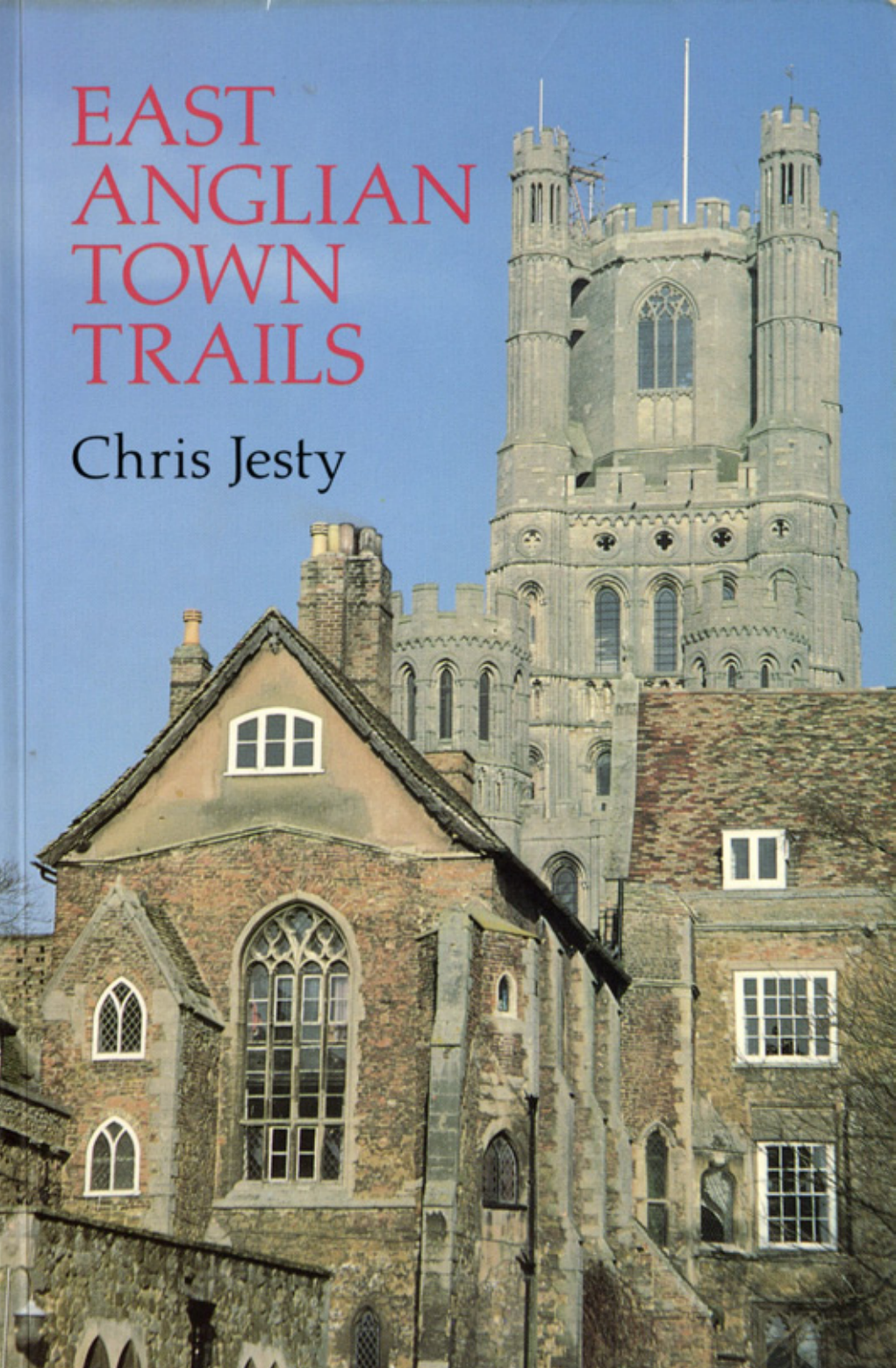
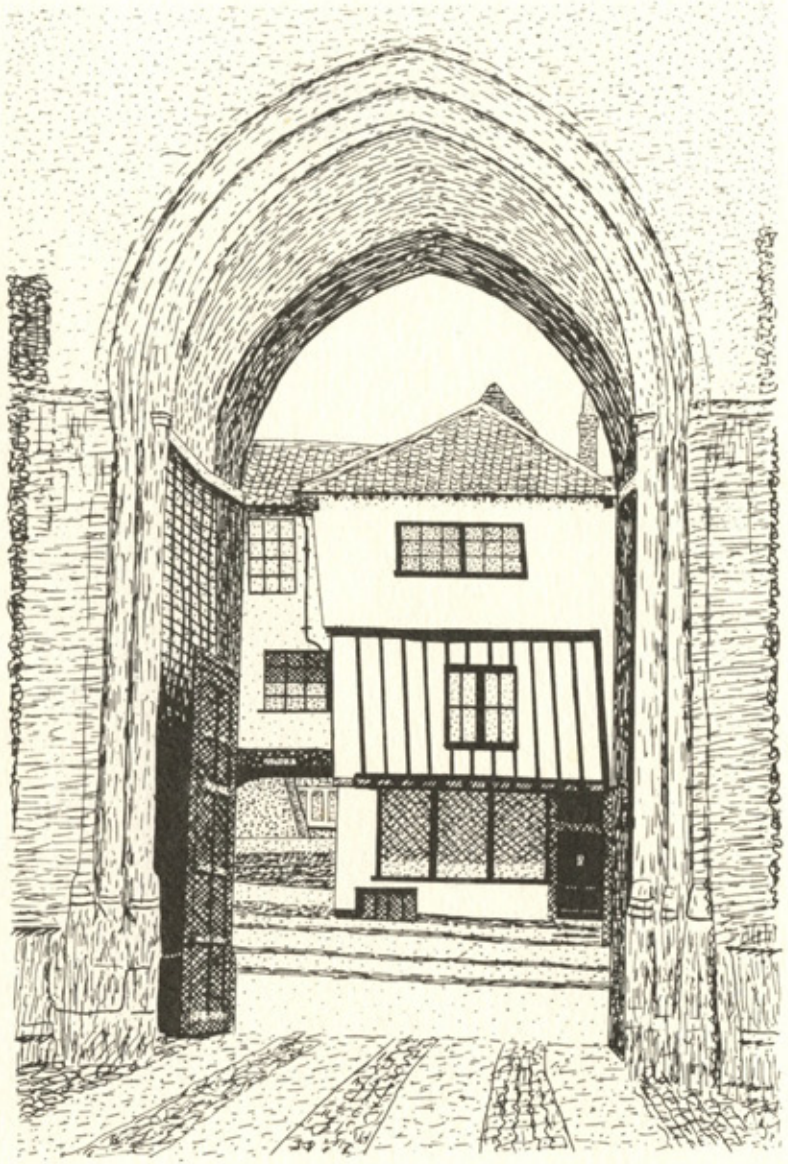
EAST ANGLIAN TOWN TRAILS

Chris Jesty



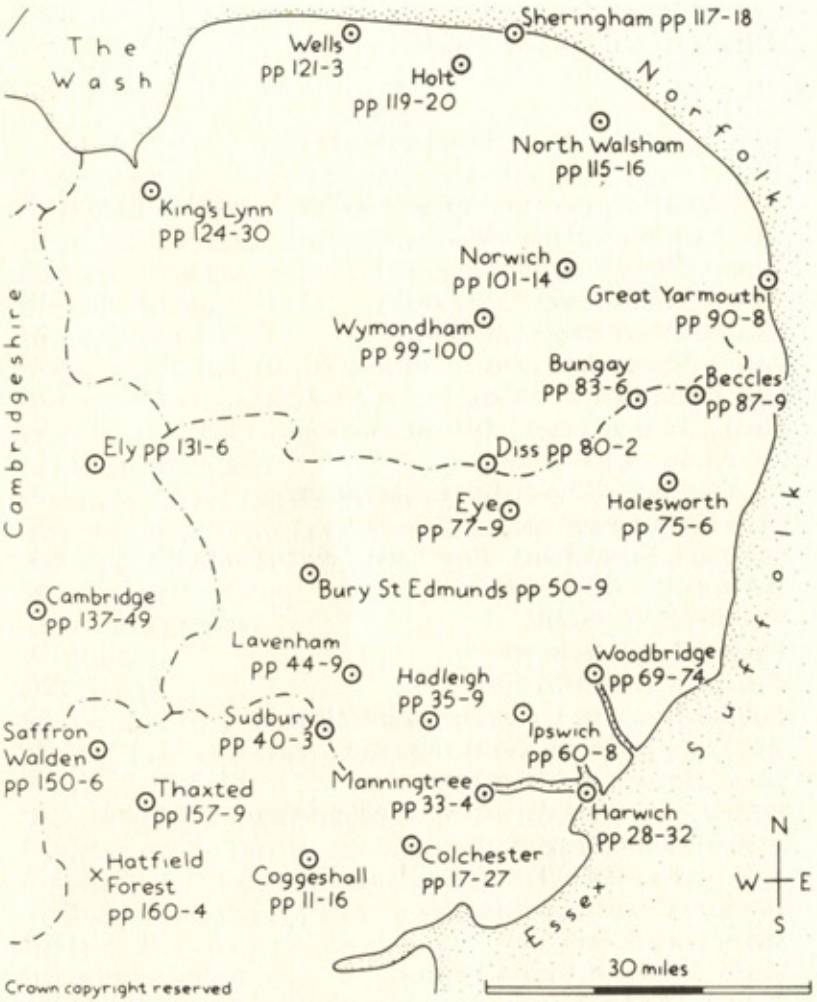


Tombland Alley from the Erpingham Gate, Norwich

East Anglian Town Trails

CHRIS JESTY

ROBERT HALE · LONDON



Introduction

There is nowhere in England where so much of interest can be crammed into an hour's walk as in the heart of historic towns. In the countryside places of interest tend to be widely separated, but in towns they can be so crowded together that it is possible to plan a walk that is an endless succession of delights.

In Dorset and the Cotswolds the chief source of pleasure is the old stone houses with their mullioned windows. In East Anglia it is the half-timbered houses with their overhanging upper storeys and close-set vertical beams. Half-timbered houses are also found in Shropshire and Herefordshire, but there the beams are more widely spaced, forming squares or rectangles.

Even within East Anglia there is variation from place to place. Pantiled roofs are more common in Norfolk and north Suffolk than in south Suffolk and Essex, and beach-pebble walls are confined mainly to the north coast of Norfolk. In Suffolk, particularly in the east, are to be found crinkle-crankle walls which are made up of alternating convex and concave bulges.

Throughout the region there are ruined priories, disused maltings and former guildhalls. There are Saxon church towers in Colchester, Cambridge and Bungay, and Norman houses in Cambridge and Bury St Edmunds. Colchester, Yarmouth, Norwich and King's Lynn all retain their town walls, but only those of Colchester and Yarmouth survive for more than half their original length.

The best timber-framed building in the region is the Rose & Crown at Colchester. The best row of timber-framed houses is Stony Lane in Thaxted. The best interior accessible to the public is that of Savory & Moore's in Bury St Edmunds. The finest square in the region is the Tuesday Market Place in King's Lynn, and the town with the most historical associations is Colchester.

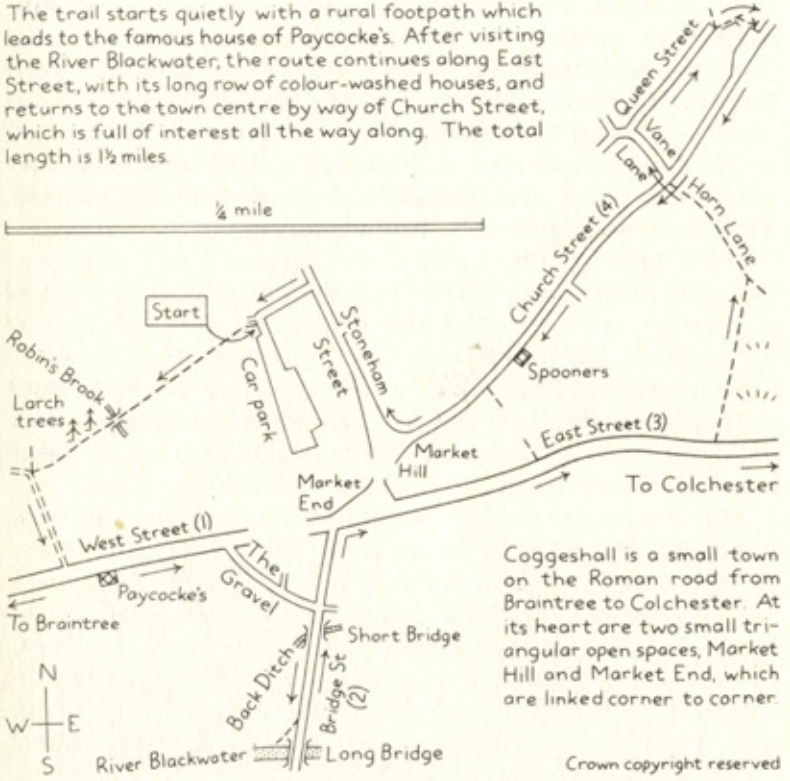
Another source of pleasure is the unusual names of the roads and alleys. In Beccles alone there is Ballygate, Blyburgate,

Ravensmere and Puddingmoor. A further eight interesting names are listed in the corner of the map of Norwich, but the best of all are Rapsy Tapsy Lane in Eye and Rickety Rockety Steps in Woodbridge.

Altogether there are thirty-four walks in twenty-seven towns (and one country walk). Most of the routes are circular and may be joined at any point. To help you find the relevant place in the text, certain key roads are printed in italic and given numbers which correspond with numbers on the maps. In general, roads are drawn to a standard width of twenty-five feet, so the smaller the scale, the narrower the roads appear on the map. Definitions of architectural terms are referred to in the index.

The sequence of the towns roughly follows an anti-clockwise loop, starting and finishing in London. The combined length of the trails is forty-seven miles.

Coggeshall



The route starts from the car-park in Stoneham Street, which is the road heading north from the town centre.

Leave the car-park the way you came in and, just before the road bends right, turn left along a footpath which leads down to Robin's Brook. The trees seen on the right after crossing the brook are larches, the only conifers that lose their needles in the winter. Beyond the larches is a plantation of spruces (Christmas trees).

Turn left at the crossways. Facing you at the end of the track is a row of houses with wooden panels and tracery dating from about 1500. Turn left into *West Street (1)*, which is part of the Roman road Stane Street. After passing the Fleece Inn you come to Coggeshall's most famous house, Paycocke's, which was built in about 1500 by John Paycocke as a wedding present for his son Thomas.

In photographs, Paycocke's appears to be an ordinary rectangular building of little architectural interest. It's only when you look closely that you realize what a wealth of carving there is. The doors, the window-sills, the bressumer and the ends of the main joists are all covered in carving; and there are carved figures over the central door and either side of the carriage entrance. The house is now owned by the National Trust, and it is open to the public in the summer.

Cross Robin's Brook by the Hare Bridge and turn right into the short road called The Gravel. A runnel flows along the left-hand side of the road and passes under the footbridge leading to the Old Lace Shop.

Turn right into *Bridge Street (2)*, and cross over the Back Ditch by the Short Bridge, which has an attractive parapet. This backwater marks the former parish boundary between Great Coggeshall to the north and Little Coggeshall to the south.

After a hundred yards, bear right to where a seat and table have been set up on the banks of the River Blackwater. From here you can see the old brick arches of the Long Bridge beneath the widening of 1912. The position of the wall on the other side of the river shows that there is still technically a ford here, although it is no longer used as such. In its upper reaches the Blackwater is known as the Pant. It rises near Saffron Walden, flows through Great Sampford and Great Bardfield and enters the sea as a broad estuary below Maldon.

Retrace your steps along Bridge Street to the main road and turn right into Market End. From here you can see through to Market Hill. Go straight on into *East Street (3)*, another section of the old Roman road. In this street are fine examples of ornamental plaster work, or pargeting. (The word is derived from the French words *'jeter'*, 'to throw', and *'par'*, 'all over'.) The walls of Tudorcraft on the right, for example, are adorned with freshly painted decorations of flowers and leaves.

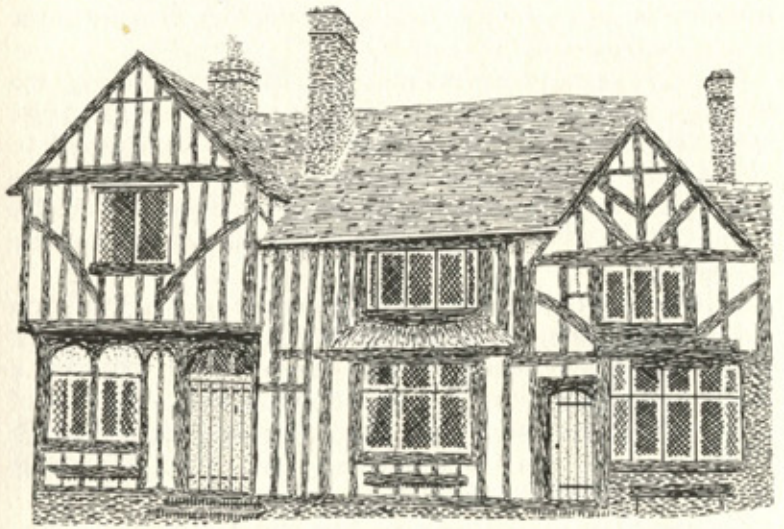
Number 23 on the right bears the date 1585. You can tell that

the date is genuine because the 5s are drawn in the Elizabethan manner, without squared corners. Numbers 39-59 on the left are painted in different colours and form a very attractive group. Number 39 (Cromwell Lodge) has some marvellous pargeting, including a swag of fruit fastened at both ends and hanging down in the centre. Stuart House, next door, has house-martins' nests under the eaves.

At the end of the houses, turn left through a green wicket gate and follow a path along the side of a park. At the corner of the park, bear left into a narrow path called Horn Lane, which makes its way between high brick walls that seem to tower over you. The path passes under a cedar tree whose branches, silhouetted against the sky, remind one of the pattern made by ice crystals on a frozen window-pane.

At the end of the path, go straight on into Vane Lane and then turn right into Queen Street. Numbers 65-75 on the left are painted in lovely pink pastel shades, with old tiles, and weather-boarding below the ground-floor windows. After the roads narrows, you pass a row of pink almshouses whose roofs are convex like a mansard roof, but curved not angled.

At the end of the road go straight on into the churchyard. Apart from the quoins of buttresses and the coping of



Woolpack Inn, Coggeshall

Tudor Cottage, Coggeshall

battlements, most of the church is made of flint, because of the lack of building-stone in this area.

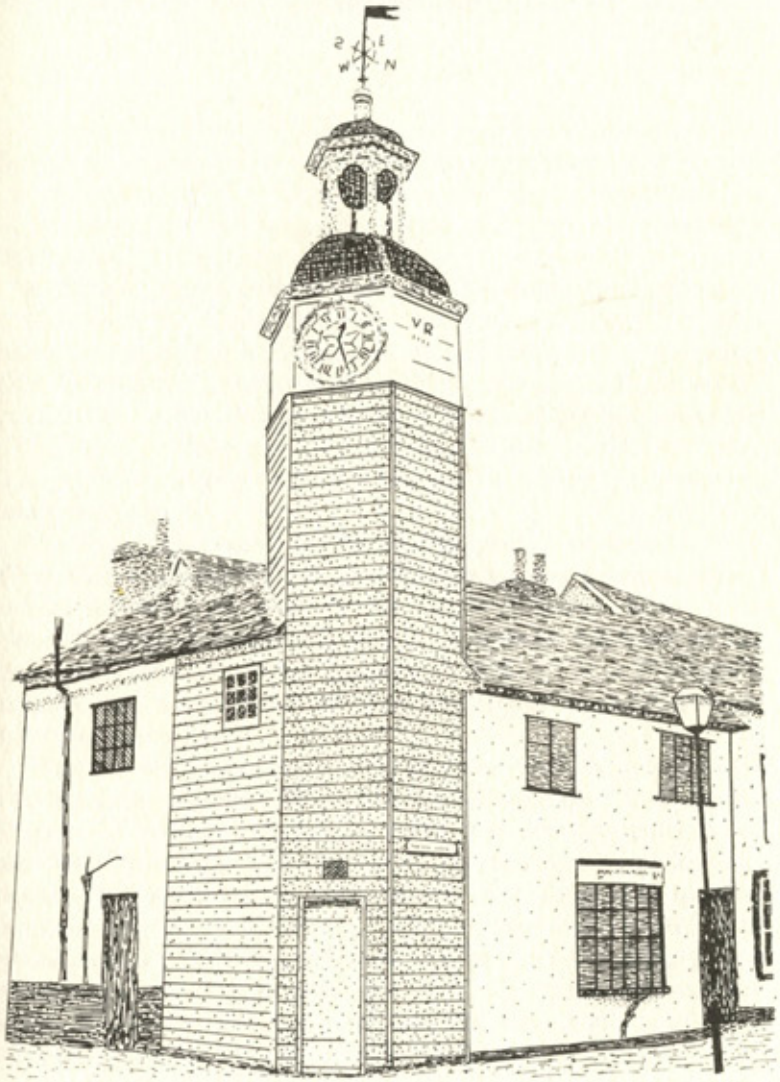
Bear right at the end of the wall, then sharp right through the lychgate, and continue into *Church Street (4)*. On the right is the second-best building in Coggeshall, the Woolpack Inn, built in 1450. On the left is Coggeshall House, a Victoria building in the Tudor style, and opposite it is the seventeenth-century 'Tudor Cottage'. Number 80 on the left is crowned with a lovely roof-top observatory.

At the junction with Vane Lane go straight on. Number 61 on the right (Cockrells) is a superb sixteenth-century timber-framed house with a brick plinth. Numbers 55-49 on the right form a late-sixteenth-century timber-framed group with a number of interesting features. Note particularly the balustrade on number 55, the unusual carving on the bressumer, and the sinuous braces on numbers 55, 53 and 51.

Number 52 on the left bears the date 1565 on one of its beams. This is another genuine date, but it only tells us the age of the

beam. The rest of the house is clearly Victorian.

Of all the carved woodwork in Church Street the most exquisite is that of number 30 ('Spooners'). The horizontal beam over the door is adorned with oak leaves, acorns and six carved faces, each with a different expression.



Victorian clock-tower, Coggeshall

Church Street leads eventually to the wedge-shaped Market Hill with its quaint Victorian clock-tower. Turn right here into Stoneham Street, where there is yet more timber-framing and pargeting. Three of the houses (numbers 14, 16 and 18) were built end-on to the road in the medieval manner.

Just past the library, turn left into the road signposted 'Free car-park'.

Colchester

The story of Colchester takes us back to some of the earliest figures from the history of what is now England: to St Helena and Boadicea, to the Emperors Claudius and Constantine, to King Cymbeline and King Caractacus, and even to that elusive character Old King Cole.

In the Iron Age and throughout the Roman period, Colchester was known as 'Camulodunum', and the appearance of this name on coins struck in about 10 BC has given rise to the claim that Colchester is Britain's oldest recorded town. From AD 10 until AD 40 Camulodunum was the capital of King Cunobelin, or Cymbeline, whose son Caractacus is the subject of that long-drawn-out song that ends 'the Court of King Caractacus is just passing by'.

The Iron Age town covered all the ground enclosed by the River Colne, Gryme's Dyke and the Roman River, and included much farmland as well as buildings. Gryme's Dyke runs roughly from north to south two miles west of the town centre and still marks the town boundary. Now it runs through a narrow strip of woodland between housing estates and makes a very pleasant walk.

The dyke consists of a parallel bank and ditch. At its northern end the ditch widens out to form the hollow called King Coel's Kitchen. A mile east of here, i.e. within the Iron Age town, is the Lexden Tumulus. For nearly 2,000 years the story was handed down that it contained the remains of a king with golden armour and a gold table. In 1924, when the mound was excavated, the table (actually made of bronze) and some of the chain mail were found to be still there. The tumulus has been dated to about the time of Cymbeline's death and may reasonably be assumed to be his burial-place.

In AD 43 the Emperor Claudius spent two weeks in Colchester. Then, in AD 50, he founded the Roman town of

Camulodunum and made it the capital of the province of Britannia. This was the first Roman town to be built in Britain, so, even if we disregard the Iron Age settlement, Colchester is still the oldest town in the country. In AD 61 the town was burned down by Queen Boudicca, or Boadicea.

Most of the Roman town wall can still be seen, as well as the foundations of the Temple of Claudius and the theatre; but the Roman town also survives in the alignment of the two main streets and in the enormous number of reused Roman bricks that appear in churches throughout the town. The Roman bricks are so much narrower than modern bricks that it is impossible to mistake them.

Colchester is unusual in that good examples of Roman, Saxon and Norman architecture are to be found in the same town. The best-preserved Roman building is the Balkerne Gate. The tower of Holy Trinity Church is Saxon, and St Botolph's Priory and the castle are both Norman.

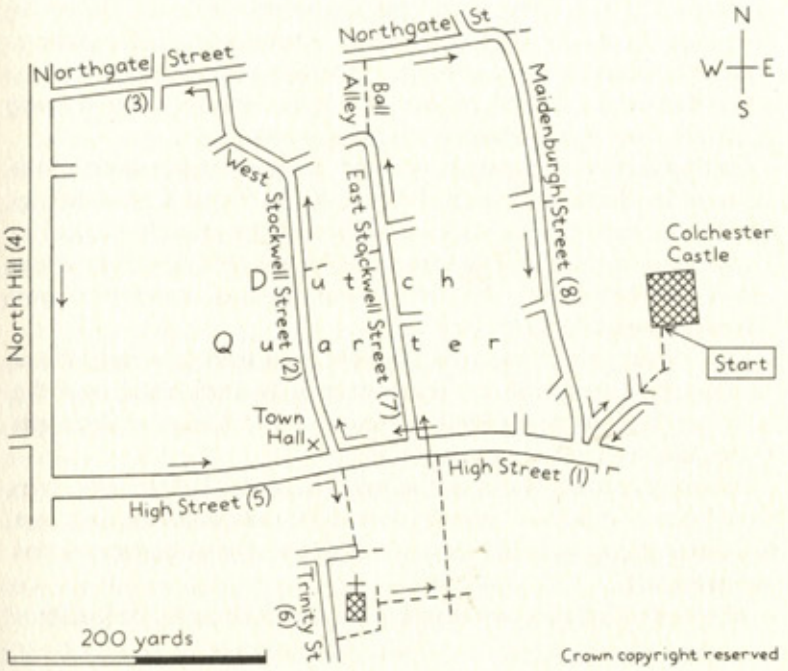
Colchester Castle was built in the late eleventh century and has the largest keep in the world. In 1470 Sir Thomas Malory wrote the *Morte d'Arthur* while he was a prisoner here. By the seventeenth century the castle had become a ruin, and the top storey was removed. In the eighteenth century the castle was in the grounds of the house called Holly Trees, but now it has been restored as a museum and is open to the public.

The Ordnance Survey six-inch map of 1881 describes the castle as being 'on the supposed site of King Coel's Palace and the Temple of Claudius'. In 1919 one of these traditions was confirmed when Sir Mortimer Wheeler identified the foundations of the Temple of Claudius underneath the castle, but it is unlikely that the other tradition will ever be proved or disproved.

King Coel, or Cole, is said to have been the father of St Helena, who was the mother of the Emperor Constantine, but this would place Cole in the third century AD, when there were no kings in Britain. It seems to me more likely that Cole lived in the time before Cymbeline, when the years were unnumbered and there were no written records, and that there were two Helenas, one of them being the daughter of Cole and the other the mother of Constantine.

St Helena is the patron saint of Colchester and was the subject of a novel written by Evelyn Waugh in 1950.

The Inner Route — Length 1½ miles



The walk starts at the castle. From the entrance, cross over the causeway and turn right. Go through the gates and take the road straight ahead (Museum Street). At the end of the road, bear right into the *High Street (1)*, and keep on the right-hand side of the road.

After a hundred yards, on the left is the fifteenth-century façade of the Red Lion Hotel. The windows are Georgian, but the original windows, which are now blocked up, can still be seen, one in the centre and one at the right-hand end of the first floor. Once you know what they look like, you can find traces of similar windows on the top floor.

Continue along the High Street. In front of you is the Victoria Tower of the town hall, which rises to a height of 162 feet. At the top is a statue of St Helena, and lower down are statues of Queen Boadicea and King Edward the Elder.

Turn right here into *West Stockwell Street (2)*, Colchester's most attractive street. The area round West Stockwell Street and East Stockwell Street is known as the Dutch Quarter because of

Flemish immigrants who settled in this area in the sixteenth century. On the right, opposite the entrance to St Runwald Street, is a very fine fifteenth-century timber-framed building. Note particularly the jettying (overhanging upper storey), close-studding (vertical beams set close together) and tracery (intricate carving over the upstairs windows).

Farther down on the right, shaded by massive horse-chestnut trees, is St Martin's Church. It is made largely of Roman bricks and has a neglected look about it. Beyond the church is number 11, where Jane Taylor lived from 1796 until 1811. In 1806, at the age of twenty-three, she wrote that famous nursery rhyme 'Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star'.

The lower part of the street is best seen from the right-hand pavement. Number 56, on the corner of Walters Yard, and the next two houses, with their gables and overhangs at different levels, make a perfect composition.

Follow the road round to the left. Numbers 23-7 on the right have been completely rebuilt in modern materials but, because the proportions are right, the atmosphere of a Tudor street has not been lost.

At the next junction, bear right. On a wall close to the junction

West Stockwell Street, Colchester

is a sign recording an award made by the Civic Trust in 1959 for the restoration of forty-two houses in the Dutch Quarter. The building on the right with three gables dates from about 1600. Note how the tiles curve round from the main roof to the gables, forming what are known as 'laced valleys'.

At the end of the road, turn left into *Northgate Street (3)* and go straight on at the crossroads. On the left there is a glimpse of the attractive side wall of the Marquis of Granby, which was built in 1520. At the end of the road, turn left into *North Hill (4)*, which lies on the line of the Roman road linking the North Gate with Head Gate.

At the top of the hill, turn left into the *High Street (5)*, which lies on the line of the Roman road leading from the Balkerne Gate to the East Gate. This was the '*Decumanus maximus*', the main street of the Roman town, and it is still the main street. The only part of the road that has moved substantially is the central portion, which was deflected thirty yards to the south 900 years ago to clear the castle bailey.

The first part of the pavement is covered, and separated from the road by a row of Doric columns. Farther along on the right is Hatchard's bookshop, an exquisite piece of classical architecture. On the front of the building are six Corinthian pilasters, i.e. columns attached to the wall. The top part of a column or pilaster is called the capital. Corinthian capitals are distinguishable from the simpler Doric capitals by their complex patterns of carved foliage.

Cross over the road and continue along the High Street. On the left is the town hall, which was completed in 1902. With its columns, statues and other embellishments, the town hall contrasts strongly with the plain modern building to the left of it.

Opposite the end of the town hall, turn right into Pelham's Lane. Turn right into Culver Street West, and then left into *Trinity Street (6)*. On the left is the late Saxon tower of Holy Trinity Church. Very often a church is described as Saxon when the windows have all be replaced and only the walls are Saxon, but here every single window is original, and at the foot of the west wall there is a very fine triangular-headed Saxon doorway.

Opposite the end of the churchyard is a glimpse through an archway of Tymperleys, once the home of William Gilberd, who discovered the principles of electro-magnetism.

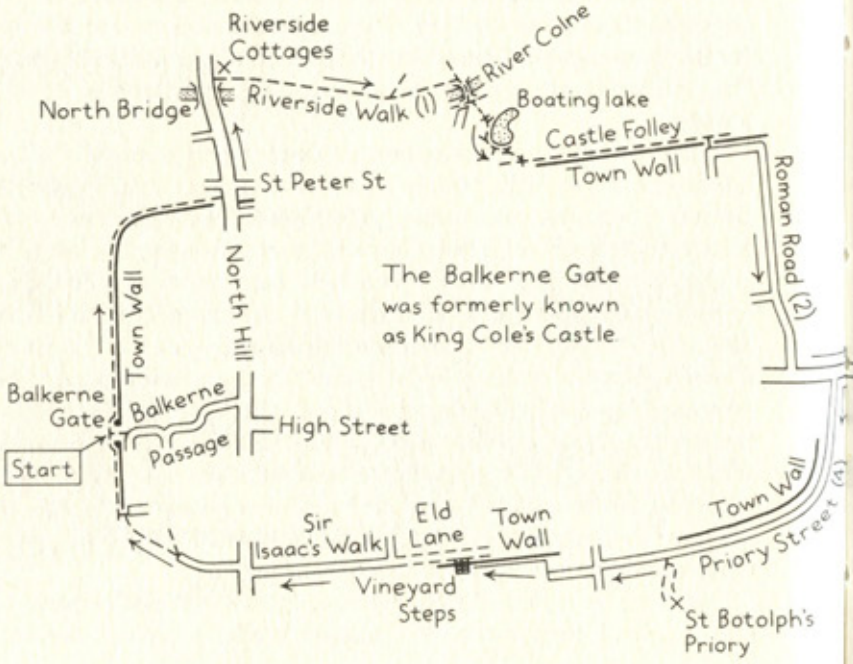
Turn left here into Trinity Square. Follow the path round to the left, and turn right into Culver Walk, a typical modern

shopping precinct. Opposite Lion Walk turn left. In a little while the path becomes the courtyard of the Red Lion Hotel, and the atmosphere changes. Georgian windows rise on either side to three storeys, and above them is a modern glass roof. Then the atmosphere changes again. The roof becomes lower, and all around are Tudor beams. The parallel horizontal beams over the archway are called joists. Finally the path emerges into the High Street.

Cross over the road and enter *East Stockwell Street (7)*. On the left you can see the early fourteen-century east window of St Martin's Church. When the road bends left, go straight on into Ball Alley and turn right into Northgate Street. Follow the road round to the right into *Maidenburgh Street (8)*.

Just past St Helens Lane, purple bricks in the road mark the position of the Roman theatre, and the actual masonry of the theatre can be seen through a window on the right. At the end of Maidenburgh Street, turn sharp left into Museum Street, and so back to the castle.

The Outer Circuit



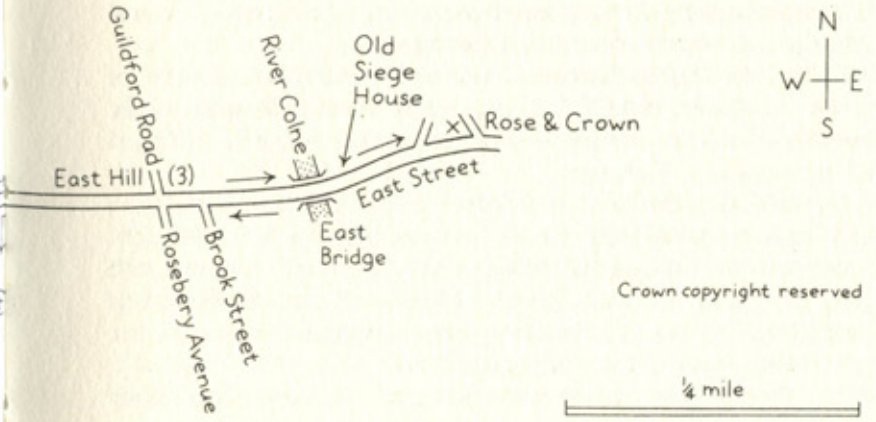
This 2½-mile walk follows the line of the Roman town walls, with a diversion to the north along Riverside Walk, and an extension to the east along East Street.

The walk starts at the Balkerne Gate, which is said to be the largest surviving Roman gateway in Britain. The remaining arch of the Balkerne Gate is smaller than the Newport Arch in Lincoln, which is used by traffic, but the total area covered by the Balkerne Gate is greater. Originally there were two carriageways with a footway on either side, and quadrant-shaped bastions beyond them.

To reach the gate from the High Street, turn right into North Hill and immediately turn left into Balkerne Passage. Follow the road round to the left, and then to the right. On the left is the enormous Balkerne Water-Tower, affectionately known as Jumbo.

In front of you are two Roman arches. That on the left is the entrance to the south bastion, and that on the right is the south footway. Go through the right-hand arch and turn right. On the right is the 'Hole in the Wall', which was built on the foundations of the south carriageway, the north carriageway and the north footway. The attractive north face of the Hole in the Wall rises from the side wall of the north bastion.

Continue along the path with the second-century town wall on your right. As the path bends right, the Royal London



Insurance building appears on the left. All its features are modern, but its general layout is like that of a medieval castle with mural towers linked by stretches of curtain wall.

Cross over North Hill and turn left. Then cross over St Peter Street and follow the right-hand pavement of Middleborough. This leads to one of the showpieces of Colchester, a row of seventeenth-century timber-framed cottages that face the sun and which are reflected in the waters of the River Colne. The timbers vary in thickness from one inch to eight inches. Some of the timbers have notches cut out of them, showing that they have been reused.

Cross over the bridge and turn right into *Riverside Walk (1)*. After a quarter of a mile turn right over two bridges. After crossing the second bridge, turn left through a gate into Lower Castle Park and take the path that skirts the right-hand edge of the boating lake. At the far side of the lake, bear left onto a broad path that bends right and passes through two gates.

Between the gates turn left into the path called Castle Folley. This follows a stretch of the town wall that consists almost entirely of a succession of bulges where the wall has been repeatedly patched up over the centuries. After 200 yards you come to the second of the surviving Roman gates, Duncan's Gate, which is smaller and less impressive than the Balkerne Gate.

Fifty yards past Duncan's Gate, turn right through an archway and immediately turn left up some steps. Here you can see that the Roman wall is made up of alternating bands of limestone and brick, each band consisting of four courses, and that the wall is backed by an earthen rampart.

Follow the wall to the corner and turn right down some more steps into *Roman Road (2)*. Colchester abounds in Roman roads, but this is not one of them. It is not shown on a map of 1777, and all its houses are Victorian.

At the end of the road, turn left into *East Hill (3)*, which is the continuation of the High Street. Just past number 10 on the right a stretch of unsquared cobbles is preserved between the pavement and the wall. Beyond number 17 on the right is a marvellous sixteenth-century door, painted in a rather unsuitable shade of greenish-grey.

Numbers 36-9 on the right overhang by a good two feet (39 by

the width of the oriel too). Numbers 50 and 51 (beyond Rosebery Avenue) retain their small Tudor windows on the first floor, as well as the later Georgian windows.

The first house on the right past Brook Street (the Framing Centre) has been very tastefully restored. At the level of the first floor you can see the ends of the joists. The thicker joists of the east part of the building (below the gable end) are fifteenth-century, and the thinner joists of the rest of the house are seventeenth-century.

After passing the Youth Hostel, with its hipped mansard roof, the road crosses the River Colne by the East Bridge. Here the river is tidal and quite different in character from the freshwater stream that flows past Riverside Cottages.

Just over the bridge on the left is Colchester Mill Hotel, a splendid example of a redundant building put to a new use. Immediately past this is the fifteenth-century Old Siege House, a venerable timber-framed building that is worth looking at closely. The enormous vertical beam at the corner is called an angle post. Rising from this and leaning outwards is a very fine dragon post. This supports the horizontal beams called bressumers that run along the side of the building at the foot of the upper storey. The weatherbeaten appearance of these old beams is something that can come only with age.

On the side facing the town are seventeen bullet-holes made in 1648, during the Civil War, and later encircled in red.

Beyond the Old Siege House, East Street is full of old houses – some jettied, some gabled, some with dormer windows and some in need of restoration. On the corner of Old Coach Lane, and best seen from the opposite corner of the crossroads, is the most beautiful building in Colchester, the fifteenth-century Rose & Crown. All the windows are leaded, and all the timber is original, yet it is not mentioned in any of the guidebooks or shown on any of the postcards.

Retrace your steps for half a mile and turn left into *Priory Street (4)*. On the right the street is followed by a long car-park, and beyond the car-park is the town wall. The three bastions projecting from the wall are medieval.

Just past the end of the car-park, take a path on the left to St Botolph's Priory, the first Augustinian priory to be founded in Britain. On the side wall of the ruin is a Norman doorway with

Rose & Crown, Colchester

chevron moulding round the arch, and above it there is interlaced Norman arcading.

Return to Priory Street and turn left. Cross over St Botolph's Street and enter Vineyard Street. At the end of the road, keep going straight on through a car-park. On the right is another stretch of the town wall, with a varied assortment of buildings perched on top of it. Halfway along, at ground level, is the round-headed entrance to a Roman drain.

Climb up to the top of the wall by means of the Vineyard Steps. At the top of the steps is a modern hoist, used for supplying shops in Eld Lane. Looking due south from here, you can see the top storey of the fifteenth-century gatehouse of St John's Abbey.

Turn left into Eld Lane. Opposite the first turning on the right is a doorway of about 1500 preserved in a modern shop front. Go straight on, along Sir Isaac's Walk, and continue into Church Walk. At the end of the road, don't bear right but go straight on through an avenue of lime trees. On the right is the Perpendicular west tower of the church of St Mary-at-the-Walls, which is now an arts centre.

Just past the church, turn left through a gap in the town wall. Then turn right and follow the wall back to the Balkerne Gate. In the last stretch of wall the pattern of four courses of limestone and four courses of bricks is again displayed, and we can see that, although the Roman wall survives for sixty per cent of its length, only a tiny part of it is in its original condition.

Harwich

Harwich is situated at the far north-east tip of Essex on a narrow peninsula. The sea is already within 200 yards of the road on both sides when there is still three-quarters of a mile to go to the end of the road.

The present network of parallel streets connected by narrow alleys was laid out in the twelfth century. Among the famous people who have stayed in Harwich are Queen Elizabeth I, Samuel Pepys, Sir Francis Drake, Admiral Nelson and Daniel Defoe. Pepys was MP for Harwich in the seventeenth century.

Piped water was introduced in 1887; previously water was sold from a cart for ½d a bucket-full.

Harwich is the terminus of various car and train ferries to the Continent and of a passenger ferry to Felixstowe. There is an active Harwich Society, founded in 1969, which is responsible for the large number of plaques to be found dotted around the town.

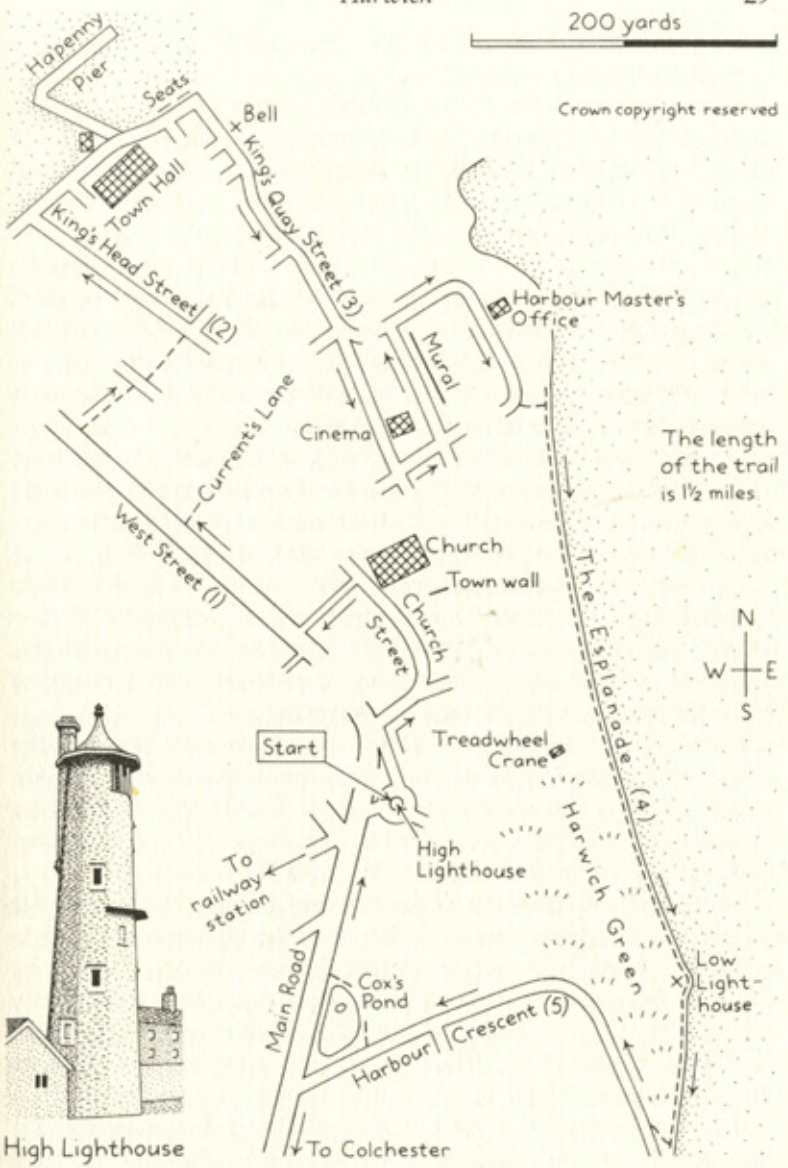
Location of the Start

To find the start of the trail from the main road into the town, go through the shopping centre and continue until you come to the High Lighthouse at the side of the road. You can't miss it. The lighthouse is also easy to find from the railway station.

The Trail

From 1818 until 1863 the High Lighthouse and Low Lighthouse acted as 'leading lights' to ships entering the harbour. In other words, if the lights appeared one above the other, the ship was on course. When the channel shifted, this was no longer the case, and the lighthouses became known as 'misleading lights'.

The High Lighthouse is built of grey gault brick, ninety feet high and nine-sided. It is now a private house with a Disneyland



quality about it. The door on the ground floor faces West Street, which is the direction to be taken. Number 81 on the right (Trinity Cottage) was originally the lighthouse-keeper's cottage.

Turn right into Wellington Road and left into Church Street. From the entrance to the churchyard, you can see low down on

the right, below a gable-end, the only visible remains of the thirteenth-century town wall.

Turn left at the church into Church Lane, and then right into *West Street (1)*. Note that the turning opposite, Golden Lion Lane, is staggered slightly to the left, as is the custom in Harwich. In medieval times Church Lane and Golden Lion Lane marked the southern limit of the built-up area.

Continue along West Street. On the left, just past number 26, is a building that was completed in 1986. In this relatively small building there are gables of different sizes, oriel windows of two types and two different eaves levels. Three different types of bricks are used, and two different roofing materials. The result is a composition that is entirely satisfying.

On the other side of the road (just past Current's Lane) is an earlier modern building where an attempt was made to introduce an element of variety, but here the attempt was half-hearted and failed, whereas in the building on the left it succeeded.

Opposite number 42 turn right into the alley called Custom House Lane. Cross over Church Street and enter Hopkin's Lane, which, like Golden Lion Lane, is staggered slightly to the right. Here we can see the pleasing effect that is created by covering old houses with modern weather-boarding.

Turn left into *King's Head Street (2)*, which was formerly the High Street. Number 13 on the left is seventeenth-century with two overhangs and an old wooden door. On the top storey is the door to the sail loft. The adjoining building, Old Swan House, has a carved beam dating from about 1500 over the door.

Number 21 on the left was the home of Christopher Jones, the Master of the *Mayflower*, in which the Pilgrim Fathers sailed to America in 1620. There are no old houses beyond this point because this was the original position of the quay. The Trinity House office on the left and the Pilot Station on the right are built on reclaimed land. The Pilot Station is an interesting piece of modern architecture completed in 1976.

Cross over the Quay and turn right along the sea-front. On the right is the town hall, which was built in 1864 as the Great Eastern Hotel; it became the town hall in 1951. Opposite is the Town Pier, built in 1854 and popularly called the Ha'penny Pier because that was what it used to cost to go on it. From here the passenger ferries leave for Felixstowe. The distance is three miles by the ferry, thirty miles by road.

Beyond the pier are seats facing out to sea, and there is an unrestricted view from Parkestone Quay in the west right the way round to Felixstowe Docks in the east. To the right of Parkestone Quay is the Stour Estuary. You can see right to the head of the estuary nine miles away, and also up the Orwell Estuary for three miles. Between the two is the village of Shotley Gate with its green tower. There used to be a passenger ferry from Harwich to Shotley Gate.

Turn right into *King's Quay Street (3)*. On the left is the Navyard Wharf, where the car ferries leave for Denmark and Norway. From 1660 until 1827 this was the Royal Naval Shipyard, and the names of fifty-eight ships that were built here are listed on a notice-board facing the road. The site was later used by the Post Office and the Office of Woods before it was taken over by the Harwich Dock Company in 1962.

Adjoining the notice-board is a bell which was cast in 1666. Before 1930 it was housed in the bell-tower in the middle of the shipyard and rung daily to summon people to work.

Continue along King's Quay Street, passing Castlegate Street and St Austin's Lane on the right. When the road bends left, go straight on. Number 45 on the left (School House) was built as a school in 1724 at the expense of Sir Humphrey Parsons, Lord Mayor of London and Member of Parliament for Harwich; his intricately painted crest may be seen adorning the front of the building. In 1981 the school was converted into a private house.

Farther along on the left is the Electric Palace, the oldest purpose-built cinema in Britain. At the top is the date 1911. Over the doors in big red letters are the words 'Admission one shilling' and 'Admission sixpence'. Over the ticket office, in much smaller letters, it says 'Adults £2.25, children £1.10'.

Turn left into the very short Cow Lane, and left again into Wellington Road. On a wall on the right is an incredible mural sixty-two paces long, depicting the town of Harwich. It was sponsored by the Harwich Society, designed by Lavinia Hamer and painted in 1982 by pupils of the Harwich School. It is still in perfect condition.

Turn right into the street with the curious name of Outpart Eastward, and follow the road round to the right. On the left is the Harbour Master's Office, which was opened in 1974. The room on the fifth floor has uninterrupted views in all directions.

After passing the sailing club, turn left, and then right along

the *Esplanade (4)*. The stretch of water on the left is Harwich Harbour. All along the far bank are the cranes of Felixstowe Docks. In mid-channel great liners may be seen gliding in and out of the estuary, while close to the shore smaller craft bob up and down at their moorings.

Two hundred yards along on the right is the Harwich Crane, believed to be the only surviving treadwheel crane in the world. It was built in 1667 and stood in the Royal Naval Shipyard until it was moved to its present site in 1930. There are two wooden wheels sixteen feet in diameter and four feet wide on a common axle. The crane was operated by men walking inside the wheels.

From here the walk may be shortened by cutting across to the High Lighthouse. Otherwise continue along the Esplanade to the Low Lighthouse, which is forty-five feet high and which was built in 1818. Since 1980 it has housed the Harwich Maritime Museum, open on Sundays from Easter until the end of October. Nearby is an old rusty anchor.

Carry on past a row of beach huts, then turn sharp right into *Harbour Crescent (5)*. Follow the crescent round to the left and turn right into the Main Road. (This is the actual name of the road.) Cox's Pond, with its island and its ducks, is on the right, and the High Lighthouse is visible ahead.

Manningtree

Location of the Start

From Harwich go straight on when the road turns away from the shore, and park on the right.

From Colchester, Hadleigh or Ipswich, follow the signposts to Manningtree, go through the town centre and turn left when the road reaches the coast.

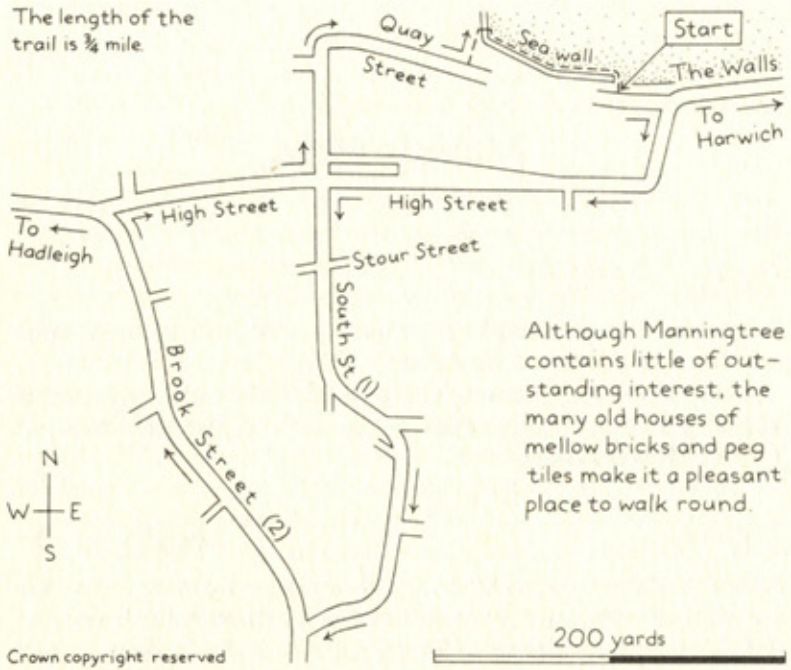
The Trail Length ¾ mile

Follow the shore to the east for a few yards and turn right into the High Street. Facing you is number 52 (Brantham House), a fine Georgian residence of three bays and 2½ storeys. Either side of the door are fluted pilasters that are slightly thicker half-way up than they are at the top and bottom. This phenomenon is known as entasis.

Farther along on the left is number 50, a larger Georgian house with seven bays and three storeys. On the other side of the road is the Crown Inn, with its beautifully painted inn sign. Adjoining Krystyn the hair-stylist on the left is a buttress from the church of St Michael and All Angels, which stood on this site from 1616 until 1966.

At the main crossroads turn left into *South Street (1)*, which is also known as South Hill. This leads to an attractive little green on a slope. If you continue along South Street, you will come to the Methodist Church with its cupola and cream-coloured fluted columns.

From the next junction you can see a painted coat of arms over the door of Alexandra House. Turn sharp right here into *Brook Street (2)*, which leads back to the town centre. When the road bends left, turn right into the High Street, and then left at the crossroads into South Street. On the right is a house that displays much fifteenth-century architecture, including tiny



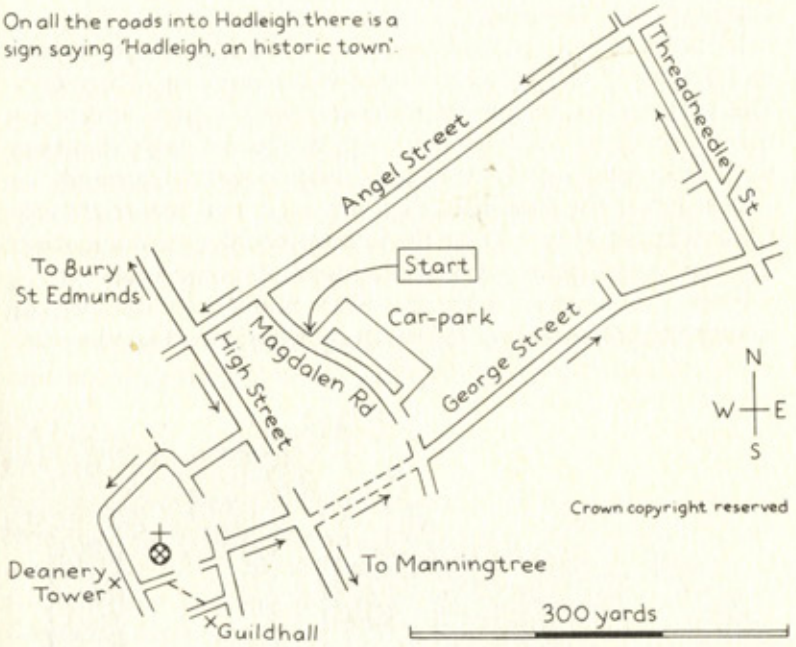
windows and carved oak leaves and acorns over the door.

Turn right into Quay Street, which leads back to your starting-point. For part of the way it is possible to walk on the seaward side of the sea-wall. At low tide you can see across a vast expanse of grey mud dotted with hundreds of tiny feeding birds, each accompanied by its reflection in the mud. At this distance they appear to be no bigger than insects. From the slipway you can see the bridges that carry the London-to-Ipswich railway over two branches of the Stour Estuary.

Hadleigh

The trail consists of two walks, the Town Walk (1 mile) and the Riverside Walk (1½ miles) both starting and finishing at the car-park. The Riverside Walk is inclined to be muddy after rain.

The Town Walk



Turn right out of the car-park into Magdalen Road, left into Angel Street, and left again into the High Street. Number 85 on the right (Budds) has a mansard roof (a roof whose lower part is steeper than the upper part).

Turn right into Queen Street, which has Georgian houses along both sides of it, and then turn right into Church Walk. The church spire on the left is of interest in that the bell is on the

outside of the spire, as it has been since 1584, and the steeple rises directly from the tower without an intervening platform and parapet. This kind of structure is called a broach spire.

Keep on the road as it follows the edge of the churchyard. Opposite the church is the resplendent Deanery Tower, built in 1495 as the gatehouse to a palace that was never completed. The tower is forty-three feet high and lavishly adorned with ornamental brickwork. This is where the Oxford Movement was founded in 1833. Adjoining the tower to the right is the nineteenth-century Deanery.

Turn left at the gatehouse, then diagonally right at the church porch. In a wall on your right you can see two old stone arches, one of which has traceried wooden doors. Behind this wall is the Garden Nature Reserve.

In front of you is Hadleigh Guildhall, a fifteenth-century building listed as Grade I and open to the public on Thursdays. The best part is the central three-storeyed section, which has many carved vertical beams, though the beams don't stand out well because the wood is the same colour as the background.

Bear left at the Guildhall, then left again and then right into Church Street. Number 8 on the left successfully combines three different-sized gables to produce a pleasing composition.

From the junction with the High Street you can see an interesting house built in 1676 with six large leaded windows on

Tudor Gables and the Old House, Hadleigh

the first floor. Go straight on into the pedestrianized part of George Street, passing on the right a remarkable old milestone with Roman numbers used to indicate distances.

Continue along George Street for a quarter of a mile. On the left, past Magdalen Road, are two houses, Tudor Gables and the Old House, which retain their small Tudor windows. Opposite them is a pair of houses with beautifully painted floral decorations and the date 1687 in the gables. Farther along on the right, number 42 has a thatched roof and a collection of horseshoes over one of its windows.

At the crossroads turn left into Threadneedle Street. Continue to the end of the road, and then turn left again into Angel Street. On the corner is the pink-washed Eight Bells, and after this comes a charming group of four cottages, all with exposed grey timbers, leaded windows and traditional doors.

On the right-hand side of the road, numbers 79-63 form another pleasing group. Number 79 displays a floral decoration similar to that seen in George Street. Above this decoration is the date 1596. Nothing that we can see is as old as this, but very often the front of the house is more recent than the rest of it. This point is well illustrated by the house at the other end of the group, number 63, where the side wall retains its timber framework.

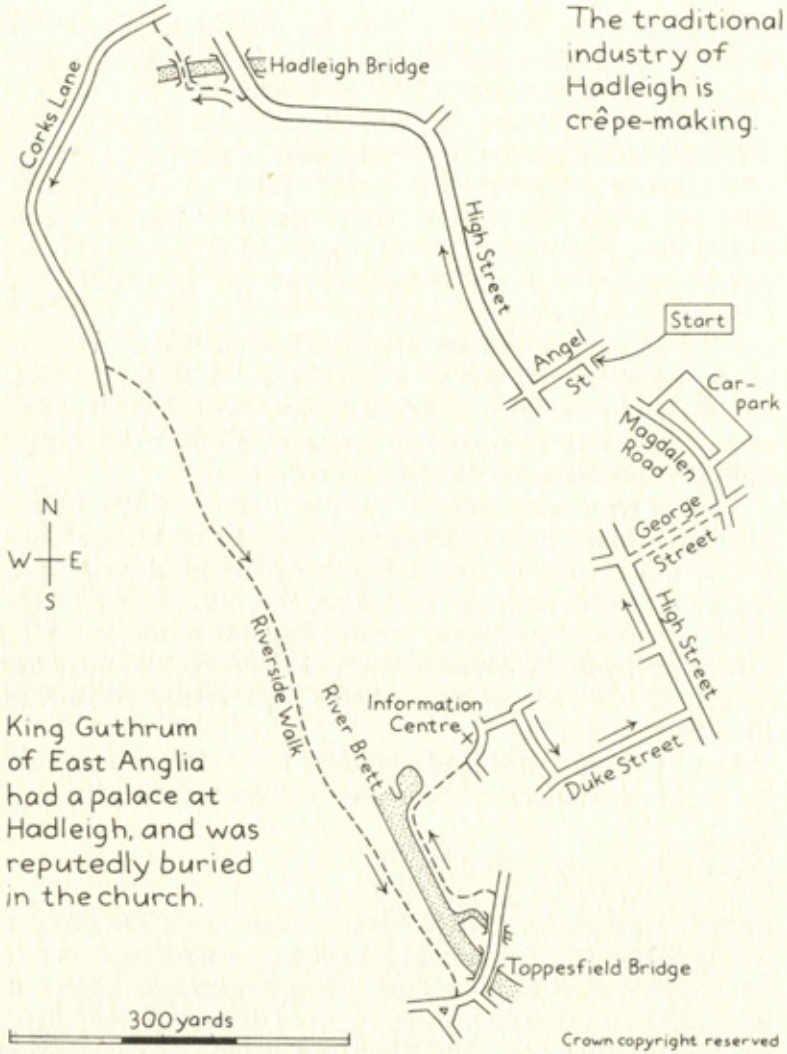
At the junction with Magdalen Road, turn left to return to the car-park or go straight on to continue with the second walk.

The Riverside Walk

Turn right out of Angel Street into the High Street. The gable of number 99 on the left is enriched with a magnificent coat of arms, the result of an enormous amount of painstaking work. It was recently painted, and the owners consulted the Royal College of Arms to make sure that all the colours were correct.

Keep on the main road as far as Hadleigh Bridge. Just before the bridge, bear left and follow a path between a private car-park and the River Brett. This river links the beautiful villages of Lavenham, Brent Eleigh, Monks Eleigh and Chelsworth and joins the Stour at Higham.

Cross the river by the footbridge. Keep straight on until you come to a road (Corks Lane), then turn left. After a quarter of a mile bear left onto a path. This is the Riverside Walk, which



meanders for half a mile through wilderness and woodland and along the banks of the River Brett.

At the end of the path, turn left onto a road and cross the river by the three-arched Toppesfield Bridge, which is said to be medieval. Continue over a second bridge and turn sharp left onto a path, which goes past a tree with a beautiful gnarled trunk.

The path follows the river for a short distance, then turns

inland by a pond. Pass to the right of a large house (now the Information Centre) and continue along its drive. Before turning right out of the drive, take a look at the brightly painted pump on the left.

At the T-junction, turn left into Duke Street. On the left is the Manor House with its dark panelled shutters. Adjoining it is a jettied, close-studded building of which every beam appears to be original.

Turn left into the High Street. Numbers 46 and 48 on the right are embellished with some brightly painted pargeting, including a long strip of grapes and the coats of arms of the Cavendish and Bayning families. On the left the interior of Edwards Furnishing is worth looking at for its perfectly preserved Tudor ceiling.

At the milestone, turn right into George Street, then left into Magdalen Road, and so back to the car-park.

Sudbury

Sudbury is a Saxon town, mentioned in the Anglo-Saxon Charter of 797, and although none of the present buildings dates from before the fourteenth century, the plan of the Saxon town survives in the layout of the modern streets. Both St Gregory's Church and the Mill Hotel lie on the site of Saxon buildings, and Croft Road, Burkitt's Lane, Friar's Street and Mill Lane mark the boundary of the Saxon town.

In the fourteenth century the town was the home of Simon of Sudbury, who became Archbishop of Canterbury and Chancellor of England, but the figure with whom the town is most commonly associated is the painter Thomas Gainsborough.

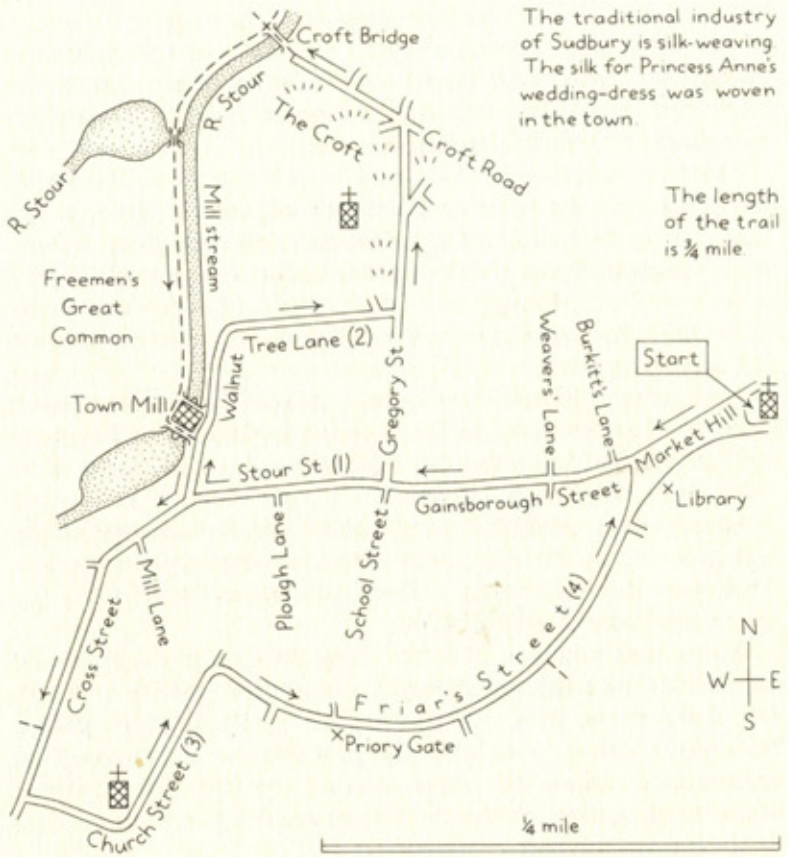
Gainsborough was born in 1727 at 46 Sepulchre Street, which has since been renamed after him. In 1748 he moved to 31 Friar's Street and set up business as a portrait-painter. Among his better-known subjects were George III and Dr Johnson. In 1972 his portrait of the Gravenor family was sold at Sotheby's for £280,000, at that time the highest price ever paid for a British painting.

Sudbury is featured in *The Pickwick Papers*, where it is called Eatanswill. The events that took place in Eatanswill are sometimes re-enacted by the local Pickwick Society.

The Trail

The walk begins in the open space called Market Hill in the centre of the town. At the top of the hill is a statue of Thomas Gainsborough, and behind him is the redundant church of St Peter, whose symmetrical outline so effectively dominates the view up Market Hill.

From the statue, follow the right-hand side of the square and continue into Gainsborough Street. Friar's Street on the left and Burkitt's Lane on the right mark the line of the moat that surrounded the Saxon town. Just past Weavers' Lane on the



right is the house where Thomas Gainsborough was born in 1727. Appropriately, the present façade was built in 1725. The house is open to the public, and a number of Gainsborough's paintings are displayed inside.

Continue along Gainsborough Street to its junction with Gregory Street and School Street. This crossroads lies at the centre of the Saxon town, and here the weekly market was held before it was moved to Market Hill.

Go straight on into *Stour Street (1)*. Just past Plough Lane on the left is the most beautiful building in Sudbury: two fifteenth-century houses, the Chantry and Salter's Hall, combined to make a school. There are close-studded gables, carved doors and traceried windows, and they are arranged in a

haphazard manner without any pattern or symmetry.

When the road bends slightly left, turn sharp right into *Walnut Tree Lane (2)*. On the far side of the valley you can see the bluffs that have been worn away by the meandering River Stour as it slowly widens its floodplain.

Closer to hand is the town mill, which stands on the site of the Saxon mill and is now a hotel. The mill-stream still emerges from under the building (and is illuminated with green light in the evenings) but, with the insertion of rectangular plate-glass windows, the building now looks more like a hotel than a mill. (In this respect it differs from the Mill Hotel in Colchester, which still looks like a mill.)

At the end of Walnut Tree Lane, turn left into Gregory Street, passing along the side of a small green. St Gregory's Church on the left was built by Simon of Sudbury in about 1370 and is the main church of the town.

Beyond the church there are greens on both sides, that on the left appearing to be continuous with the adjoining countryside. This open space is known as The Croft, and in the Middle Ages it was the scene of St Peter's Fair.

At the next junction, bear left along the side of the green. At the end of the road, go straight on over Croft Bridge and turn left along the far bank of the river. On the left is a little gabled boathouse with its own inlet. Just past this the path crosses the sluices that control the water entering the mill. The power of water rushing through the sluices has eroded an enormous pool to the right of the path.

After 300 yards the diminished stream passes under the mill. Through a big window on the left you can see the water-wheel turning inside the hotel dining-room. To the right of the path are the former water-meadows of the Freemen's Great Common, and at the corner of the mill is a notice saying that these meadows were granted to the freemen of Sudbury by Richard de Clare in about 1260.

Turn left along the front of the hotel, passing two millstones set vertically either side of the entrance. Turn right into Walnut Tree Lane and bear right into the main road. After 300 yards turn left into *Church Street (3)*, passing the fifteenth-century tower of All Saints' Church. The road bends left, then right, and becomes *Friars' Street (4)*. As this road curves gently to the left, it follows the line of the Saxon town wall.

On the right is the fifteenth-century Priory Gate, all that remains of a Dominican priory founded in 1245. There is a carriage entrance which is now blocked up, and a pedestrian entrance, or postern, to the left of it. The areas above and to the right of the carriage entrance are close-studded, with a Georgian window inserted.

Number 62 on the left displays lovely old tiles cleverly carried round from the main roof to the gable. The pink of the walls matches the tiles perfectly. To the right of the house is a green horse-drawn plough.

Farther along on the right are a number of fine Georgian houses, including number 31, where Thomas Gainsborough had his studio. In this house he painted his famous portrit of Mr and Mrs Andrews, which is now in the National Gallery.

The road eventually leads back to Market Hill, where the walk began. On the right are the huge Tuscan columns of the Corn Exchange, which since 1968 has been the public library.

Lavenham

With a population of 1,666, Lavenham is the smallest locality featured in this publication. Though locally regarded as a village, it is sometimes referred to in print as a town. But it is not the occasional references to Lavenham as a town that justifies its inclusion here: it is the extraordinary quality of Lavenham's architecture.

If you can do only one of these trails, make it Lavenham. If you can do more than one, leave Lavenham till last, otherwise all the others will be an anti-climax. In other towns there are occasional half-timbered houses dotted about; here there are whole streets of them. In other towns there are medieval hall houses that have been altered out of all recognition, but only in Lavenham will you find hall houses that have remained unaltered through all the intervening centuries.

Church Street, Lavenham

The trail starts at the car-park, which is roughly opposite the church on the Sudbury road.

The Trail

Turn right out of the car-park into Church Street. The first of the half-timbered houses is number 68 on the left, but a better example is Blaize House, which is just past Bear's Lane on the right. Then, on the left, is a whole row of beautiful houses, extending from number 85 to number 90.

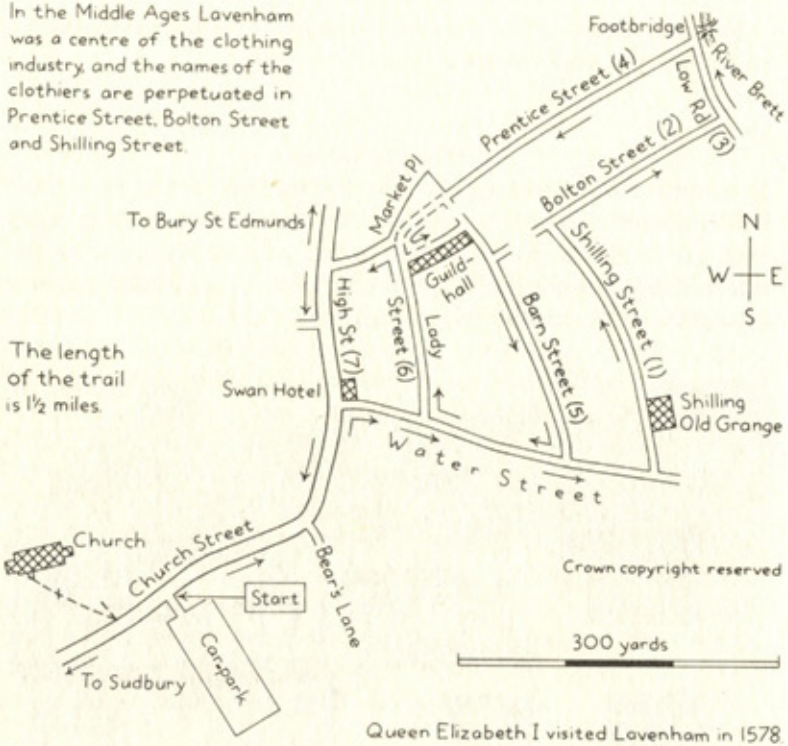
Another view of Church Street, Lavenham

At the corner of the Swan Hotel, turn right into Water Street, which takes its name from an underground stream that runs along the side of the road. the *fleur-de-lis* and other marks above the name-plate are emblems of the wool trade. All the buildings on the left-hand side of the road before the first turning are now part of the Swan Hotel.

On the right is a Grade I listed building called the Priory, which is open to the public in the afternoons from Easter to September. It dates from the fourteenth century, but it has been considerably restored and the pale grey wood does not show up well.

Farther along on the right is a much better building, De Vere

In the Middle Ages Lavenham was a centre of the clothing industry, and the names of the clothiers are perpetuated in Prentice Street, Bolton Street and Shilling Street.



Queen Elizabeth I visited Lavenham in 1578.

House. It was built in the fifteenth century and is in perfect condition throughout. The overall composition is pleasing, with a small gable flanked by two larger gables, and this is enhanced by a wealth of fine details. The doors are made of oak and strengthened with vertical ribs called battens. The little door within the larger door is called a wicket. Many of the beams are carved, and there are carved figures either side of the main door. The brick infill, which is called brick nogging, is later than the timber framework.

Beyond De Vere House there are several half-timbered houses on the right. Just before you get to Barn Street on the left, you can see the circular wall of a well through an archway on the right. Go straight on here, passing an interesting row of Flemish weavers' cottages on the left, and turn left into *Shilling Street (1)*.

On the right is Shilling Old Grange, a fifteenth-century house with three gables. This was the childhood home of Jane Taylor (see p.20) before she moved to Colchester. Just past the house is a well, complete with its handle and tiled roof. Farther along on

the right is a very fine group of houses that have been painted in subtle shades of pink and green. Some of them have exposed beams, and they all have old tiles.

At the end of the road, turn right into *Bolton Street (2)*. Just past number 7 on the left is a medieval hall house where the upstairs and downstairs windows are separated by no more than the thickness of a beam. Numbers 10 and 11 on the left have an unusually steep roof.

Swan Hotel, Lavenham

Turn left into *Low Road (3)* and left again into Prentice Street. Close to the junction is a footbridge where you can stand and watch the dark waters of the River Brett trickling past underneath.

In *Prentice Street (4)* there are several interesting houses on the right-hand side, including number 25 whose roof is made of wooden tiles called shingles – it is most unusual to see these on a private house. Numbers 35, 36 and 37 on the left are rather ordinary houses which have been much improved by being painted different colours. Number 42 has an oriel window (a bay window that doesn't touch the ground), and the house is called Oriel Cottage. Number 44 on the left has a very simple plank door of the sort that goes back to Saxon times.

When you get to the Market Place, go straight on. On your left is the Market Cross, which was erected in 1501. As you pass the cross, Lavenham's most famous building, the Guildhall, comes into view on the left. Follow the road round to the left and then

turn left along the front of the Guildhall.

The Guildhall of Corpus Christi was built in 1529 and given to the National Trust in 1950. It is open to the public from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. and from 2 p.m. to 5.30, April to November. The porch, the storey above it and the parts of the building to the right of the porch are all covered in beautiful carvings. On one of the corner-posts of the porch is a carving of John de Vere holding a distaff and the charter of the Guild. To the left of the porch only the bressumer is carved. In this area discerning house-martins have built their nests under the eaves. Further to the left, the wall of the ground floor has been brought forward to eliminate the overhang, a practice that is known as 'latching'. At the end of the building are two early shop windows with remains of their shutters.

Facing you at the end of the lane is the fifteenth-century Little Hall, now the home of the Suffolk Preservation Society. The main door is decorated with an arrangement of pointed arches that is found on several houses in Lavenham. To the right of this is the two-storey window of the medieval hall. The house is open to the public from 2.30 to 6 p.m. on Saturdays, Sundays and Bank Holidays in the summer.

Turn right here into *Barn Street (5)* and go straight on. On the right is yet another marvellous fifteenth-century building, Molet House. The door is similar to that of the Little Hall, and the upper bressumer is decorated with strapwork. The house called the Barn on the left has a similar door but is more cottagy in style. The blocked upstairs windows with diamond mullions date from the time before glass was used. Farther along on the left is the Old Grammar School. It has pink walls, and the upper storey is half-timbered. It was built in 1647, and the painter John Constable was one of its pupils.

At the end of the road, turn right into Water Street, and right again into *Lady Street (6)*. On the right are three blocked-up Tudor shop windows. On the left is the Old Wool Hall, which was built in 1464 and incorporated into the Swan Hotel in 1963. This is a hall house, and the central hall is still one-storeyed. The flanking wings are not identical, the one on the left having curved braces in the gable.

Number 7 on the right is also a hall house, and number 6 has an old upstairs window. At the far end of the road on the right is the side wall of the celebrated Guildhall, with its brick plinth

and small cellar door.

Turn left into the attractive Market Lane, and left again into the *High Street (7)*. On the far side of the road are many fifteenth-century houses, including the aptly named Crooked House. Farther along on the left is the complex gabled frontage of the Swan Hotel, where the stage-coaches from London to Bury St Edmunds used to stop to change horses. The overhang of the last gable reaches to within six feet of the ground.

Keep straight on, past the car-park, and turn right to the church. Lavenham Church was built of Barnack stone and flint between 1485 and 1530 at the expense of John de Vere and Thomas Spring II. The Spring coat of arms is carved all round the parapet of the tower, and the star of the de Veres appears on each face of the tower about halfway up. The church is regarded as the finest in Suffolk and is frequently chosen in books on architecture to illustrate the Perpendicular style.

Bury St Edmunds

Bury St Edmunds was known as Bedericsworth in Saxon times. In AD 633 Sigebert, the first Christian King of East Anglia, founded a monastery here. In 1020 the town was renamed in honour of St Edmund, who had been buried in the monastery in 903.

St Edmund was crowned King of East Anglia on Christmas Day 855 and reigned until his death in 869, when East Anglia became part of the kingdom of England. He was the patron saint of England until he was superseded by St George in the fourteenth century.

In 1030 the first Abbey Church was completed, and St Edmund's body was transferred to its new shrine in the presence of King Canute. Between 1066 and 1080 a new town was laid out to the west of the abbey under the direction of Abbot Baldwin. The streets form a rectangular grid, but they are not exactly equidistant, parallel or straight.

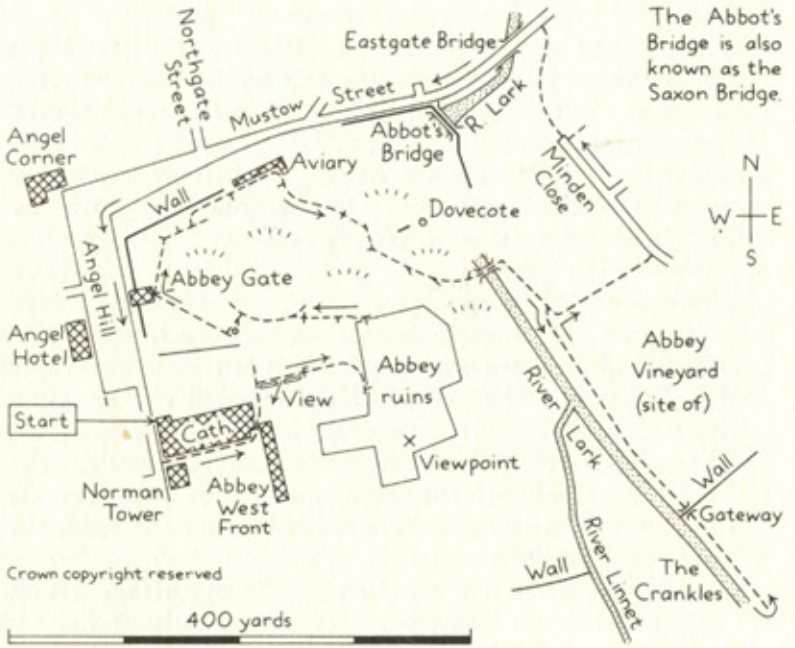
The abbey whose ruins can be seen today was built between 1090 and 1211. Its most famous abbot was Sampson, who died in 1213 and who was the subject of a book by Thomas Carlyle. On St Edmund's Day (20 November) 1214, a meeting of twenty-five barons was held in the abbey which led to the sealing of the Magna Carta by King John and to the establishment of the principle that nobody could be convicted without a fair trial. The burial of St Edmund and the meeting of the barons are referred to in the town's motto, 'Shrine of a King, Cradle of the Law'.

The abbey went on to become one of the richest in the country, before it was dissolved in 1539. There is a story that Abbot Reeve, knowing that the abbey's possessions would be handed over to the King's Commissioners, removed some of the abbey treasures and hid them, but died shortly afterwards without disclosing the hiding-place. Some people believe that

the treasure still lies hidden in the Bury area, perhaps walled up in a cellar. The remains of St Edmund were moved to Toulouse in 1539 and later transferred to Arundel Castle.

The trail consists of two circular walks, the Abbey Walk and the Town Walk, both 1½ miles long, and both starting and finishing at the cathedral. The first walk should be completed in daylight, because the Abbey Gardens are closed at night.

The Abbey Walk



At the entrance to the cathedral, turn left, then left again, passing between the cathedral and the Norman Tower.

The Norman Tower, also known as St James's Gate Tower or the Cemetery Gate, was built between 1120 and 1148 and now serves as a detached bell-tower, or *campanile*, for the cathedral. It was built of Barnack limestone brought by water from near Stamford and is encrusted with the grime of centuries.

Ahead of you stands the ruined west front of St Edmund's Abbey. There are ruined abbeys all over Britain, but there is

nothing that remotely resembles the west front at Bury St Edmunds. All the facing stone has been removed, leaving only the rubble core, in which three large arches can be made out. To the right of the arches the façade continues to a polygonal structure called Sampson's Tower. In the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries houses were built into the rubble walls, resulting in a composition that is quite unique.

At the end of the cathedral, turn left through a gateway and take the first path on the right. Through a gap in the yew hedge on the right you can see chimney-pots sprouting from the ruined walls, giving them an almost surrealist quality.

At the end of the hedge continue straight on. The garden to the left of the path occupies the site of the monks' refectory, and the lawn to the right of the path was once the abbey cloister. Follow the path round to the right, and turn left into the enclosed part of the abbey ruins. No particular route is suggested for exploring the ruins but, in order to continue the walk, the enclosed area should be left by the gate at the north-west corner (see map).

St Edmund's Abbey is more ruined than Fountains or Tintern but less ruined than Shaftesbury. Walls and pillars rise to a considerable height, but there are no windows or archways, and at first glance it is difficult to tell exactly where the abbey was.

The two highest pillars stand at opposite corners of the crossing, the chancel being to the left and the nave to the right. On the highest pillar is a plaque giving the names of the twenty-five barons who met here in 1214. The poem below the plaque is worth reading.

The best viewpoint is on the far side of the crossing, close to the corner of a house. From here you can get some idea of the enormous area covered by the ruins. The abbey was 505 feet long, fifty feet longer than Norwich Cathedral. To the north of the north transept is the chapter house, where the stone coffins of five abbots were discovered in 1903.

On leaving the fenced area, turn left. Keep going straight on until you come to a path leading to a sundial, and then turn left again. In front of you is the high buttressed wall that separated the Great Court from the Palace Yard. Turn right at the sundial. Many of the trees in this area have been labelled for identification, including a Tree of Heaven near the Information Centre.

When you get to the abbey gate, bear right, but don't turn sharp right. After the path bends right at the corner of the park, you can see on the left the buttressed wall and blocked windows of the former monastic brewery. After passing a swamp cypress, take a path on the left. This bends right along the abbey wall, passes a tea shop and an aviary and then bends right again.

Ignore a private entrance on the left and a path on the right and continue along the edge of the park. On the left is Alwyne House, which was originally the abbot's bakery. Go straight on at the crossways and bear right. From here you can see the thirteenth-century Abbot's Bridge with the abbey wall leading away from it to the right. Closer to hand is the fourteenth-century dovecote, and a stretch of the old wall that separated the abbot's garden on the right from the cattle pound on the left.

Bear left and cross the River Lark by a footbridge. After it leaves Bury St Edmunds, the river flows through Mildenhall and Prickwillow and joins the Great Ouse near Littleport. After the path bends right, there is a good view of the abbey ruins on the right.

Before you get to the gate, bear right and follow the River Lark for an indefinite distance. The land to the left of the path was formerly the abbey vineyard. In fifty yards the river is joined by its tributary the Linnet. The land between the two rivers is called the Crankles and is the site of the abbey fishponds.

The path leads to an old wall which marks the limit of the vineyard, and of the abbey precinct. The wall can be seen continuing the other side of the River Linnet. The path crosses the wall by the remains of a fourteenth-century gateway and continues along the river bank. Before long there are fields on both sides, and water-voles' holes at the water's edge. (The purpose of this diversion is to show that it is possible to walk from the town centre to the countryside without passing a single house or crossing a single road.)

Return through the old gateway and turn right fifty yards before the bridge. At the end of the path, turn left into a road. Ignore a turning on the right, and at the end of the road go straight on along a footpath which cuts across the open space called Walnut Tree Close. Turn left into Eastgate Street and cross over the River Lark by the Eastgate Bridge.

In front of you on the left is one of the sights of Bury St Edmunds, the Abbot's Bridge, which is best seen from this side.

The three ribbed arches that carry the abbey wall across the river, and the three lower arches of the footbridge behind them, were all built early in the thirteenth century. Pointing upstream from the bridge are two buttresses which were added in the fourteenth century. The two arches that have been cut through the buttresses were once utilized by a wooden footbridge.

Opposite the bridge on the right is a fifteenth-century house with some marvellous carved woodwork. For the next hundred yards the road is accompanied on the left by the thirteenth-century abbey wall. Between the Abbot's Bridge and the first buttress the east gate formerly adjoined the wall. The only surviving evidence is the uneven surface of this stretch of the wall and the remains of an old fireplace.

Keep straight on, passing Cotton Lane and Northgate Street on the right. Northgate Street is extremely old. Before the abbey was founded in the tenth century, the road went straight through to Southgate Street. Then it was diverted a hundred yards to the west to form the Saxon market-place of Angel Hill.

Angel Hill is shaped like a wellington boot, with the toe pointing towards the East Gate. From the Middle Ages until 1871 it was the scene of Bury Fair, which was held annually in September. On the left is the seventeenth-century One Bull Inn. The coaching entrance is now the entrance to the bar, but the old hinges can still be seen.

Along the right-hand side of the road is a row of grey Georgian houses, and at the end of the row is a Queen Anne house called Angel Corner, which is now a museum of clocks and watches. The museum is open from 10 a.m. till 5 p.m. on weekdays and from 2 p.m. till 5 p.m. on Sundays.

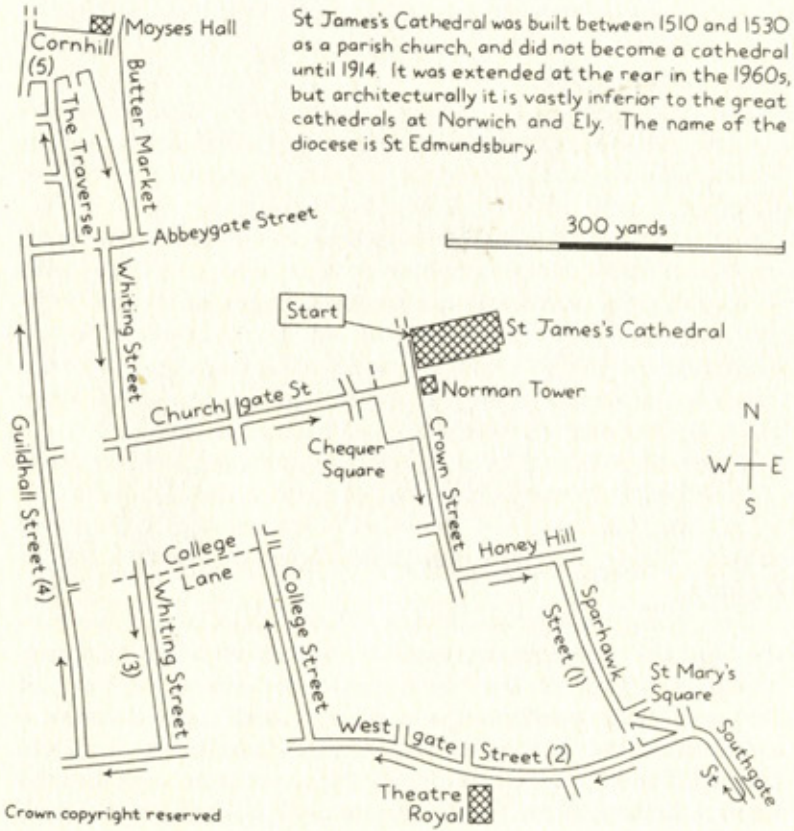
Here Angel Hill takes a right-angled turn to the left. In the centre of the square is a prominent signpost known locally as 'The Pillar of Salt'. All around are Georgian buildings, except on the left where there is a twelfth-century wall.

In the middle of this wall is the Abbey Gate, or Great Gate, which was built of Barnack limestone in 1347. Turn left here, passing under the portcullis and through the outer chamber into the inner chamber. Part of the old flagstone floor has survived on the right, and in the wall behind this there are an original doorway and fireplace. On the other side of the chamber is a very interesting painting of the abbey buildings before they became ruined.

Return to Angel Hill and turn left. On the far side of the square is the Angel Hotel, where Charles Dickens stayed in 1859 and 1861. The four-poster bed that he slept in is still there, and the Angel Hotel was featured in *The Pickwick Papers*.

Just past the hotel is number 2, which was visited by Louis Philippe the King of France, and at the end of the square is the Athenaeum, where Charles Dickens gave readings. The walk ends at the cathedral, which is just beyond the Athenaeum on the left.

The Town Walk



Turn left out of the cathedral and go straight on at the Norman tower. On the right is the open space called Chequer Square.

Before the Athenaeum was built, this was the southern end of Angel Hill, and the western sides of the two squares are on the same line. All the buildings around Chequer Square are Georgian except for the Norman Tower and the Victorian house next to it. In the centre of the square is an eighteenth-century obelisk.

Go straight on into Crown Street. On the left are fragments of the abbey wall, and farther along is St Mary's Church, where Henry VIII's sister, Mary Tudor, was buried.

Turn left along the side of the church into Honey Hill, and then right into *Sparhawk Street (1)*. On the right are a number of timber-framed houses which have been covered in modern materials while retaining the proportions of the older buildings. On numbers 4 and 5 the combination of dark and light green is particularly pleasing.

The road leads to the Saxon market-place called St Mary's Square. In the Middle Ages it was known as 'the old market' or 'the horse market'. On the right is the brewery of Greene, King & Sons.

Follow the road diagonally across the square and enter Southgate Street. Number 153 on the right is very attractive with its carved grey beams and overhanging upper storey, but even this is eclipsed by numbers 149 and 148, whose upper floors are a happy blend of close-studding and Suffolk pink. Several of the small Tudor windows have been retained, some glazed, some blocked. Originally these would have been unglazed.

Return to St Mary's Square and turn left into *Westgate Street (2)*. On the left, beyond Mayneswater Lane, is the Theatre Royal, which was built in 1819 and is now owned by the National Trust. This is the only surviving Regency theatre outside London.

Keep going straight on. Bridewell Lane and College Street on the right are both Norman streets. Turn right into College Street, which is typical of the older residential streets of Bury St Edmunds, with a wide range of colours used in the decoration of the walls and window-frames. On the first floor of numbers 18 and 20 on the right, you can see Roman numbers cut into the vertical timbers. These are the carpenters' marks that were made when the houses were built, to ensure that each beam was placed in its correct position.

Turn left into College Lane. At the end of the lane is a

beautiful half-timbered house with a rounded doorway and two gables, one much smaller than the other. Turn left here into *Whiting Street (3)*. Like College Street, this is an agreeable mixture of old houses of different styles and colours. Number 38 on the left has some very old windows, and number 52 on the right is decorated with the signs of the Zodiac.

63 Whiting Street from College Lane, Bury St Edmunds

Turn right at the T-junction, and right again into *Guildhall Street (4)*, the most westerly of the Norman streets. Just past Churchgate Street on the right is the nineteenth-century Guildhall with its early Tudor porch. Over the entrance is the shield of Bury St Edmunds, which incorporates the three crowns of the East Anglian kingdom. Before 1966 this building was used for meetings of the town council.

After a hundred yards turn right into Abbeygate Street, and then left into the Traverse. On the right is the 'Nutshell', which claims to be the smallest public house in Britain. This claim is disputed by the Smith's Arms at Godmanstone in Dorset, but whereas the Smith's Arms in 19½ feet by ten, the Nutshell is only sixteen feet by 7½.

On the left are three 'islands' in the former Norman market-place. The first is the Corn Exchange, which was built in 1862; the second is slightly smaller than the first and was built in 1836; both have now been converted into shops. Opposite the second island is the beautifully decorated Cupola House, which was built at the end of the seventeenth century and which was visited by Celia Fiennes and Daniel Defoe.

The third island is smaller than the other two and is known as the Market Cross. It was built by Robert Adam in 1780 as a theatre, became the town hall and is now an art gallery.

At the end of the road, turn right into *Cornhill (5)*, passing Skinner Street on the right. The proximity of Skinner Street to the streets either side of it is a sure sign of encroachment, and reference to early maps confirms that the whole of this area was once part of the market-place. Despite the encroachment, a considerable amount of open space remains, and a market still takes place every Wednesday and Saturday.

The flint-walled building on the far side of Cornhill is Moyses Hall. It was built in 1180 as a private house. Since then it has been an inn, a synagogue and a police station; now it is a museum. Among the exhibits is a church made of snail shells.

The side of the building facing Cornhill is made up of features from many different periods. The buttresses and the two round-headed windows on the first floor are Norman. The doorway and the ground-floor windows are fourteenth-century. The traceried window on the first floor is fifteenth-century, and the turret is Victorian.

Turn right into the wedge-shaped Butter Market, which is full of stalls on market days, and then right into Abbeygate Street. On the left is the Georgian shop front of Savory & Moore the chemists, which is worth visiting for its marvellous timber-framed interior. Under the clock (on your right as you go in) is an ancient good-luck stone.

Turn left here into Whiting Street, which is so called because it was formerly occupied by whitening-makers. After 200 yards

turn left into Churchgate Street, which was laid out in the eleventh century as a processional way from the west gate to the abbey.

Keep going straight on until you come to the Norman Tower, and then turn left for the cathedral.

Woodbridge

Location of the Start

Leave the Woodbridge bypass by the B1079, which is Grundisborough Road. After a quarter of a mile bear right into Burkitt Road. Just past the junction is Buttrum's Mill, a seven-storey tower-mill complete with sails and fantail. It was built in 1816 and was in use for 112 years. Continue for another quarter of a mile to the car-park adjoining the fire station, where the walk begins.

If the car-park is full, go straight on, keeping to the left of the Bull Hotel, into New Street. Turn left into St John's Street and go straight on at the Red Lion into Lime Kiln Quay Road. This bends right and becomes Quay Side. There is a larger car-park in Hamblyn Road on the right. The trail may be picked up at the junction of Quay Side and Doric Place (3).

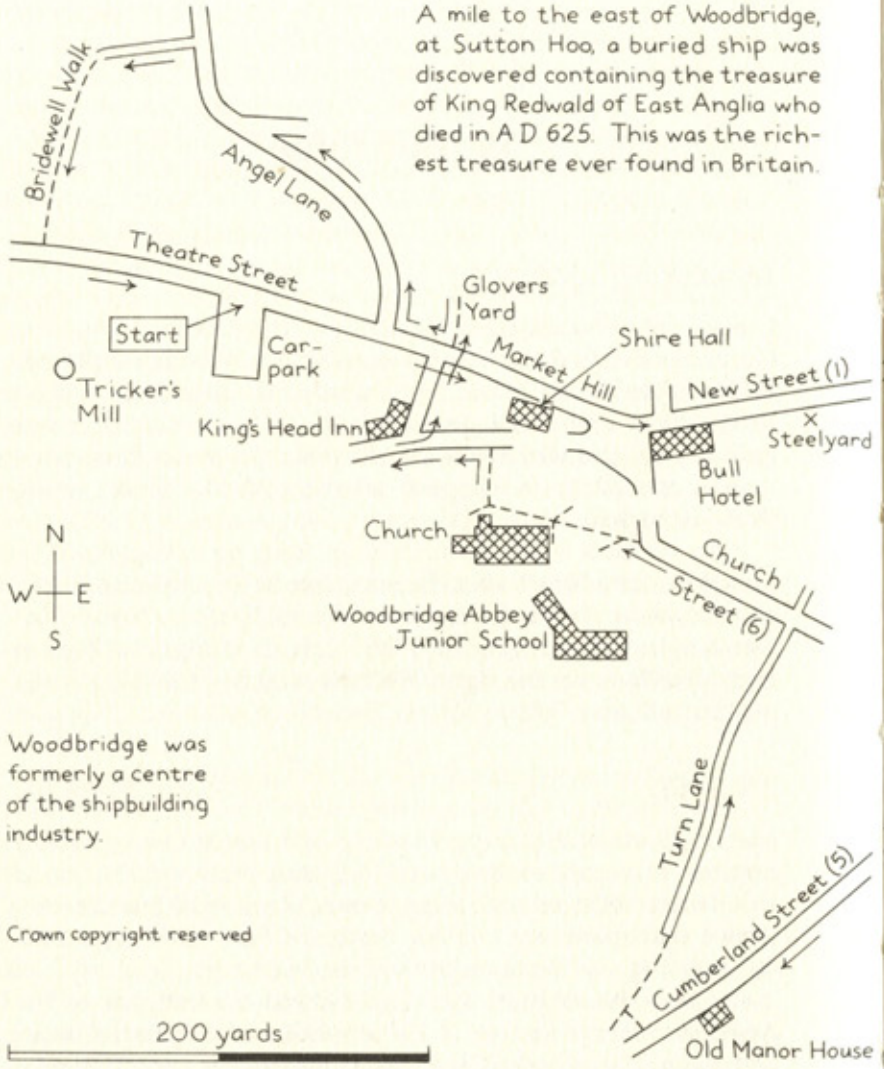
The Trail Length 1¾ miles

Turn right out of the car-park into Theatre Street. On the right is number 11, a sixteenth-century building with much carved woodwork. Its most endearing feature is a row of low wooden arches that spans the carriage entrance. From 1557 until 1607 this building was the home of the Free Grammar School.

On the other side of the road, behind the car-park of the Angel Inn, there is a row of stables with freshly painted doors and black strap hinges. Then Angel Lane curves away downhill in a manner reminiscent of Gold Hill in Shaftesbury. There is much sixteenth-century timber exposed in the side wall of the Angel Inn.

The open space on the right is called Market Hill and may be regarded as the centre of Woodbridge. In the Middle Ages an annual fair was held here on St Andrew's Day (23 October), and a weekly market is still held every Thursday. In the centre of the

A mile to the east of Woodbridge, at Sutton Hoo, a buried ship was discovered containing the treasure of King Redwald of East Anglia who died in A D 625. This was the richest treasure ever found in Britain.



Woodbridge was formerly a centre of the shipbuilding industry.

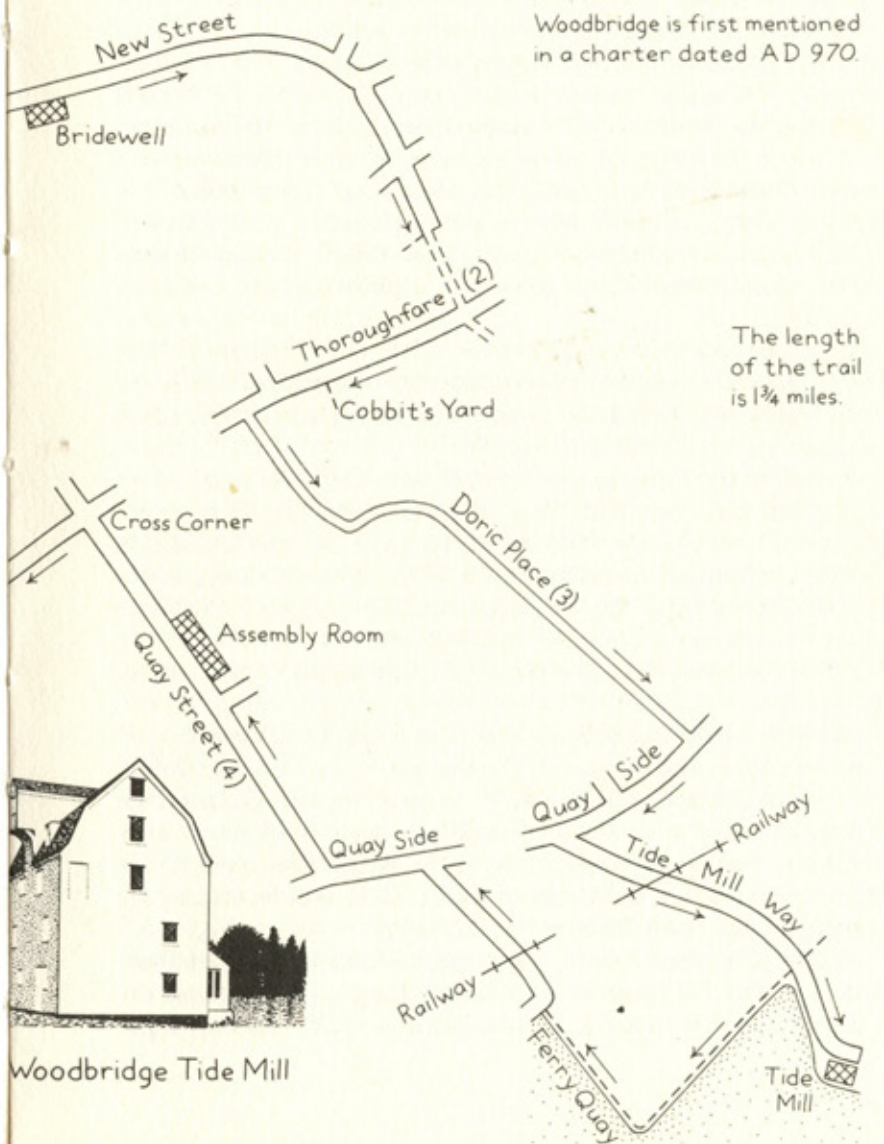
square is the Shire Hall, built by Thomas Seckford in 1575. The stone steps were added in the late seventeenth century. Over the door is the coat of arms of the Seckford family.

Keep straight on, passing to the left of the Shire Hall. The inscription between the first-floor windows of a house on the left records the residence here of the poet Edward Fitzgerald,

who is best remembered for his translation of *The Rubáiyát* of Omar Khayyám.

In front of you is the Bull Hotel, where Alfred, Lord Tennyson, stayed in 1876 when he was Poet Laureate. Go straight on, passing to the left of the hotel, into *New Street (1)*, which has been so called since it was built in 1550. The intriguing wooden structure projecting over the road is a steelyard, one of only two surviving on their original sites.

Woodbridge is first mentioned in a charter dated A D 970.



The length of the trail is 1¾ miles.

Woodbridge Tide Mill

Chains were passed under a loaded wagon and a hundred-pound lead weight was moved along the steelyard until it lifted the wagon off the ground. The wagon was then weighed again when it was empty to give the weight of the load. The apparatus was in use from early in the seventeenth century until the 1880s, and it could weigh up to 2½ tons.

Adjoining the steelyard is the sixteenth-century Old Bell & Steelyard Inn, and farther along on the same side is another sixteenth-century building, the Bridewell, a former gaol. Both these buildings display a wealth of old beams.

In the grounds of Woodbridge County Primary School on the right an ash and a Scots pine have been labelled for the benefit of the pupils. No doubt other trees have been labelled too.

Keep on the road as it curves round to the right and tapers to a path. Then turn right into the shopping street called the *Thoroughfare (2)*. On the left is Cobbitt's Yard, a paved area in which a modern fountain plays. Past this is Martin Hogg's China Shop, which has a carving of a phoenix over one of its windows.

Just past this turn left into *Doric Place (3)*, a delightful little lane, still uncluttered with modern street-furniture. When the lane bends left, there is an ornamental brick pillar on the right, and farther on there is an old pump.

At the end of the lane, turn right into Quay Side and then sharp left into Tide Mill Way, which crosses the London-to-Lowestoft railway. At the end of the road is the Tide Mill, a Grade I building constructed in the 1790s. When it closed down in 1957, it was the last working tidemill in the country. Since then it has been meticulously restored, and now it is open to the public in the summer. A mill was first recorded on this site in 1170.

On leaving the tidemill, retrace your steps for fifty yards and turn left along the quayside. On the left is the Deben Estuary, which on summer weekends is crossed by the Woodbridge Ferry. On the far bank is the Sandlings, an area of sandy soils with conifer planations and pockets of heath that stretches for twenty miles to the north-east. You can see down the estuary for a mile, but the open sea is eight miles away.

Follow the quay round to the right, along the side of Bass' Dock. When the quay turns left, go straight on, crossing the railway by a level-crossing. Turn left into Quay Side and right

into *Quay Street (4)*. Numbers 17 to 9 on the left have all been attractively painted, number 9 being decorated with silhouettes. Beyond Crown Place on the right is a disused maltings which is now the Assembly Room.

Turn left at Cross Corner into *Cumberland Street (5)*. Just past the post office are three imposing Georgian houses – Cumberland House on the left, and Marston House and Gordon House on the right. Although these three houses are similar in general design, they differ considerably in detail. Two of the houses have shutters, and two have exposed brickwork. Cumberland House has a segmental, or curved, pediment over the door. The other two houses have standard pediments, and beneath that of Gordon House is a beautiful carved face with swags either side of it.

There are other enjoyable buildings in Cumberland Street, including the Old Manor House on the left, which is early seventeenth-century. After passing number 28, turn right onto a path and right again into Turn Lane, which begins as a path and later becomes a narrow road.

Turn left into *Church Street (6)*. When the road bends right, you can see Woodbridge Abbey Junior School on the left. This was built as a private house in 1564, on the site of an Augustinian priory, and was the home of the Seckford family.

Go straight on through the wrought-iron gates into the churchyard, and keep to the right of the church. On the side of the porch you can see how patterns have been created by cutting hollows out of the stonework and filling the hollows with knapped flints. This is the flushwork frequently found on East Anglian churches.

At the porch turn right up some steps and continue along a short cobbled lane to Market Hill. In the centre of the square is a wheel-operated Victorian pump housed in a small Gothic-style building.

Turn left along the side of the square and continue into Seckford Street. The side wall of the King's Head Inn has several interesting features from the late fifteenth century. On the ground floor are two small wood-mullioned windows, one four-light and one two-light. Farther along are five carved heads below an upstairs window, and at the far end of the building is a vertical beam rising through two storeys. This is called a storey-post.

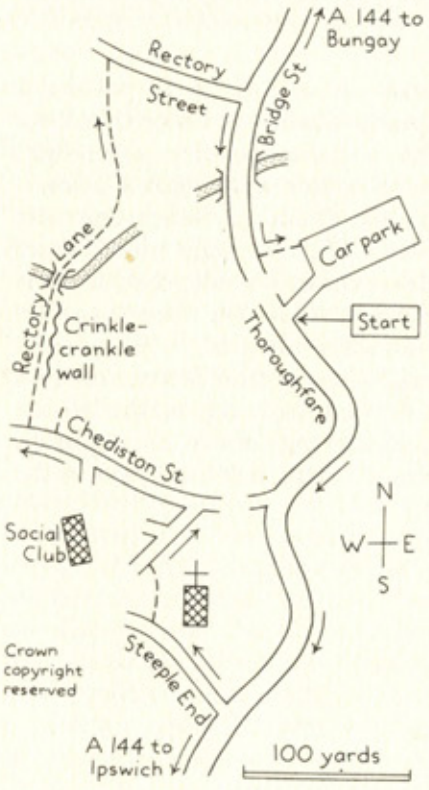
Retrace your steps for a few yards and turn left along the front of the King's Head. From here you can see how the colour of the old peg tiles varies from brick red to almost black. At the corner of the square go straight on into Glover's Yard. On the right is a sixteenth-century black-and-white cottage that was formerly used for glove-making.

Return to the corner of the square and turn right into Theatre Street. If you have enough energy left to climb a long flight of steps, turn right into Angel Lane; otherwise go straight on to the car-park. Angel Lane curves round to the left and then bends right by an old pump. Just past the bend, turn left into a narrow road and continue up the steps. Turn left into Theatre Street, which leads back to the car-park. As you turn into the car-park, you can see the top of Tricker's Mill over the fire station. This is a tower-mill built early in the nineteenth century and now used as a common room.

Halesworth

The half-mile walk starts at the car-park next to the White Lion Hotel in the main street. The car-park is signposted 'Town Park', but the sign is easily missed.

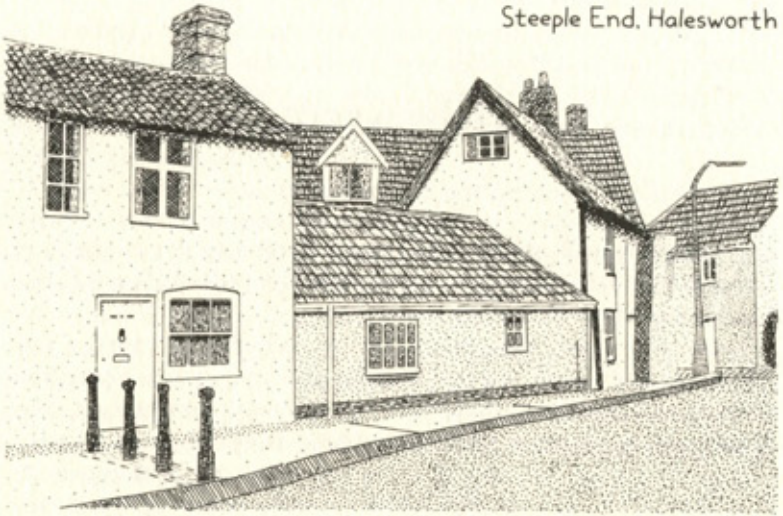
Turn left into the main street, which is called 'The Thoroughfare'. The road bends right and comes to a Y-junction with a half-timbered gable-end on the opposite corner. The slightly curved horizontal beam at the level of the eaves is called a tie-beam, and the horizontal beam between this and the apex of the gable is called a collar-beam.



Bear left here. At the next bend is a house with an unusual Jacobean porch. The farther part of the house is half-timbered.

Turn right into Steeple End. From here there is an enjoyable view through the pine trees of the medieval church. On the left are the Cary Almshouses with their five old doors. They were built in 1686 and now house the museum, art gallery and library.

Turn right between the church porch and a group of pantiled cottages that have been tastefully modernized. Follow the path to the left, and turn


Steeple End, Halesworth

right along the side of the market-place. Close to the pavement is a nineteenth-century stone pump which was restored in 1983. From here you can see the sixteenth-century seven-light windows of the Social Club on the far side of the market-place.

Just past the pump, turn left into Chediston Street. Opposite the antique shop called 'Number Six', turn right into Rectory Lane. On the right is one of those curious crinkle-crankle walls that abound in this part of Suffolk. After you cross the river, there is a seat on the left in an attractive situation.

At the end of the path, turn right into Rectory Street, and then right again into Bridge Street. Beyond the bridge on the left is a shop with some interesting old carvings above its windows. Immediately past this, turn left into a lane that leads back to the car-park.

Eye

Eye is a sleepy little town with a feeling that the twentieth century has passed it by – a feeling that it shares with Montgomery and Llandrindod Wells. The population is only 1,760, and before 1974 Eye was the smallest borough in the United Kingdom.

In the time of William the Conqueror, Eye was a place of considerable importance. The castle was the headquarters of the Honour of Eye, which was made up of 247 estates and covered an area of 60,000 acres, and was held by William Malet, the nephew of Lady Godiva; it passed to his son Robert, who founded the market, and was later held by Stephen of Blois, who was to become King Stephen in 1135, and by Thomas à Becket.

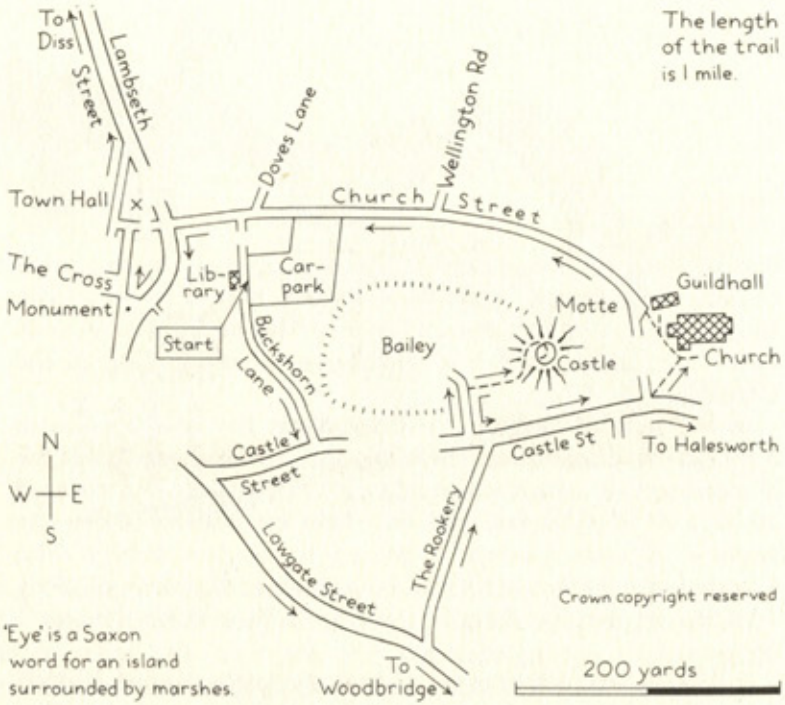
In 1591 a windmill was erected on the castle mound. In 1845 the owner of the site, General Sir Edward Kerrison, demolished the mill and replaced it with a house for his batman, who had saved the General's life at the Battle of Waterloo. The house survives as a circular battlemented wall. In 1923 the castle was bought by the Borough Council, and in 1980 twenty houses were built in the castle bailey.

The Trail — Length 1 mile

Leave the car-park by the library entrance and turn left into Buckshorn Lane. The rising ground of the castle bailey can be seen behind the cottages on the left. Turn right into Castle Street and left into Lowgate Street. At the de-restriction sign, turn left into The Rookery. Now the castle mound can be seen rising behind a pair of very pretty cottages.

Go straight on into Castle Hill and right when the road starts to bend left. Unless the gate is locked, it is possible to ascend the motte by a flight of steps that rises through a little valley.

Return to Castle Hill and turn left. Then turn left again into

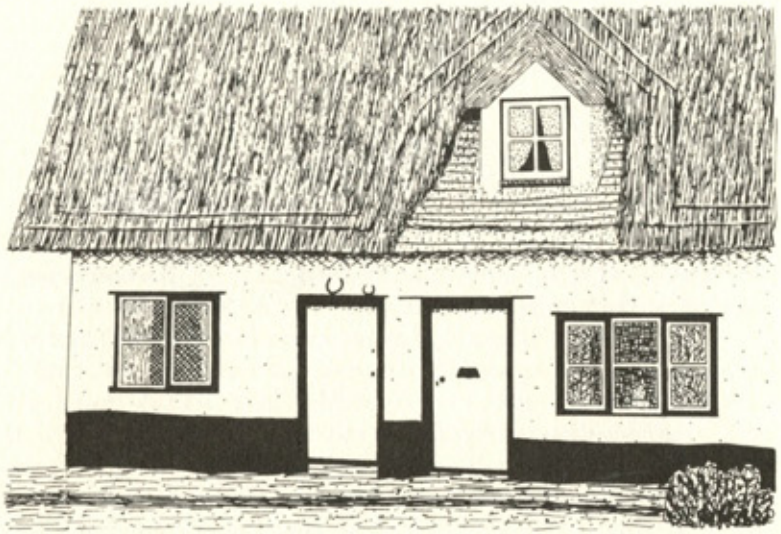


Castle Street. At the junction with Church Street, take the path to the church porch. The church tower was built in 1470 and is 100 feet high. Turn left at the porch and go straight on. On your right is the finest building in Eye, the fifteenth-century Guildhall. Note the exquisite carving on the corner-post.

Leave the churchyard by the double gates and go straight on into Church Street. Near the end of the road on the left is a very attractive chemist's shop with Tudor shopwindows, close-studding and a long bressumer that dips quaintly to the left.

At the crossroads turn left. On the left is the White Lion Hotel, with stone sculptured lions over the carriage entrance. In 1980 it was used as the location of *The Diary of an Innkeeper*, which was shown on BBC television. On the right is a monument erected in 1888 in memory of Sir Edward Kerrison, MP for Eye from 1852 until 1866.

Turn right at the monument, and right again through a narrow gap into The Cross. In front of you is the Victorian town hall with its domed clock-tower surmounted by a smaller



Cottage in Castle Hill, Eye

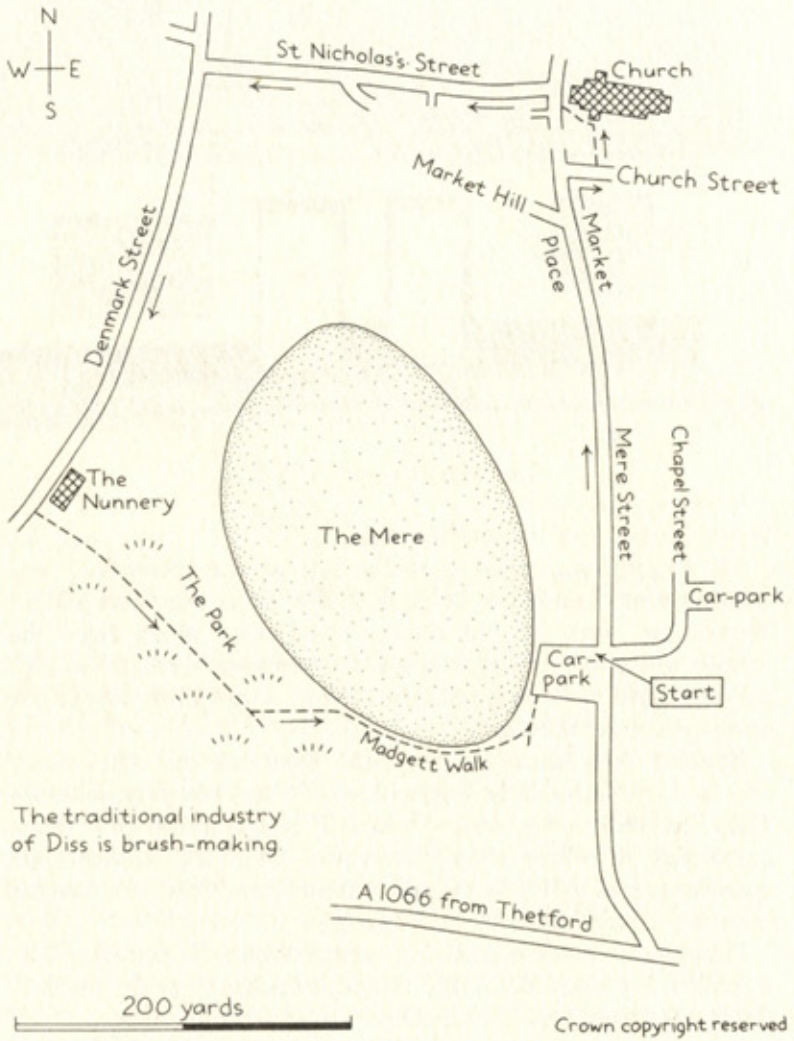
bell-tower, its roof shaped like a bell.

Go straight on, passing to the left of the town hall, and continue into Lambseth Street. On the left is the Dove House Restaurant, with an old iron-studded door taken from the former town hall. Above the door are imitation beams so well proportioned that they look real from a distance. Inside are many genuine old beams.

Beyond Wellington Road on the right are the almshouses founded by Nicholas Bedingfield in 1635 for four poor widows. They are still occupied by widows, but recently they were converted from four cottages to three. Over the windows are such messages as 'Patience' and 'Charity', and there are four tall chimneys, each with a different pattern.

Finally, on the left is a crinkle-crankle wall with no fewer than twenty-one bulges. Behind is Chandos Lodge, once the home of the late Sir Frederick Ashton, Director of the Royal Ballet.

The length of the trail is ¾ mile.



The traditional industry of Diss is brush-making.

Diss

Leave the A143 by the A1066, and turn right after three-quarters of a mile into Mere Street. The walk starts from the car-park on the left. (There are other car-parks in Chapel Street.)

Turn left out of the car-park into the main shopping street of the town. As the road widens out to form the Market Place, there is an interesting view of Market Hill wandering off to the left.

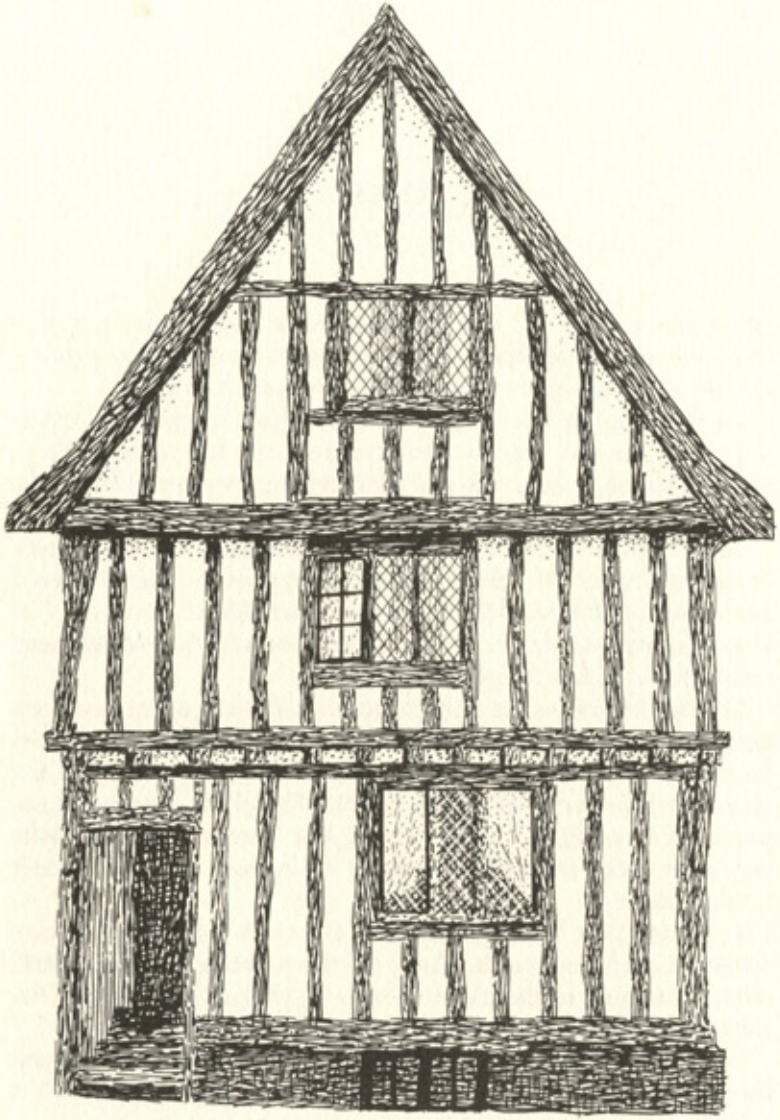
Turn right into Church Street, then left towards the church. From the churchyard there is a good view of the half-timbered gable-end of Dolphin House on the other side of the road. The lowest horizontal beam is called the ground sill, and the wall below this is called the plinth.

In front of you is the church porch, which is decorated with flushwork. From 1504 until 1529 John Skelton, the Poet Laureate, was the rector here, and the church provided the setting for his poem 'Ware the Hawk'. The path turns left at the porch and comes out into a road. The narrow road opposite separates two 'islands' that have been built on the former market-place.

Turn right for a few yards, and then left into St Nicholas's Street. A hundred yards along on the right is the Corn Hall, which was built in the classical style in 1854. Adjoining it is the sixteenth-century side wall of the Greyhound public house.

Turn left at the T-junction, and after 200 yards turn left again through a pair of wrought-iron gates into the park. On the left is a large lake called 'the Mere' which is owned by the Town Council. After passing through a group of mature horse-chestnut trees, take a path on the left that leads down to the lake. The lake is visited by wildfowl of many kinds, and the view of the town across the broad expanse of water gives this area an atmosphere of tranquillity.

The path follows the lake shore back to the car-park. In the vicinity of the car-park is the town cross, which depicts a



Dolphin House from the churchyard, Diss

spinning-wheel and a Diss farthing, among other things. There is also a chart to help one identify the various birds that visit the lake. Just round the corner in Mere Street is a glass-fronted case giving details of shops, bus times and so on; the pages may be turned over by operating little levers underneath.

Bungay

The trail is made up of two half-mile walks, the Town Walk and the Castle Walk, both starting and finishing at the Butter Cross.

The Town Walk

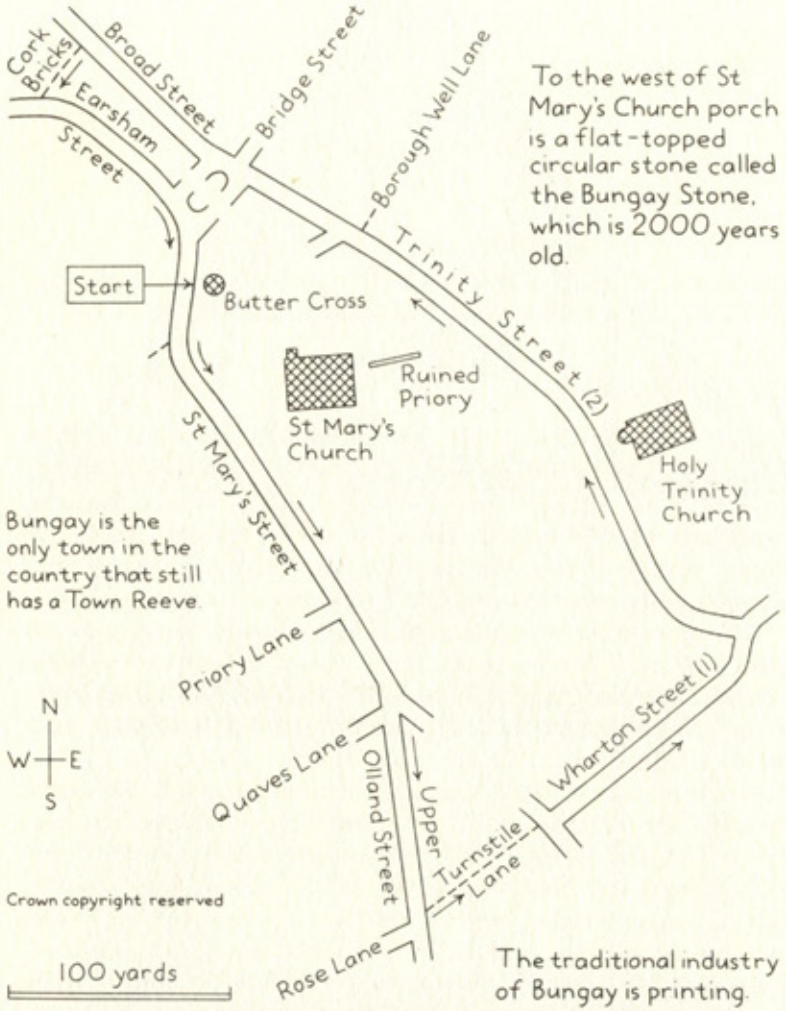
From the Butter Cross, face the Midland Bank and turn left along the main road. On the left is the priory church of St Mary, formerly the church of the Holy Cross, which became redundant in 1977 because there is another church nearby in Trinity Street. On the right, opposite the end of the churchyard, is a sixteenth-century house with a wealth of carved woodwork.

The Y-junction ahead is the result of two roads converging on a point of entry into the Saxon town. Take the right fork (Upper Olland Street), passing a pretty little oriel window on the left. Roughly opposite Rose Lane, turn left into Turnstile Lane and carry straight on into *Wharton Street (1).*

At the next junction is a little cluster of distinctive Georgian houses. Turn left here into *Trinity Street (2)* and re-enter the area covered by the Saxon town. On the right is the church of the Holy Trinity with its round tower of 1041. If you look closely, you can make out the 'herringbone' Saxon masonry. Above the modern window is a blocked round-headed Saxon window. There are more round church towers in Norfolk and Suffolk than in the rest of England because of the lack of a suitable stone for the corners.

Farther along on the left, in the churchyard of St Mary's, are the ruins of a Benedictine convent founded by Gundreda, the wife of Hugh Bigod, in 1160. The nuns were known as 'the Ladies of Bungay'. On the right, facing the churchyard, is a row of very attractive Georgian houses.

Keep straight on until you come to the market-place. In the centre of the square is a lamp-post crowned with a weathervane in the form of 'the Black Dog of Bungay'. According to legend,



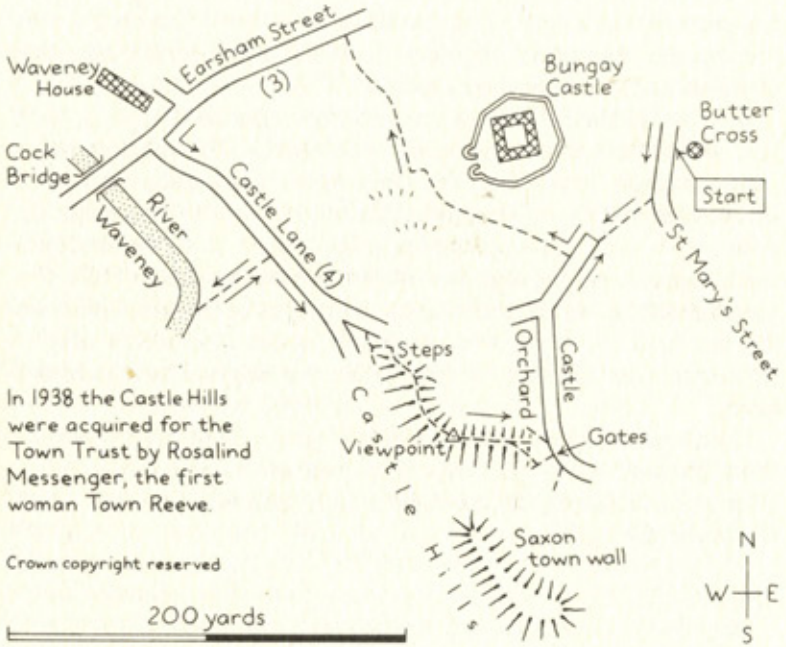
the dog appeared in the parish church during a thunderstorm on 4 August 1577. The lamp-post stands on the site of the town pump of 1812, which replaced the even earlier Corn Cross.

Go straight on into Broad Street. On the right is a real junk shop called 'Bungajunk', where you can still buy a frying-pan for 25p or a tin-opener for 10p. Where the road widens out, turn left into a tiny lane with the incredible name of Cork Bricks. From here there is a glimpse of the castle ruins (which will be visited in the second part of the walk).

Turn left into Earsham Street, which passes between the hanging inn signs of the Three Tuns on the left and the King's Head on the right. Bear right at the market-place, and the Butter Cross is on the left.

The Butter Cross was built in 1689 and was used by farmers to sell butter, eggs and other produce. More recently it was used for the sale of fish, and now it provides useful shelter from the rain. The beautiful statue of Justice that crowns the dome was added in 1754.

The Castle Walk



Leave the Butter Cross in the same direction as before but, when the road bears left, turn right, passing under the sign saying 'Entrance to Bigod's Castle'. After forty yards, take a path on the right, which leads to the castle. Between the round towers of the gatehouse can be seen the remains of the square Norman keep built by Hugh Bigod in 1165. It has walls eighteen feet thick – the thickest walls of any castle in England, and it was originally ninety feet high, the same height as St Mary's Church tower.

The gatehouse and polygonal outer wall were added by Roger Bigod in 1294.

At the end of the eighteenth century the castle was owned by the writer Elizabeth Bonhote, who lived in a tall, thin house squeezed into the space between the round towers. One of her novels was entitled *Bungay Castle*.

Keep on the path as it bends left and right by the castle gates, then carry on to *Earsham Street (3)* and turn left. Just past Outney Road on the right is Waveney House. Early in the nineteenth century this was the home of J.B. Scott, the author of *An Englishman at Home and Abroad*.

Turn left into *Castle Lane (4)*. On the right by a telegraph pole is a path that leads down to the River Waveney. The river forms the county boundary between Norfolk and Suffolk and has given its name to Waveney District.

Bear left at the fork, then immediately right onto a path, then left, and follow the steps up onto the ridge. The highest point makes a good viewpoint. The ridge you are standing on is part of the rampart that surrounded the castle bailey. The ridge on your right, with steps up the end of it, is part of the Saxon town wall. The two ridges together are known as the Castle Hills. On your left is the castle, with the drum towers of the gatehouse on the left, and the keep on the right. You can also see St Mary's Church tower and use it to visualize the original height of the keep.

Continue along the ridge for thirty yards, then drop down to the right and leave the area by a pair of wrought-iron gates. Turn left into Castle Orchard, bear right and keep straight on to the Butter Cross.

Beccles

Beccles lies on the tidal River Waveney, twenty-five miles from the open sea and close to the limit of navigation. The town is centred on the Old Market, which is Saxon, and the New Market, which is medieval. Close to the New Market is St Michael's Church, which is unusual in that the tower is separate from the rest of the building. In 1972 the tower was bought by the Town Council for a 1795 Beccles penny, which may be seen on the side of the tower facing the road called 'The Walk'.

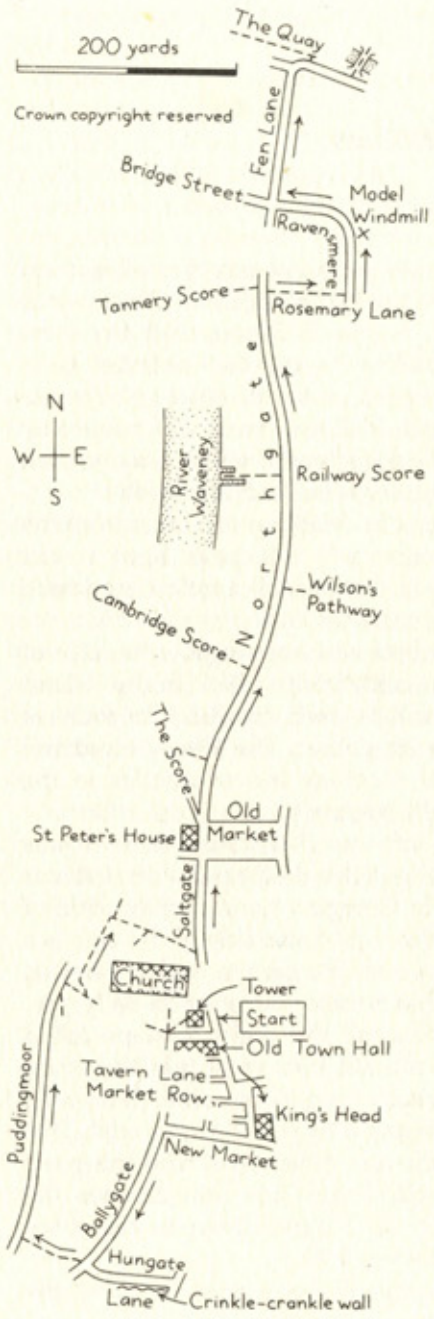
The mile-long trail begins in The Walk on the far side of the road. Face the tower and turn left. On your right is the eighteenth-century town hall. In front of it is a milestone which looks very old but was actually made in 1984.

Keep straight on. On your right you can see how the area of the New Market has been completely filled in by island development. The largest island is itself divided into four, so there are really seven islands altogether. The King's Head Inn on the left was the principal coaching inn of Beccles in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

Turn right here, and then left into Ballygate, which means 'street leading to the bailey'. After a hundred yards, turn left into Hungate Lane, noting the fine Georgian houses either side of the entrance to the lane. On the right-hand side of the lane is a crinkle-crankle wall which was once the garden wall of a house. Turn round at the T-junction and retrace your steps to Ballygate.

Cross over the road and descend the flight of steps called Stepping Hill. At the foot of the hill turn right into the street called Puddingmoor, which means 'frog moor'. After 200 yards, turn right up some steps adjoining a high buttressed wall. This wall is over 600 years old. At the top of the steps, turn sharp left and follow the top of the wall. From here you can see the grass-covered Church Score, which runs down to the River Waveney between walls of massive flints.

At the corner of the churchyard, turn right. In 1749 the



parents of Admiral Nelson were married in this church, and here, in 1783, George Crabb married Sarah Emmy, whom he called 'Mira' in his poems.

Turn left into Saltgate. On your right is the Old Market, which has been put to good use as a bus station. In front of you is a house with vertical timbers ('studs') on the first floor. The wide spacing of the studs assigns the house to the seventeenth or late sixteenth century. On your left, facing the square, is St Peter's House Hotel, a Grade I Georgian building on the site of the medieval chapel of St Peter.

From the left-hand corner of the square a lane called 'The Score' leads down to the River Waveney. There are other scores, distinguished by such names as Cambridge Score and Tannery Score, but this is known simply as 'The Score' because it is the oldest, and this is the way the herrings were brought up a thousand years ago to be sold in the Old Market.

Go straight on into Northgate, the best street in Beccles, and the subject

of Adrian Bell's book *A Street in Suffolk*. He lived at number 19 Northgate from 1954 until 1964. All along this street are seventeenth-century Dutch gables made up of alternating convex and concave curves. Many of the gables are capped by triangular pediments.

After 200 yards, turn left into Railway Score, which leads down to the River Waveney. Small creeks join the river either side of the path, and farther upstream weeping willows may be seen rising from lawns and cascading down to the water's edge. The land on the far bank is in Norfolk.

Return to Northgate and turn left. On the right is Oswald House, where Field Marshal Sir Claude Auchinleck lived from 1960 to 1967. Turn right into Rosemary Lane and left into Ravensmere. On the right is a marvellous model windmill with a revolving cap, a fantail and even hinges on the doors.

Follow the road round to the left, and turn right at the crossroads into Fen Lane. On the left is the Maltings, which has been converted into attractive dwellings. At the end of the lane is the Quay, where ducks and pleasure boats gather in large numbers, and the walk comes to an end.

Great Yarmouth

Great Yarmouth is situated on the east coast of Norfolk on a narrow strip of land between the River Yare and the open sea. From Saxon times until the nineteenth century the town faced west, to the estuary; then, in about 1850, it turned over and faced east. The sea-front was developed, and Yarmouth became a major holiday resort.

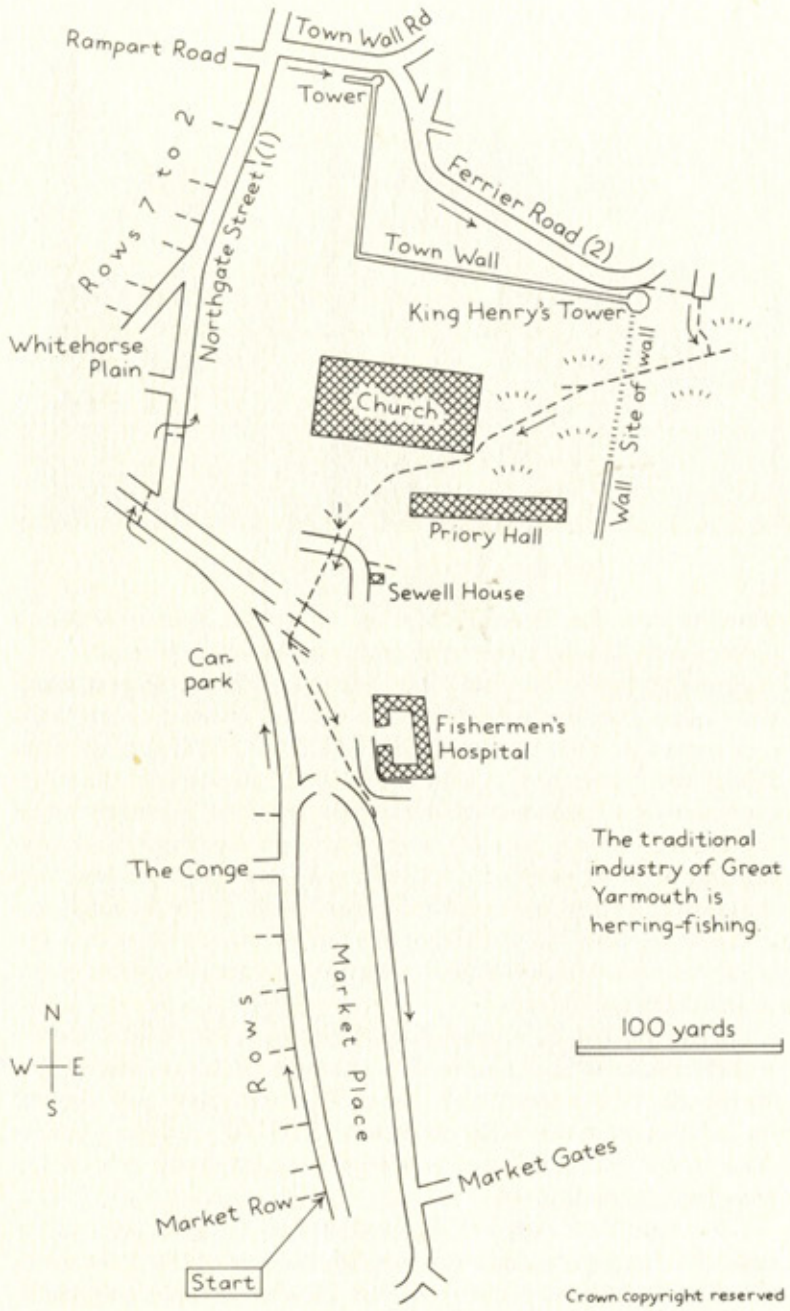
The old town is surrounded by a well-preserved town wall built between 1285 and 1346. It was originally 1¼ miles in length and twenty-three feet high. There were ten gates and sixteen towers, of which eleven survive, including King Henry's Tower, the Hospital Tower, the Guard Tower, the Pinnacle Tower, Shave's Tower, Harris's Tower, Blackfriars Tower and Palmer's Tower. All the gates were demolished between 1776 and 1837. The best-preserved parts of the town wall are the north and south ends, and these are visited in the course of the trail.

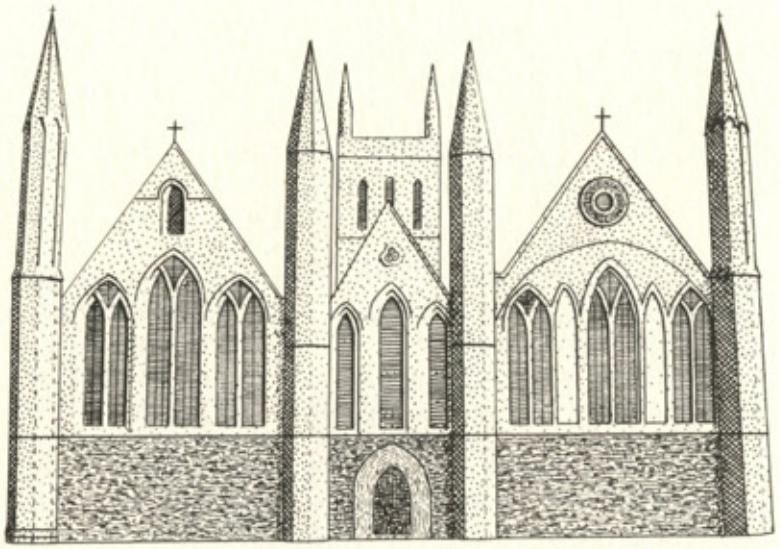
The most interesting feature of the town is the enormous number of parallel alleys, called rows, that run from east to west. The rows were first numbered in 1804; before that time they had only names. Originally they were surfaced with gravel, then with cobbles, and later with flagstones or concrete. Goods were transported along the rows by means of specially designed horse-drawn carts called trolls. In order to reduce the width of the carts, the wheels were placed underneath the body. Altogether there were 146 of these rows, of which sixty-nine have survived and fifty-six are visited on this walk.

The walk consists of two loops, both starting and finishing in the market-place. The northern loop is three-quarters of a mile long, and the southern loop 1¾, making 2½ miles together.

The Northern Route

From Market Row turn left into the Market Place. This is said to be the largest market-place in England, though I would have





St Nicholas's Church, Great Yarmouth

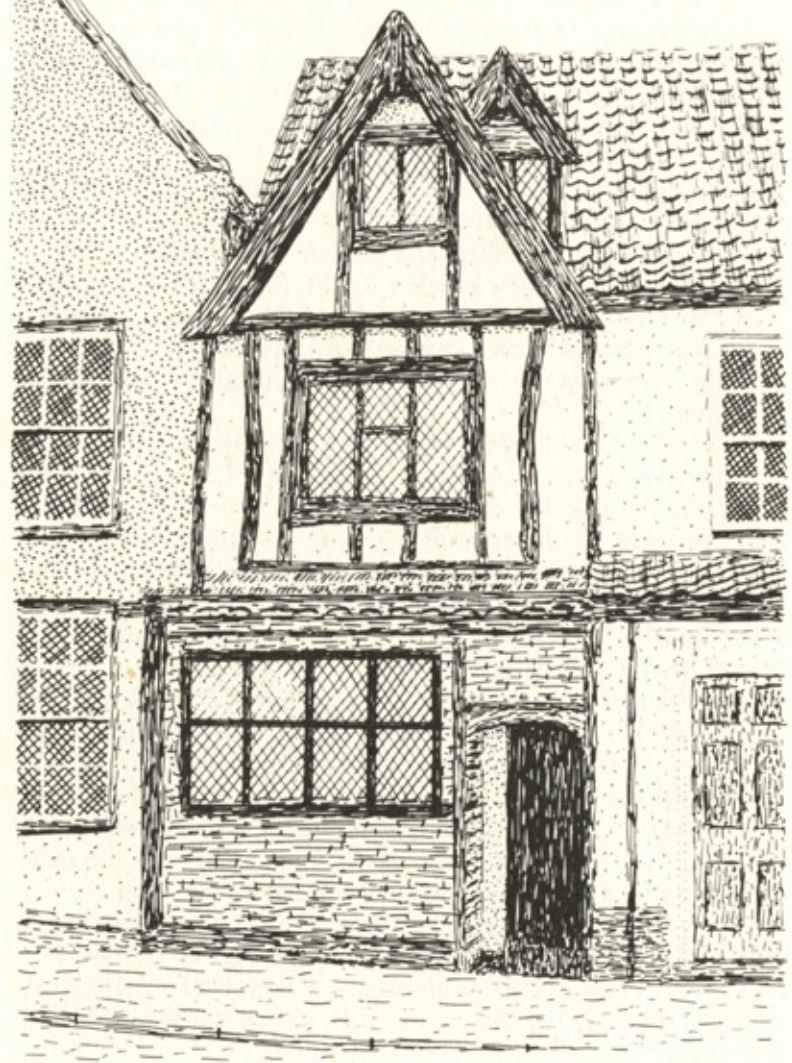
thought that the Tuesday Market in King's Lynn covered a greater area. On the left are the entrances to six of the rows.

At the end of the Market Place, keep straight on. After passing the Gallon Pot, the path curves to the left between a car-park and a road and then runs along the side of a dual carriageway. When the pavement comes to an end, cross over the dual carriageway to join the left-hand pavement of *Northgate Street (1)*. Then cross over and follow the right-hand pavement. On the right is a good view of St Nicholas's Church in its spacious graveyard. This church, with its four spires, is the subject of a drawing by J.S. Cotman. From this angle you can see that the aisles are wider than the nave. They are in fact the widest aisles of any church in Britain.

On the left are the entrances to Rows 7, 6, 5, 4, 3 and 2. Row 5 is also known as Split Gutter Row. Rampart Road on the left lies on the site of the town wall. Along this road there is a view of the north-east tower with its conical roof 200 yards away. The door to the wall-walk can be seen on the left-hand side of the tower at first-floor level.

Turn right into Town Wall Road and right again into *Ferrier Road (2)*. From here there is a very good view of the town wall, terminating in King Henry's Tower. This is the only polygonal

Sewell House, Great Yarmouth



tower on the wall: all the others are circular. The plinth and quoins are stone, the rest of the tower is flint.

Bear right at the tower along the side of a brick wall. Then turn right through a wrought-iron gate into the churchyard. The

oldest part of the church is the lower part of the tower, which is Norman.

At the T-junction, turn right, onto a path which cuts across a bank which marks the position of a stretch of the town wall, which has disappeared. On the left you can see the wall continuing beyond the churchyard, and on the right the rampire, or grassy slope, which was built up against the inside of the wall in the seventeenth century.

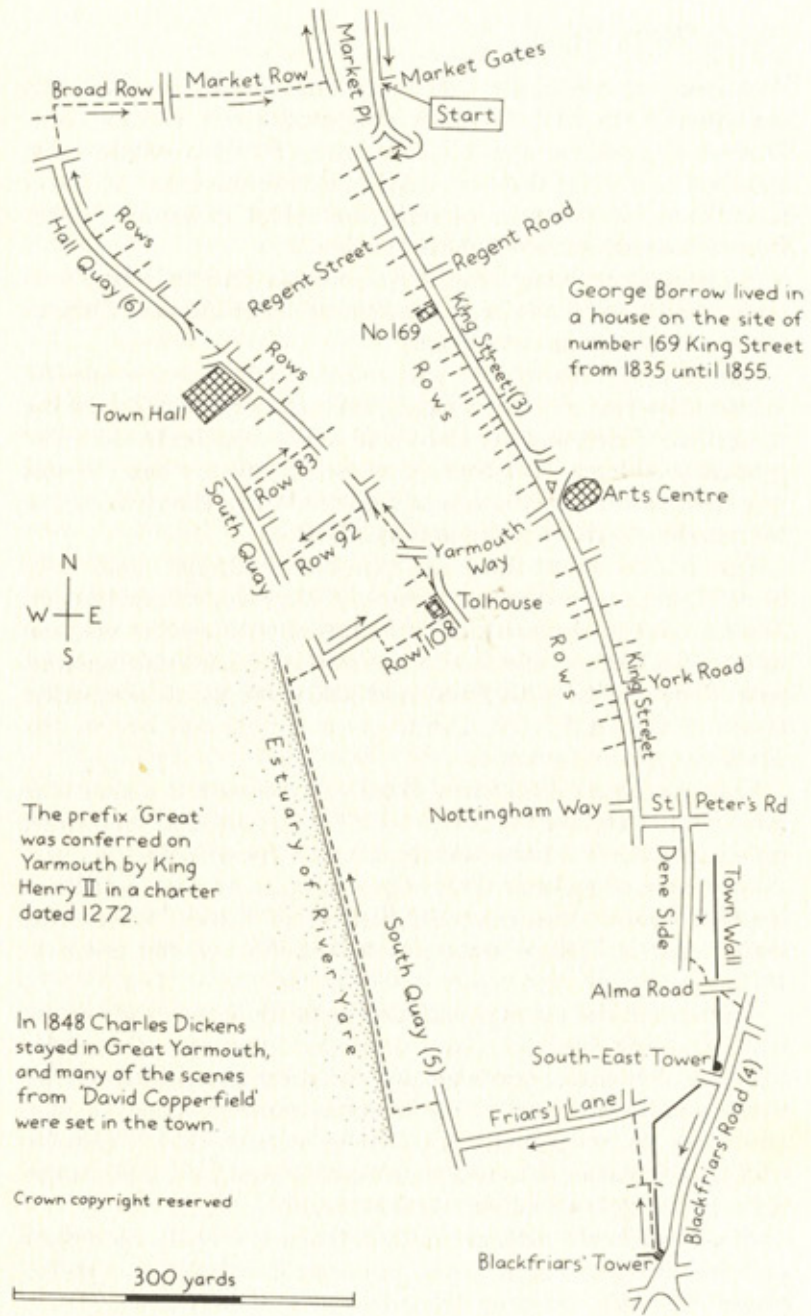
Where the paths fork, bear left, passing between the church and the Priory Hall, which is now the assembly hall of the Priory School. The hall was built in 1260 as part of a Benedictine priory. it is easy to tell which features of the original building have survived and which have been replaced. The outer parts of the two large windows, the doorway and the corble table are all original, and so is the doorway in the wall to the right of the building.

Bear left. After passing through the gates, take the path straight ahead across the open space called Church Plain. On the left is the fine Georgian vicarage of 1718 with a shell-hood over the door. To the right of that is Priory Row (the only row that doesn't have a number). After that comes a house in dire need of renovation, and then there is the prettiest house in Yarmouth, Sewell House, built in 1641 and named after Anna Sewell, who was born here in 1820.

Anna Sewell is best known as the author of *Black Beauty*, the story of the life of a horse, related in the first person. This is the first book I read at school when I had finished the Beacon Readers. It is remarkable how often famous people are born in beautiful houses. Note the old door with its vertical battens, the slightly bent beams on the first floor, and the unusual arrangement of two gables, one half-hidden by the other.

Cross over the road and bear slightly left, passing to the right of two telephone boxes. On the left is the delightful Fishermen's Hospital with its dormer windows, shutters, Dutch gables and central cupola. Inside the cupola is a painted statue of St Peter, and lower down is a painting of a sailing ship.

Keep roughly straight on, following the left-hand side of the Market Place. The Southern Route begins at the corner of the first turning on the left (Market Gates).



The Southern Route

At the end of the Market Place turn right and immediately left into *King Street (3)*, the main shopping street of the town. Directly opposite as you turn into King Street is Austin Row, number 60. Within the next third of a mile there are no fewer than twenty-six rows on the right, and a further ten on the left. Row 95 is better known as Kitty Witches Row.

Halfway along King Street is St George's Church, which was built in 1714 and modelled on the church of St Clement Dane in London. It is now an arts centre.

Ignore York Road on the left, and turn left opposite the Old White Lion into St Peter's Road. Take the first turning on the right (Dene Side), and the town wall can be seen on the left. The ground level must have been considerably lower when the wall was built, since only the top of the arcading is exposed. Above the arcades are the remains of the wall-walk.

Turn left into Alma Road and right into *Blackfriars' Road (4)*. In front of you is the very impressive D-shaped south-east tower. The top part of the tower is embellished with a most unusual form of decoration. The face of the wall is divided into squares, half of them filled with flints, and half made up of alternating layers of flint and brick. The tower is roofed and houses the Great Yarmouth Pottery.

Continue along Blackfriars' Road. On the right is a very well preserved stretch of the town wall. The houses that were built up against the wall have been removed without leaving a trace. Where the wall makes a right-angled turn to the west is another D-shaped tower, the Friars' or Blackfriars' Tower, which was built in about 1340. A passage was cut through the tower in 1807.

Go through the passage and turn right along the inside of the wall. Looking back at the tower, you can see, above the entrance, a blocked doorway that formerly gave access to the wall-walk. To the right of the tower is another stretch of wall where the adjoining buildings have been removed, but here the wall is so mutilated that one feels that it would have been better if the buildings had been left as they were.

At the gap in the wall, turn left for just a few yards, then right and then left into Friars' Lane. Opposite Middlegate is a public house with curved corner windows typical of the 1930s.

At the end of Friars' Lane, turn right into *South Quay (5)*. As soon as it is practicable, cross over the road and walk along the quayside. At one time most of the ships moored here were trawlers; now the majority are supply vessels for offshore oil- and gas-rigs.

At the road signposted to the Central Library, turn right. (There is also a road sign here saying 'Lowestoft A12', and this is more easily seen.) Just before the library, turn right, onto a path which bends left and becomes Row 108. Near the end of the row on the left is an old window of the Tolhouse Museum. Turn left into Tolhouse Street, which passes along the front of the museum.

The Tolhouse was built as a private house in the thirteenth century and later used as a town hall. Low down on the right is the window of the dungeon. Above this are two unglazed cusped windows, and through them can be seen an old archway with X-shaped 'dog-tooth' mouldings, characteristic of the thirteenth century. Between the windows of the hall is a figure of Justice holding a sword and a pair of scales.

The museum is open from Monday to Friday from 10 a.m. till 1 p.m. and from 2 p.m. till 5.30; in the summer it is also open on Sundays. Among the exhibits is one of the troll carts referred to on p.90.

When Tolhouse Street bears right, go straight on along a path. Cross over Yarmouth Way and, where the path merges with Greyfriars Way, turn left into Row 92. Through gaps in the wall on your right you can see the complex ruins of the Greyfriars' cloister.

Turn right into South Quay, cross over Queen Street and turn right into row 83. After you emerge from the archway, you pass a number of low Elizabethan windows on the left. These are part of the Elizabethan House, which is the property of the National Trust.

Turn left into Greyfriars Way and keep straight on. On the right are the entrances to Rows 77, 75, 72 and 71. On the other side of the road is the Victorian town hall, completed in 1882. Beyond this the road widens out and becomes *Hall Quay (6)*. On the far side of the river you can see a thatched building with buttresses. This is a Victorian ice-house, though from this distance it looks older.

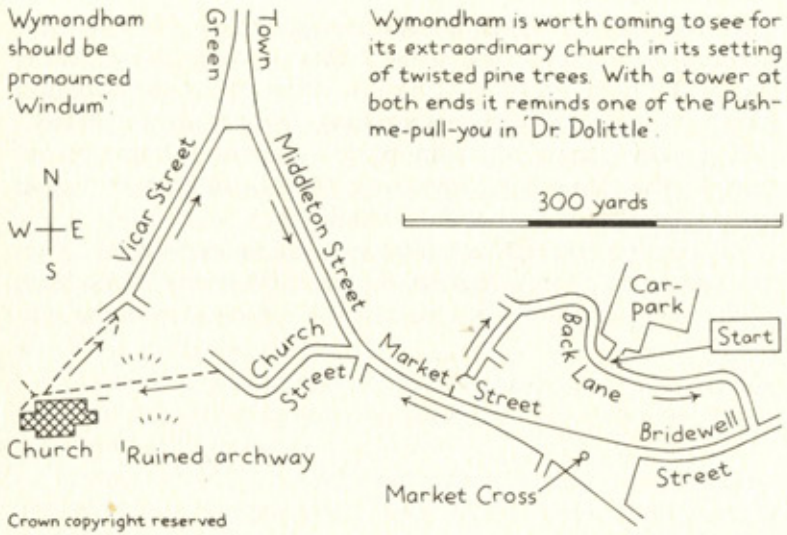
Here there are more rows on the right, including Sarah

Martin's Row (No. 57), which was named after a nineteenth-century prison-reformer. On Barclay's Bank is a plaque commemorating Dawson Turner, the botanist, who lived here from 1799 until 1852.

Continue along the right-hand side of Hall Quay to Stonecutters Way. This road is of interest because it has replaced the buildings that stood between Rows 52 and 50, and the rows have now become its pavements.

Go straight on into George Street (a broad path) and turn right into Broad Row, which has a central gutter and shops along both sides. At the end of the row, turn left for just a few yards, then right into Market Row. This also has shops on both sides and is slightly narrower than Broad Row. Market Row leads to the Market Place where the North Route begins.

Wymondham



To begin this mile-long walk, turn left out of the car-park into Back Lane and right into Bridewell Street. On the left is the Queen's Head, with portraits of two queens on the wall. The second one is recognizable as Queen Victoria. The road leads to the market-place with its attractive Market Cross built in 1617. The upper floor is used as a Council Room.

Carry straight on into Market Street. There is an interesting house on the right, opposite the entrance to Damgate Street. Immediately past this, bear left into Church Street. On the corner is the Town Cross, which displays the town emblem, a wooden spoon crossed with a spigot, two of the objects that were produced when wood-turning was the main industry in Wymondham. Behind the cross is the fourteenth-century chapel of St Thomas à Becket, which is now the public library.

Carry on along Church Street, passing on the right a lovely old black-and-white public house called the Green Dragon.

Follow the road round to the right and turn left into the churchyard. All along the path are beautiful pine trees, and behind them rise the two towers of the abbey church. The two towers reflect the combined usage of the church by the monks and the public. The nearer tower was built by the monks in 1400, the farther one by the townspeople in 1448. The archway to the left of the church is all that remains of the chapter house, which was built in about 1400.

At the church porch, turn sharp right. There are pine trees along the side of the path, some of them covered in ivy. At the end of the path, go straight on into Vicar Street (first turning round to appreciate the remarkable shape of the abbey.) Halfway along the road on the right is a rather ordinary pair of cottages that have been improved by the addition of simple green shutters to the downstairs windows.

Turn right at the war memorial into Middleton Street. Stay on the road as it curves to the left, and turn left at the White Hart. Keep going straight on, and the car-park will be seen on the left.

Norwich

Norwich is the county town of Norfolk and the unofficial capital of East Anglia. It is twinned with Rouen, which is the unofficial capital of Normandy.

Exploring Bury St Edmunds and Norwich, one is struck by a number of similarities. Each has a rectangular Norman market-place and an L-shaped Saxon market-place to the east of it. In each case the Saxon market-place is aligned from north-north-west to south-south-east and has two medieval gatehouses adjoining it on the east. Beyond these is a cathedral or abbey precinct, and farther east, in both towns, there is a surviving medieval bridge.

Norwich lies at the focus of no fewer than fourteen classified roads, and on all the approaches there is a sign saying 'Welcome to Norwich, a fine city'.

The area of the city centre was first settled in the fifth century, but there is a Roman town three miles to the south, and a neolithic henge lies midway between the two. The Roman town of Venta Icenorum was founded in about AD 70, close to the present-day village of Caistor St Edmunds, and the surviving walls were built in the third century.

The Saxon settlement of Northwic stretched from Fye Bridge to the market-place at Tombland. The name 'Norwich' first appears on coins from the early tenth century. By the end of the Saxon period Norwich had become a place of considerable importance, and in 1066 it was the largest city in England apart from London and York.

The city walls were built between 1294 and 1342. They were originally 2¼ miles long and twenty feet high, but considerable stretches were demolished in the nineteenth century. The best-preserved section is at the southern end, near Carrow Bridge.

Within the city walls are more than thirty medieval churches, many of which have now been put to other uses. St Saviour's,

for example, is a badminton hall, St James's is a puppet theatre, St Martin at Oak is a night shelter, St Michael's is a recreation centre, and St Lawrence's is an art studio; others will be encountered on the trails.

In 1803 the greatest school of landscape painters in England was founded in Norwich. Originally called 'the Norwich Society of Artists', it is now known as 'the Norwich School'. The founder was John Crome, who was known in his later years as 'Old Crome' and who painted the countryside round Norwich in oils. The other leading figure was John Sell Cotman, who joined the society in 1807 and painted the buildings of Norfolk in watercolour.

The trail is made up of two circular routes, both starting and finishing at the main entrance to the cathedral.

The Cathedral Walk (2 miles) visits all the oldest and most beautiful parts of the city, including the famous Elm Hill and the historic buildings in the Cathedral Close. It should be noted that the Riverside Walk is locked at night and that there is no reasonable alternative.

The City Walk (1¾ miles) covers the remaining parts of the city centre, with a brief excursion to Norwich-over-the-Water; plenty of time should be allowed if the museums are to be included. The Royal Arcade is locked when the shops are closed, but there is an easy alternative.

The Cathedral Walk

Norwich Cathedral is the finest building in East Anglia. With its 300-foot spire, it resembles the cathedral at Salisbury, but whereas the latter belongs to one period, Norwich combines elements from several different periods. To describe the interior in detail here would be impossible. Two features that particularly impressed me were the thickness of the Norman columns in the nave, and the intricacy of the carving in the choir stalls.

Leave the cathedral by the west door and walk towards the Erpingham Gate. On the left is a marble statue of Lord Nelson, and on the right is the school he attended, Norwich School. The half-timbered house facing the cathedral, the chapel adjoining it, and School House, which is beyond the chapel, are all part of

the school. Inside the porch of School House is a fifteenth-century doorway.

Through the gatehouse can be seen the entrance to Tombland Alley. To the right of this is the timber-framed Augustine Steward House, named after the Mayor of Norwich who built the house in 1549. Further right is Samson and Hercules House, which was built in 1657 and which takes its name from the two characters whose statues support the roof of the porch.

Enter Tombland Alley, perhaps the best known and most attractive of all the alleyways of Norwich. The side wall of Augustine Steward House is enriched with crooked beams, old doors and carved wooden shutters. From the archway a deeply sunken path leads diagonally across a small square. On the left is the church of St George's, Tombland, which is still used as a place of worship.

Turn right into *Princes Street (1)*. The first house on the right, number 26, is jettied but has Georgian windows. The following house, number 24, has older windows. If you compare the two houses, you will see that the upper storey, complete with studs, bressumer and joists, has simply been covered over, and that many houses that appear to be Georgian are actually much older.

On the right, just past Plumbers Arms Alley, are two houses, numbers 18 and 16, which have Gibbs door-surrounds. The following house, number 14, has two yellow doors, each flanked by Ionic columns. (Ionic columns may be identified by the coil-shaped structures called volutes that are found at the top of the column on either side.)

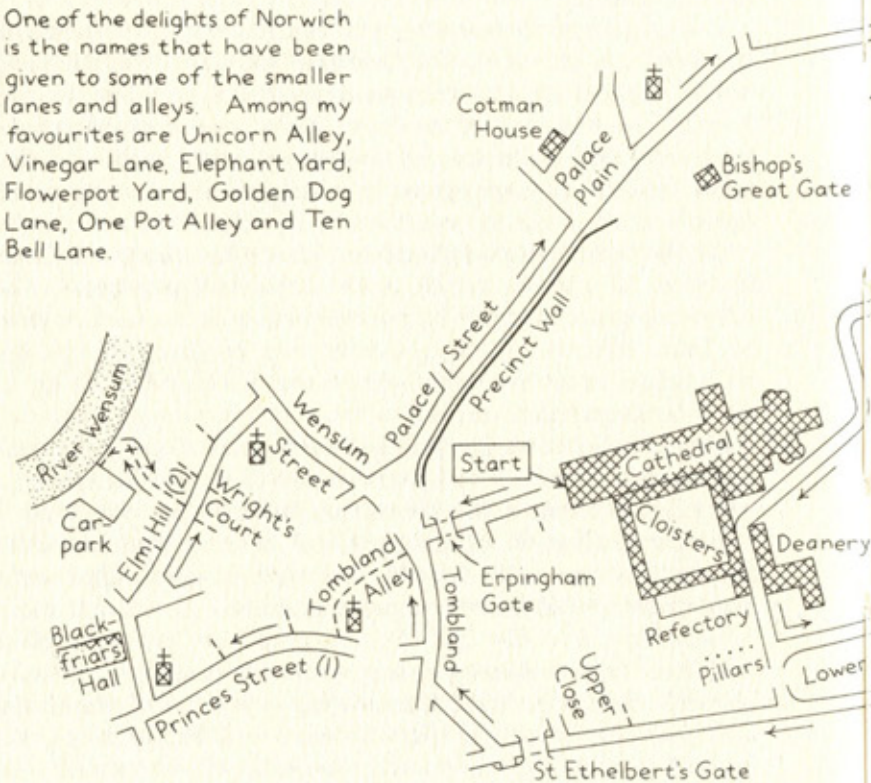
Mandells Court on the right is now no more than an entrance but was formerly enclosed, like Wright's Court, which is visited later. Beyond this is the church of St Peter Hungate, now a museum of Church art. When I was there, a bird had built its nest in the niche above the church door, apparently unperturbed by all the people passing below.

Turn right into *Elm Hill (2)*, and note how the rectangular cobbles of Princes Street give way to the earlier round cobbles of Elm Hill. Beyond number 8 on the left is the end of Blackfriars Hall, part of a Dominican friary founded in 1226. On the right is the oldest building in Elm Hill, the fifteenth-century Britons Arms. At one time it was a nunnery.

Bear right here into a cobbled triangular area with a pump and a plane tree. The tree was planted in 1979 to replace the elm tree that had stood on this site since the time of Henry VIII. The building on the left, with its three gables, was once used by weavers, and there were looms in the attics. In the nineteenth century it housed a monastery founded by Father Ignatius.

Facing us is a picturesque row of houses built in 1507 and painted yellow. Keep left of these and continue along the cobbled street. On the left is the entrance to Crown Court Yard, which is bridged by massive joists. Beyond this is the Strangers' Club, built by Augustine Steward in the early sixteenth century. From this building Queen Elizabeth I watched a pageant taking place in the street outside.

One of the delights of Norwich is the names that have been given to some of the smaller lanes and alleys. Among my favourites are Unicorn Alley, Vinegar Lane, Elephant Yard, Flowerpot Yard, Golden Dog Lane, One Pot Alley and Ten Bell Lane.



Between numbers 26 and 28, turn left into Towler's Court and left along the bank of the River Wensum. From here you can see the back of the Strangers' Club, which, with its venerable chimney and gable, is much more interesting than the front.

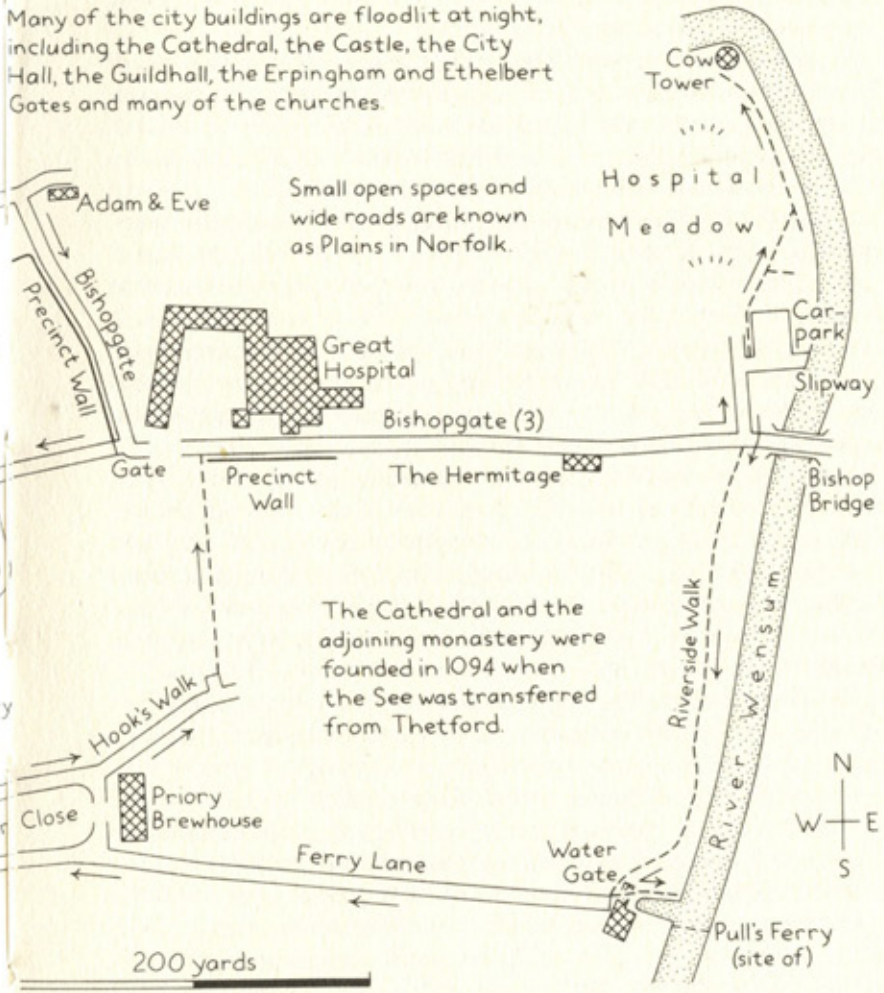
Return to Elm Hill and turn left. Number 41 on the right has very old blocked traceried windows upstairs. This was the home of the Pettus family, including Thomas Pettus who was Mayor in 1590, and Sir John Pettus, Mayor in 1608.

After passing number 43, turn right into Wright's Court,

Many of the city buildings are floodlit at night, including the Cathedral, the Castle, the City Hall, the Guildhall, the Erpingham and Ethelbert Gates and many of the churches.

Small open spaces and wide roads are known as Plains in Norfolk.

The Cathedral and the adjoining monastery were founded in 1094 when the See was transferred from Thetford.



which is still enclosed. Number 2 on the right is occupied by a taxidermist and worth a close look. When you return to Elm Hill, you can see a fifteenth-century archway at the far end of the opening opposite.

Turn right along the road. On the left is a long building with Georgian windows and an overhanging upper floor. This was the home of the Baker family, including John Baker, who was Mayor in 1584. In the centre of the house is the entrance to Roaches Court, which leads down to the river. On the other side of the road is the church of St Simon and St Jude, which is now the Norwich Area Scout Headquarters.

Turn right into Wensum Street. On the left is the Maid's Head Hotel, where Queen Elizabeth I once spent the night. At the end of the hotel, turn left into Palace Street. Cross over to the right-hand side of the road and follow the high Precinct Wall, which is now incorporated into Norwich School.

When the road widens out into St Martin-at-Palace Plain, keep straight on, passing to the right of the church. On the left-hand side of the plain is a row of attractive Georgian houses. The largest of these was once the home of the artist John Sell Cotman, who held his School of Drawing and Painting here from 1824 until 1834. At the far end of the row is a two-storey bay window from a house that was built early in the fourteenth century and purchased by Sir Thomas Erpingham in 1409.

Here the Precinct Wall veers off to the right and leads to the Bishop's Great Gate, which is also known as the Bishop's Palace Gate or the Alnwyck Gate. It was built in about 1430 and has beautiful oak doors. The building to the left of the gatehouse, with its narrow upstairs windows, is fourteenth-century. In the days of the monastery the upper floor was used as a granary and the lower floor as stables.

Further round to the left is a modern house that would be acceptable in a new town but which is quite out of keeping amongst all these ancient buildings.

Opposite the Bishop's Great Gate is the church of St Martin-at-Palace, which is now in the care of the Norwich Historic Churches Trust. At the end of the churchyard, go straight on into Bishopgate and keep on the road when it bends right. From here you can see the seventeenth-century Dutch gable of the Adam & Eve public house. Before long the road is joined by the Precinct Wall, and for the next hundred yards it

runs between that and the wall of the Great Hospital on the left.

When the road bends left, turn right and enter the Cathedral Close. From the gate you can see part of the Great Hospital, including an old window which has had no fewer than four storeys of modern windows built into it. The hospital was founded in 1256 as lodgings for old people, a function it still performs today.

Within the Close the road follows a high flint wall and bends left. Now the eastern end of the cathedral can be seen across the open space called Life's Green. The most interesting part is the Norman Jesus Chapel, which is made up of two large curves and three smaller curves. To the left of this is the Lady Chapel, also known as St Saviour's Chapel, built in 1932. Above the Jesus Chapel are the fourteenth-century windows of the presbytery, or chancel, and above that is the Norman tower capped by the fifteenth-century spire with its three tiers of lucarnes.

After the road bends right, it passes close to St Luke's Chapel, which is like a mirror image of the Jesus Chapel, with its Norman arcading and its unusual shape. Beyond St Luke's Chapel is the Bauchun Chapel, and beyond that is the three-storey Dean's Vestry Block, dwarfed by the south transept behind it.

In front of you is the entrance to the cloisters, and if the door is open, it is worth while going inside and looking round. When there are no people about, there is a marvellous atmosphere of tranquillity in here. These are the largest cloisters in England, and they were built between 1300 and 1430. Close to the north-east corner is the fourteenth-century Prior's Doorway, and on the other side of the corner are fourteenth-century cupboards that were used to store parchment scrolls.

The road continues between the cloisters and a wall of immense antiquity with many signs of alteration. It was originally the wall of the monks' dormitory, which was built in 1108 where the road is now.

On the right, beyond the cloisters, is the Cathedral Song School, built into the ruins of the Dark Entry. The entrance to the school is a thirteenth-century archway in a twelfth-century wall. On the other side of the road is the Prior's Hall, built in 1284. The remains of the original doorway may be seen to the left of the modern entrance.

The car-park on the right lies on the site of the infirmary

garden. To the right of it, behind the Dark Entry, are the ruins of the refectory. On the other side of the car-park are six twelfth-century pillars from the south arcade of the infirmary hall. Behind them are two fourteenth-century arches, set in the twelfth-century wall of the infirmarer's house.

Turn left here, along the side of the Lower Close. Here we have a typical cathedral close, with old houses overlooking a green that is graced by weeping silver birches. On the left are the crow-stepped gables of the Prior's Hall, which is now the Deanery. The gables are seventeenth-century, but there are a number of features surviving from 1284, including the buttresses that can be seen from the entrance to number 55.

All the remaining houses on the left-hand side of the green have been converted from the monastic granary, and all the flint walls are medieval. The houses at the end of the green were originally the priory brewhouse.

At the corner of the green, bear left into Hook's Walk, which I consider to be the most beautiful street in Norwich, the proximity of the houses on both sides creating an intimate atmosphere. Just before the end of the road, turn left and continue along a footpath with tennis courts on one side and a hockey pitch on the other.

Turn right into *Bishopgate (3)*, which passes between the Precinct Wall on the right and the Great Hospital on the left. The poem above the door facing the road is worth reading. A hundred yards along on the right is a very interesting fifteenth-century house called the Hermitage, built into the Precinct Wall.

Just before the Red Lion, turn left into a road and then right along the side of the car-park to the slipway. From here you can see the delightful Bishop's Bridge, which was built in 1340. Return to the road, and turn right along a path which crosses the Hospital Meadow to the Cow Tower. This is late fourteenth-century and the oldest surviving brick building in Norwich. There is a story that the tower is haunted by a rider called 'Old Blunderhazard' who gallops past on Christmas Eve.

Return to Bishopgate and go straight on into Riverside Walk. This soon becomes a pleasant path with the river on the left, and the cathedral on the right. The path leads to the fifteenth-century Water Gate, now the Norwich Girl Guides Headquarters. Turn left through the archway and along a short inlet, which is all that remains of the medieval canal that was used to carry stone to the cathedral. Here you can see a photograph of the Water Gate as it

was before it was restored. This area is known as Pull's Ferry, although the ferry no longer operates.

Go back through the archway and straight on along Ferry Lane, which lies on the line of the canal. After 200 yards, you can see a fifteenth-century blocked arch and window in the rear wall of number 32 The Close.

Keep going straight on, passing the Lower Close and Upper Close on the right. In the Upper Close is a bronze life-sized statue of the Duke of Wellington, which balances the statue of Nelson at the other end of the green. The buildings along the right-hand side of the green have been adapted from the fourteenth-century cellars.

On your left is Almary Green, which takes its name from the medieval almonry that stood on this site. In front of you is St Ethelbert's Gate, with its fine vaulted ceiling and panelled doors. It is also known as the Great Gate, and it was built in 1316.

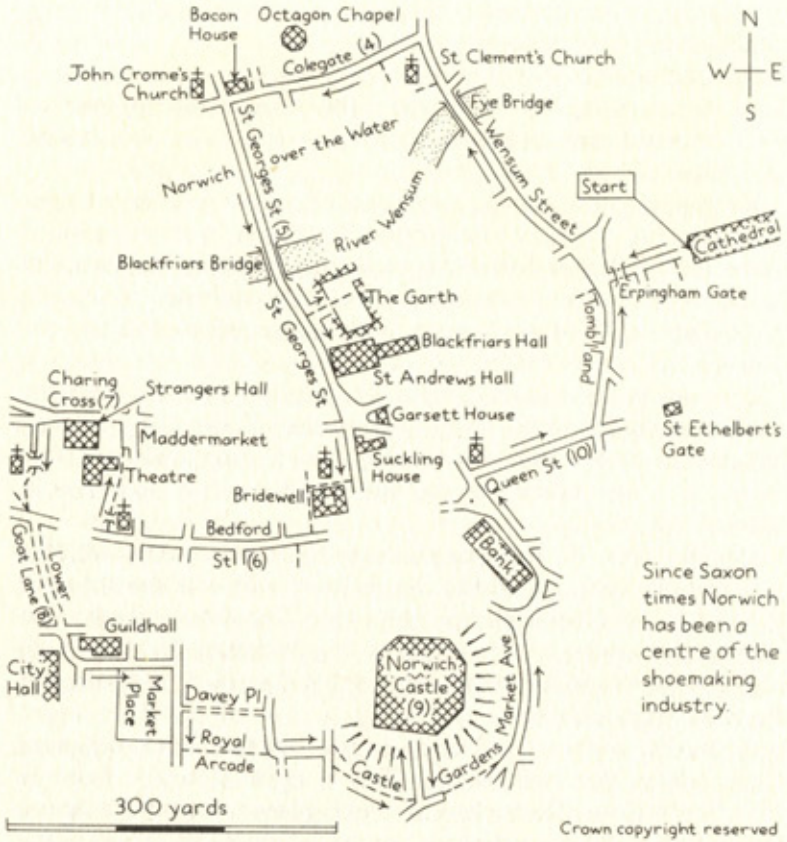
Pass through the archway and turn right into Tombland. This was the market-place of the Saxon town and was the scene of the Easter and Christmas fairs until 1818. The houses on the east side of the square are built against the Norman Precinct Wall, and the houses on the south side occupy the site of the palace of the East Anglian kings.

At the far end of Tombland, on the right, is the Erpingham Gate, where the walk began. This is quite different from St Ethelbert's Gate. The ceiling is much plainer, but the external decoration is richer, with stone figures following the curve of the arch, and a statue of the donor of the gate, Sir Thomas Erpingham, in a niche over the entrance. The Erpingham gate was built in 1420, about a hundred years later than St Ethelbert's Gate.

The City Walk

From the main door of the cathedral, pass through the Erpingham Gate and cross over the road. Turn right into Tombland and continue along Wensum Street, which crosses the River Wensum by the Fye Bridge. The river was originally called Wendsome because of its winding course.

Carry on past the Mischiel Tavern and St Clement's Church (now in the care of the Norwich Historic Churches Trust), and turn left into *Colegate (4)*. This is the principal street of the area



known as 'Norwich over the Water'. On the right is the Octagon Chapel, which was built in 1754.

Farther along on the right, just before the crossroads, is Bacon's House, the home of Henry Bacon, who was Mayor from 1557 to 1566. It was built in about 1559 and retains the original doors. From here you can see the church of St George's Colegate, also known simply as John Crome's Church, as it was the church the artist attended and where he was eventually buried. His house was in the upper part of St George's Street but is no longer there.

Turn left into *St George's Street (5)*. The building on the right was the Norvic Shoe Factory until it was closed down in 1980. The road crosses the Wensum by Blackfriars Bridge, which was designed by Sir John Soane and built in 1784. This is the second oldest bridge in Norwich. On the far side of the bridge on the

left is the Norwich School of Art. The bench-mark on the side of the porch is only thirteen feet above sea-level, although it is seventeen miles from the open sea.

At the end of the School of Art, turn left through an archway into the quadrangle called 'The Garth', formerly the cloisters of a Dominican friary. The building facing you is called 'Cloister Hall', and on the first floor is a small fourteenth-century cusped window.

Return to St George's Street and turn left. Before long the pavement passes under the buttresses of St Andrew's Hall, built by Sir Thomas Erpingham between 1440 and 1470. In 1540 it was acquired by the Norwich corporation, and it has been used as a public hall ever since. Originally it was the nave of the Dominican friary church. The chancel, now Blackfriars Hall, can be seen from Elm Hill. This is the only complete church surviving from any friary in England.

Here the road widens out into St Andrew's Plain, and two roads lead off to the left. Between them is Garsett House, which was built in 1589 and which has been the headquarters of the Norwich and Norfolk Archaeological Society since 1951. In front of you is the early sixteenth-century Suckling House, with its original doorway and Georgian extension. At the end of the gable is a list of people who have lived here (or in a house on this site) from 1285 until 1564. In 1979 the house was made into a cinema.

Go straight on to St Andrews Hill. St Andrew's Church on the right was built in 1506 and is still in use. At the end of the church, turn right into Bridewell Alley. On the left is the knapped flint wall of the Bridewell Museum. This was built as a private house in about 1370 by the father of the first Mayor of Norwich. From 1583 until 1828 it was the city prison or Bridewell. From 1828 until 1923 it was a factory, and since then it has been a museum of local industries.

Turn left at the T-junction. On the left is the entrance to the museum, which is open all the year round from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday to Saturday. There is little of architectural interest inside, but the exhibits are worth seeing. On leaving the museum, continue uphill, passing the famous Mustard Shop on the left.

Turn right into *Bedford Street (6)* and keep going straight on. After the junction with Exchange Street, the road becomes Lobster Lane, and after the next crossroads it takes on the lovely

name of Pottergate. On the right is the fifteenth-century church of St John Maddermarket, which is now a Greek Orthodox church.

Turn right into St John's Alley, popularly known as Maddermarket Alley, which tunnels under the church tower. On the left is the Maddermarket Theatre, which has been the home of the Norwich Players since 1921. Opposite the entrance is a plaque commemorating an Elizabethan actor who Morris-danced from London to Norwich.

The alley leads to a small open space called the Maddermarket, where a red vegetable dye prepared from madder roots was sold for use in the woollen industry. On the corner is an old iron pump.

Turn left into *Charing Cross (7)*. On the left is the entrance to the enormous medieval house called Strangers Hall. Like the Bridewell, this is now a museum, but unlike the Bridewell it is worth visiting for its architecture alone.

Pass through the archway and enter the building by the steps at the far side of the courtyard. To the right of the present entrance and at a lower level is a stone doorway of 1320 which was the original entrance to the house. At the top of the steps, go straight on along a passage. On the left are the arches that originally led to the buttery and pantry. (A buttery is a room where butts of wine are stored.) On the right is the Great Hall, built in about 1450. The carved tie-beams, which span the ceiling, and the crown posts, which rise from the centre of these beams, were added in about 1530. Opening off the hall on the left are two interesting bay windows. The farther one was built in about 1530, the nearer one in 1627. The nearer bay is filled by a staircase that gives access to the rest of the house. Altogether twenty-three rooms are open to the public, far too many to describe here. Of especial interest are the fourteenth-century Undercroft, the broad fireplace in the Sotherton Room, and a car once owned by C.S. Rolls. The house is open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday to Saturday, for a nominal charge.

Turn left out of Strangers Hall, passing on the left a public house with the incredible name of 'The Hog in Armour'. Immediately past this, turn left into a lane called St Gregory's Back Alley, which follows the example of Maddermarket Alley by burrowing under a church. This tunnel is squatter than the other one, and here it is the chancel and not the tower that is underpassed.

St Gregory's Church was built in the fourteenth century and is now an arts centre. On emerging from the church, the path bends right and left and comes out into Pottergate. Turn left for a few yards and then right into *Lower Goat Lane (8)*. From the far end of the lane you can see the church of St Peter Mancroft framed between the Guildhall of 1413 and the City Hall of 1938.

Pass between the City Hall and Guildhall and turn left into Gaol Hill. On the left is the Bassingham Gateway, about which nothing needs to be said because all the relevant information is given on an adjoining plaque. Either side of the gate the wall is built of knapped flints and garneted with tiny slivers of flint – a job that must have been enormously time-consuming considering the size of the wall.

On the right is the market-place, which has been used as such for 900 years. The area is divided by passageways into forty-five blocks, each consisting of four stalls. It is interesting to walk round on a Sunday when the place is not crowded with people. The most attractive building adjoining the square is the Sir Garnet Wolseley public house.

At the foot of the hill, turn right into Gentlemen's Walk, which acquired its name in the Regency period when it was the principal promenade in the city. Ignore Davey Place on the left and turn left into the Royal Arcade, a delightful example of late Victorian architecture. It was designed by Skipper in 1899 in the Art Nouveau style, with glazed Doulton tiles and enormous suspended lights under a glass roof. (If the Royal Arcade is locked, use Davey Place instead.)

At the end of the Royal Arcade, go straight on into Arcade Street. Turn right into Castle Meadow, and in a few yards turn left up some steps. On the left are the Castle Gardens, which occupy the ditch that once separated the castle mound from the bailey. In the garden is a sculpture by Barbara Hepworth in the form of a shapeless object with holes cut through it. Some people consider that this type of sculpture displays artistic merit.

Farther along on the left are the gates of *Norwich Castle (9)*. The motte and ditch were constructed soon after 1066, and the keep was built in about 1170. It was refaced in Bath stone in 1839, but the original masonry can still be seen from the inside. From 1220 until 1887 the castle served as the county gaol, and since 1894 it has been a museum.

Norwich Castle Museum is the best museum in Norfolk and

Suffolk, and at least an hour should be allowed for a visit. The Crome and Cotman galleries are full of beautiful landscape paintings. (Two that I particularly liked were *The Farmyard* by Alfred Munnings and the *View of Beachy Head from Pevensey* by George Vincent.) There are also sections on archaeology, porcelain and natural history. In the natural history section are six dioramas where foreground models are ingeniously combined with painted backcloths to produce the illusion of three dimensions. The museum is open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. from Monday to Saturday and from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. on Sundays.

On leaving the castle, return to the gates and turn left. Much of the car-park on the right was formerly used as a cattle-market. Beyond the car-park is an illuminated sign giving the time and the temperature in degrees centigrade. In the gardens on the left, close to a thatched building, is the Whiffler Open Air Theatre.

The path becomes the pavement of Market Avenue, with the Shire Hall on the left, and the Anglia Television studios on the right. At the next junction go straight on (actually slightly right, then left) into Bank Plain. On the left is the local head office of Barclay's Bank. Barclay's originated in Norwich, and it is fitting that the Norwich branch should be housed in such a superb building. It was built in 1930 in the Georgian style and is even more sumptuous inside.

At the entrance to London Street on the left is a plane tree on the site of the Red Well that gave its name to Redwell Street. London Street was the first shopping street in Britain to be pedestrianized.

Turn right into *Queen Street (10)*. On the corner is the church of St Michael at Pleas, now a coffee shop, antique shop etc. It is so called because the archdeacon held his court here and dealt with any pleas that came before him. On the face of the clock are the words 'Forget me not'.

Halfway along Queen Street on the left is Bank of England Court, where Sir Lambert Blackwell once turned round a coach-and-four for a bet. Farther along on the left is the entrance to the church of St Mary the Less, which is now a furniture store. At the end of the road, turn left into Tombland, and the Erpingham Gate and the cathedral are on the right.

Wells

The little town of Wells-next-the-Sea lies at the centre of that enchanting strip of sand dunes and salt-marshes that stretches for thirty miles from Hunstanton to Sheringham. It takes its name from the many wells that were sunk in the area because of the absence of a river or stream. Several of the pumps that replaced the wells can still be seen today.

Location of the Start

The trail starts at the beach car-park. Coming from Hunstanton, turn left onto the B1105 signposted 'Wells Quay ¾'. The car-park is on the right. Coming from Cromer or Walsingham, turn right onto the B1105 signposted 'Town Centre, Beach'. Ignore the signpost to the 'Town centre'. Follow the road round to the left, and the car-park is 300 yards along on the left.

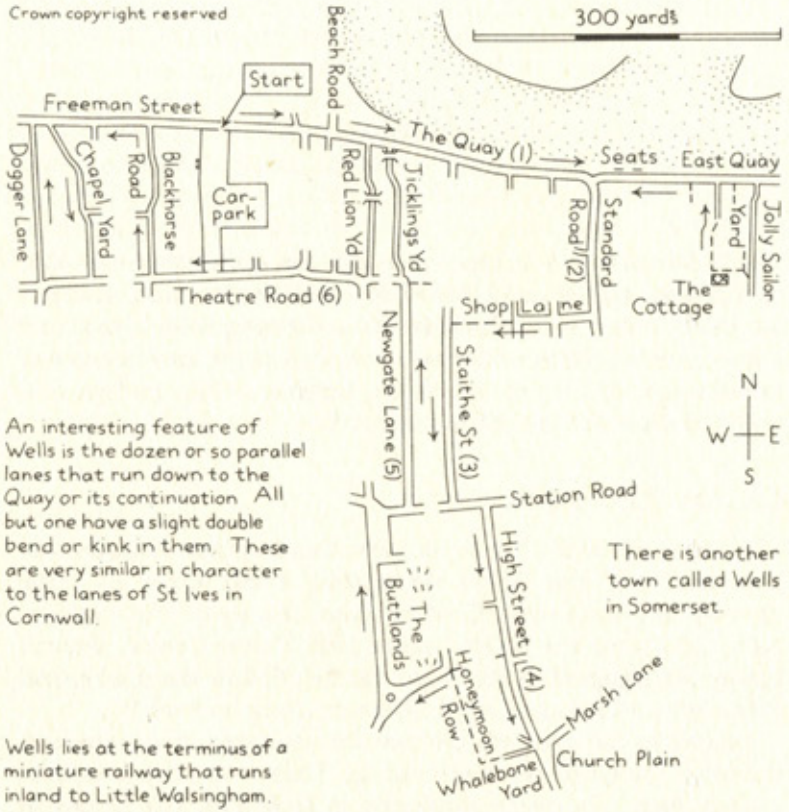
Adjoining the car-park are two tiny cottages, one detached, the other joined to another building. These were the houses of ostlers, men who were employed to look after the horses of people staying at a nearby inn.

The Trail Length 2 miles

Leave the car-park by the lower entrance and turn right. Along the side of Beach Road is a sea-wall designed to keep out the highest conceivable tides. Adjoining this is another stretch of wall which runs on rails and can be drawn across the quay to keep the sea out of the area to the west.

Go straight on to *The Quay (1)*. By the overhead conveyor are the Favor Parker granaries where animal feeds and fertilizers are imported. On the corner of the granary are marks indicating the height reached by the freak tides of 1953 and 1978.

When the road bends right, go straight on to East Quay. Just past here is an area where there are seats and picnic tables with



An interesting feature of Wells is the dozen or so parallel lanes that run down to the Quay or its continuation. All but one have a slight double bend or kink in them. These are very similar in character to the lanes of St Ives in Cornwall.

There is another town called Wells in Somerset.

Wells lies at the terminus of a miniature railway that runs inland to Little Walsingham.

uninterrupted views across the estuary to the Wells salt-marshes. There is no better place than this for observing wild ducks, geese and swans. It is like being in Sir Peter Scott's sitting-room. At low tide the sea is two miles away, and the farthest flocks of birds appear like wisps of smoke on the horizon.

Twenty yards past the Shipwright's Arms, turn right into Jolly Sailor Yard. Pass an open space on the right, then a house and then turn sharp right, but instead of returning the way you came, bear left past the house called 'The Cottage'. Here the path bends right and returns to East Quay. This little excursion serves as an introduction to the area of lanes and paths that gives Wells its unique flavour.

Turn left at the Shipwright's Arms and left again into *Standard Road (2)*. After passing the Well House on the left, turn right into

a road marked 'Public footpath'. Here there are a number of modern houses where the local building traditions are being perpetuated by the use of beach-pebble walls and pantiled roofs.

At the end of the road, go straight on into Shop Lane, a metalled path with houses along it, and then left into *Staithe Street (3)*. Despite its narrowness, this is the main shopping street of the town, but here you will find no supermarkets or department stores – just rows of village shops. 'Staithe' is a northern word for a wharf or landing-place.

At the T-junction, turn left into Station Road and immediately right into the *High Street (4)*. When the road widens out, turn right (at right-angles) into Whalebone Yard. This narrows to a path, bends right and becomes Honeymoon Row. At the end of the path, turn left along the side of the open space called 'The Buttlands', which has retained its name since the days when it was used for archery practice.

At the corner of the green is a smaller green with a beech tree encircled by seats. Turn right here, passing between The Buttlands and a number of late Georgian houses whose noble façades add dignity to this lovely scene.

Turn right into the main road and immediately left into *Newgate Lane (5)*. When this bends left, go straight on into Jicklings Yard. Some way along on the left is St Michael's Cottage, dated 1595, with an interesting old doorway on the first floor. Here the lane sidesteps slightly to the left and passes under an archway. According to the sign, the headroom is five feet nine inches, but I make it six feet one inch.

Turn left onto the Quay and left again into Red Lion Yard, which also passes under an archway. At the top of the hill, turn right into *Theatre Road (6)* and keep straight on, passing Tunns Yard, the Glebe and Lugger Yard on the right. Turn right into Blackhorse Road, where there are modern houses that completely ignore the local tradition. At the foot of the hill, turn left into Freeman Street. Ignore Mindhams Yard and turn left into Chapel Yard. Turn right at the T-junction and then right again into Dogger Lane. This is the last of the little lanes, and the only one that doesn't have a kink in it. When you reach Freeman Street, turn right and you will find the car-park 150 yards along on the right.

King's Lynn

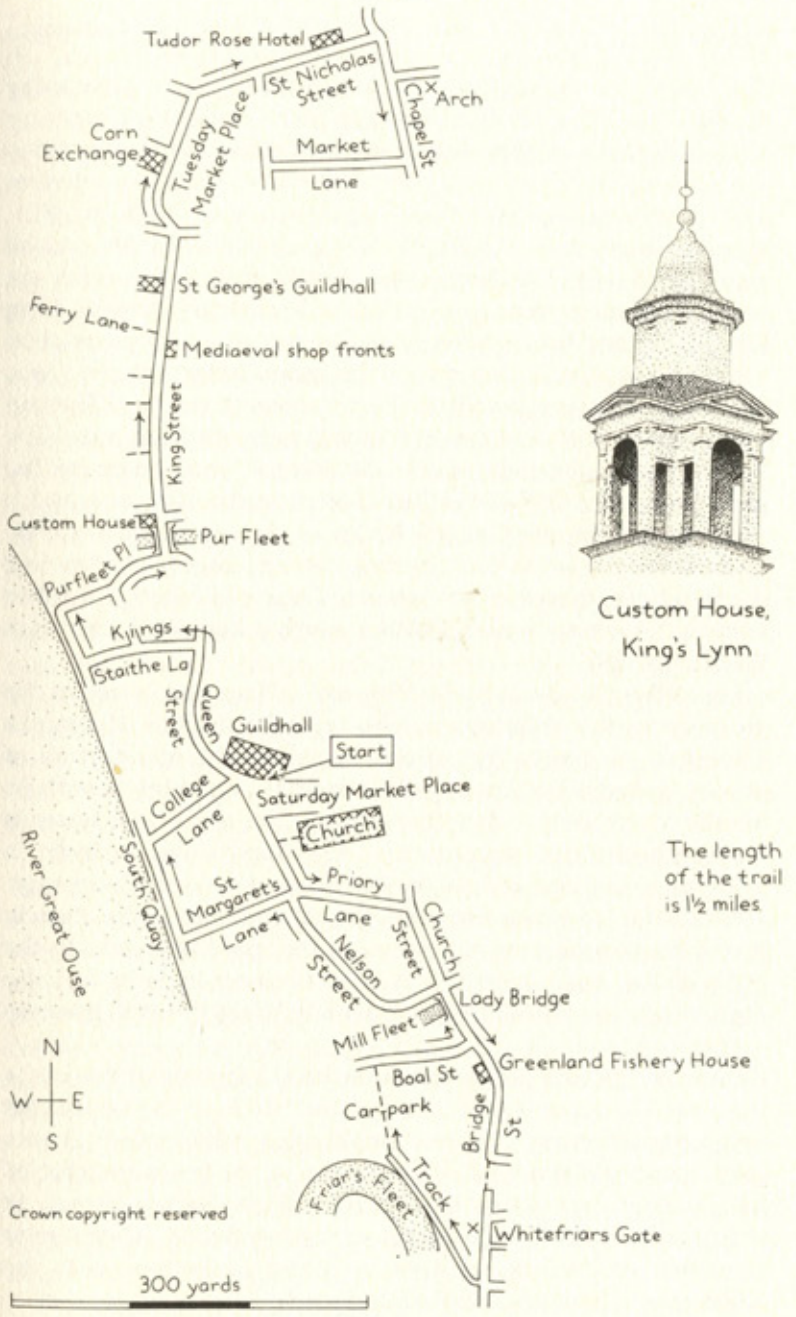
Like the old town of Yarmouth, King's Lynn is aligned from north to south along the east bank of a broad estuary. In this case the estuary is that of the Great Ouse.

The name Lynn is derived from a Celtic word for a pool or lake. The town was founded as a monastic port in the eleventh century by Herbert de Losinga, Bishop of Norwich. The original settlement was situated to the south of the Pur Fleet and centred on the Saturday Market Place. In about 1150 a second town was established to the north of the Pur Fleet. This was called Newland Town, and it was based on the Tuesday Market Place. In 1204 the two towns were united to become Bishop's Lynn, but their separate market-places were retained. Neither has been subject to encroachment, and they are both still used for weekly markets.

In the thirteenth century friaries were set up on the outskirts of the town, the Austin friars to the north, the Blackfriars and Greyfriars to the east, and the Whitefriars to the south. Only fragments of the buildings remain. In 1537 the bishop's manor was acquired by the Crown, and Bishop's Lynn became known as King's Lynn.

Throughout the Middle Ages salt and wool were exported to the Continent, and wine, coal and timber were imported. King's Lynn stood at the point of transition between river transport and transport by sea, and the men who handled the transition were the merchants. They bought or hired ships, constructed warehouses to store goods awaiting shipment and sold merchandise direct to the public. The activities of the merchants were controlled by the guilds, in particular by the Trinity Gild, which was founded in 1204.

In 1985 King's Lynn was used as the location for the film *Revolution*, which was set in New York in 1776. The town was chosen because it was considered to be more like the New York of the period than any other town.



Custom House, King's Lynn

The Trail — Length 1½ miles

The route starts at the Trinity Guildhall in the Saturday Market Place. The whole of the front of the Guildhall is made up of little squares of flint and stone arranged like an enormous chessboard. The right-hand part, with a large first-floor window and four small ground-floor windows, was built in 1421. Upstairs is the Council Room, which is still used for council meetings, and below this is the Regalia Room, in which are housed the town treasures, including King John's Sword, King John's Cup and the Red Register. The sword was presented by King John in 1204 in gratitude for his entertainment in the town, but the blade was replaced in the seventeenth century. The cup was made in 1340 and was not connected with King John. The Red Register, a record of the commercial transactions of the port, dates from 1307 and is the oldest paper book in the world.

To the left of the Council Room is the Elizabethan annex. Right at the top is the coat of arms of King James I, and below it is a much-weathered coat of arms of Queen Elizabeth I. Further to the left is a more recent addition which is described later on in the trail (p.128).

Leave the Guildhall by St Margaret's Place and pause at the entrance to the churchyard. The west front of St Margaret's Church is of interest because it combines the architecture of several periods. The lower part of the right-hand tower with its interlaced arcading is twelfth-century. The rest of the tower is thirteenth-century, except for the top stage, which is fourteenth-century, and the left-hand tower is fifteenth-century.

When the town was founded, the sea came up to the church. It still does so on rare occasions, as indicated by marks to the right of the main entrance. It is interesting to note that the highest tide here was in 1978, though in Wells the 1953 tide was higher.

From the church gate you can see on the far side of the road a nine-bay Georgian house. It is not the width of the house that arrests the attention, however, but its tremendous depth. It goes back and back and back. This is one of the great merchants' houses that ran down to the river from Nelson Street, St Margaret's Place, Queen Street and King Street. As the river retreated, so the houses were extended at the rear with the addition of warehouses, cellars and yards.

Continue along St Margaret's Place. The concave jettying of the house facing you is called coving. Turn left here into Priory Lane. The cottages on the left-hand side of the road were converted in 1589 from the buildings of St Margaret's Priory. In 1975 they were turned round so that their entrances faced away from the street.

Turn right at the T-junction and go straight on at the crossroads, crossing the Mill Fleet by the Lady Bridge. Just past the next turning on the right is a most interesting building called Greenland Fishery House. Built by a mayor of King's Lynn in 1605, it looks for all the world as though the builder had got halfway up the second storey and decided to stop there.

When the road bends left, go straight on along a footpath and continue along the road called 'The Friars'. On the right is the fourteenth-century Whitefriars Gate, all that remains of the Carmelite friary. Ignore a lane on the left and turn sharp right opposite the next road. A rough track follows the bank of Friar's Fleet, the tidal part of the River Nar.

At the end of the track, cut across the car-park, passing to the right of an enormous chimney. Turn right out of the car-park into Boal Street, which runs parallel with the Mill Fleet. Opposite the entrance to the car-park is a white-painted warehouse where cargoes where unloaded direct from the creek. Extending from here to the bridge is a malthouse which has been converted into flats without any alteration being made to the external appearance of the building.

Turn left over the bridge and left again into Nelson Street. This is a very attractive road, particularly at the far end. Number 9 on the left has a magnificent fifteenth-century door with vertical battens, square-headed bolts and beautifully carved surrounds. Beyond here there are coved (or curved) overhangs on both sides of the road. An archway on the left leads to the cobbled courtyard of Hampton Court. On the left-hand side of the yard, near the far end, is an early fourteenth-century doorway.

Turn left into St Margaret's Lane. Below the road name-place is a wrought-iron hoop like the frame of a basketball net, which would have been used to hold a street lamp. Along the right-hand side of the lane is the Hanseatic Warehouse, built in about 1475 and used as council offices since 1971.

Turn right onto South Quay. On the right is Marriott's Barn,

which was built in the sixteenth century, the lower part of it being of stone. On the left you can see along the estuary of the Great Ouse all the way to the Wash. It is hard to believe that this stretch of water, two miles long and 200 yards wide, is entirely artificial, having been constructed between 1850 and 1857. This is a good place to study wild ducks, and sometimes a long line of swans may be seen floating past in single file.

A short distance beyond Marriott's Barn, turn right into College Lane, which, like St Margaret's Lane, is cobbled. On the left is Thoresby College, built in about 1500 and now used as a Youth Hostel. Note how the wall has been repaired with small, dark bricks chosen for their resemblance to the original bricks. On the right is a coat of arms of Henry VIII, which was taken from the East Gate and installed on its present site in 1980.

In front of you is the extension to the Guildhall referred to at the start of the trail. It retains the chequered pattern of the earlier building, but below one of the ground-floor windows is the date 1895.

Turn left here into Queen Street, a perfect Georgian street curving to the right. On the left is an early sixteenth-century oak door covered in carving and surrounded by stonework of the same period. From the old door you can see the top of a six-storey Elizabethan watch-tower built by the merchant of Clifton House so that he could see his ships entering the estuary and prepare berths for them.

Continue along Queen Street, passing Clifton House on the left. Its most memorable feature is the pair of very bold barleysugar columns that flank the entrance to the house. In a few yards turn left into another cobbled lane, King's Staithe Lane. Beyond the Georgian house on the left is a sixteenth-century warehouse that has been converted into flats.

At the end of the lane, turn right onto South Quay and follow the road round to the right. On the right you can see the Old Bank House with its statue of King Charles I in a niche above the door. Go straight on (bearing slightly left) along the side of a creek that is full of oozy brown mud at low tide. On the far bank is the seventeenth-century Custom House with its roof-top ballustrade and elegant ornamental cupola.

Turn left over the creek into King Street. Looking back, you can see a statue of Charles II in a niche on the north-facing wall of the Custom House. Adjoining numbers 7 and 15 are attractive

Adjoining number 7 King Street, King's Lynn

views down cobbled lanes on the left. At number 19 is Aickman's Yard, with the date 1827 in Roman numerals over the arch.

Just past this on the right are numbers 28 and 30, with their spartan fourteenth-century timber framework. Then on the left is Ferry Lane, formerly called Thimble Lane, leading to the ferry to West Lynn. In 1216 King John set off along this lane to cross the Fens to Newark, but before he reached Sutton Bridge his party was overtaken by the tide and he lost his treasure in the Wash. It has never been found.

Further along on the left is the Local History Museum, built of Georgian stone. Adjoining that is the Guildhall of St George, built in 1406 and regarded as the largest and oldest guildhall in England. Since the guilds were dissolved in 1545, the building has been used as a court-house, corn exchange, public meeting-place, theatre, granary and wool warehouse. Since 1951 it has been the setting of the annual King's Lynn Festival. Here Kathleen Ferrier, Janet Baker and Peter Pears have sung, Peter Ustinov and Sybil Thorndike have acted, Sir John Betjeman and C. Day Lewis have recited, Yehudi Menuhin has played and Sir John Barbirolli has conducted.

King Street finally emerges into the Tuesday Market Place. This was the market-place of the new town founded in 1170. The square is surrounded on all sides by beautiful buildings, which are best seen when the market is not being held.

Go roughly straight on, along the side of the square. The second building on the left is the Corn Exchange of 1854, with the arms of King's Lynn over the central door and sheaves of corn carved in panels over the doors on either side.

Beyond the Corn Exchange the whole of the space between Water Lane and Page Stair Lane is occupied by two Georgian mansions. These are the last of the great merchants' houses to be encountered on this trail.

Turn right along the second side of the square and continue into St Nicholas Street. Halfway along on the right is a little blocked archway standing forlorn and neglected and leading nowhere. Just past this, on the left, is the Tudor Rose Hotel. At the left end of the hotel is a fifteenth-century door with exceptionally fine carving. The pillars either side of it were added in 1685.

From the next junction you can see the chapel of St Nicholas, with its steeple and splendid porch. Turn right here into Chapel Street. From the junction with Austin Street, you can see another of those old, abandoned archways, this one from an Augustinian friary. If the land has to be redeveloped, surely these old arches could be utilized in a constructive way.

Continue along Chapel Street. All the land on the left-hand side of the road was once occupied by the friary. On the right is the Lattice public house, which has fifteenth-century timber throughout the upper storey and on either side of the entrance. Turn right into Market Lane, and so back to the Tuesday Market Place.

In St Nicholas Street and Chapel Street we have seen buildings that are individually better than any in the Tuesday Market Place but which are less satisfying because they do not form a coherent group.

Ely

Ely is a small town, although it is a city. It is situated on a low hill rising to about eighty feet and surrounded by the level plains of the Fens. Before the Fens were drained, the hill was virtually an island, and the name Ely means 'eel island'.

In AD 673 St Etheldreda, Queen of East Anglia, founded a monastery at Ely and became its first abbess. Etheldreda was also known as St Audrey, and the word 'tawdry' comes from the reputedly poor-quality goods that were sold at an annual fair on St Audrey's day. In the south aisle of the cathedral there is part of an inscribed cross dating from her time.

In 970 the King's School was founded in the monastic grounds and in 1010 Edward the Confessor entered the school as a pupil. Ely was also the home of Hereward the Wake, and of Oliver Cromwell, who was the Steward of the Ely Tithes before his rise to power.

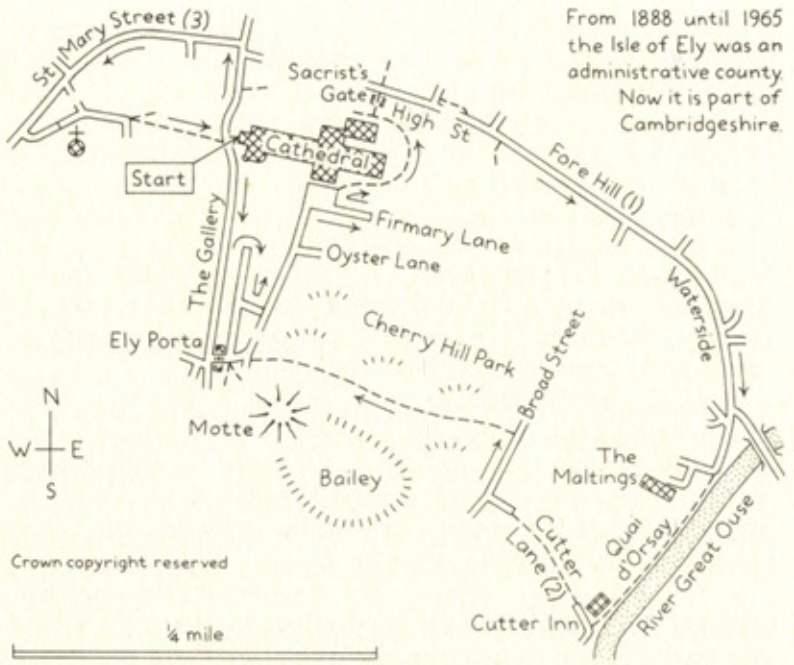
In 1083 Abbot Simeon started to build the abbey at the age of ninety. In 1109 it became a cathedral, and the abbots became bishops.

Ely Cathedral is a splendid building, visible from great distances across the Fens. A feature of the cathedral is its many octagonal towers and turrets, particularly the fourteenth-century central tower which is surmounted by the nineteenth-century corona. The west tower is 215 feet high.

The trail starts and finishes at the cathedral. It begins with a tour of the Cathedral Close, which has been described as the largest collection of medieval domestic buildings in Europe. This is followed by a loop to the River Great Ouse, and finally there is a shorter loop to Oliver Cromwell's house. The total length is two miles.

The Trail

From the main entrance of the cathedral, turn left and pause at



the corner of the porch. The four-storey mansion on the right-hand side of the road is the fifteenth-century Old Palace, once the residence of the bishop and now a Sue Ryder Home. The road ahead is called 'The Gallery' and takes its name from an overhead passage that once linked the palace with the cathedral. On the left-hand side of the road, seen over a high stone wall, is the thirteenth-century Great Hall or Guest Hall with its great buttresses and towering chimney. When the bishop lived in the palace, this was the deanery, but now it is the home of the bishop.

The porch of the cathedral is linked by a stretch of Norman wall to a decagonal turret. From a point on the pavement midway between the corner of the porch and the turret, you can look up at the Great West Tower of the cathedral and appreciate its prodigious height. From the same point you can compare the Early English architecture of the Galilee Porch with the Norman architecture of the south-west transept and its turret.

Cross over the road and continue along The Gallery. On the left, adjoining the Great Hall, is the fourteenth-century Queen's Hall or Fair Hall, which was built for Queen Phillippa, the wife

of Edward III. Now it is the house of the headmaster of the King's School. Beyond this is a long range of buildings that have been incorporated into the school. The nearer part, which has flat buttresses, is twelfth-century and was originally the Guests' Servants' Hall. Some of the narrow Norman windows can still be seen. The farther part, which has staged, or stepped, buttresses, is roughly fifteenth-century and was originally the monastic malting-house. The houses on the other side of the road, though not worth describing in detail, are old enough to make this a truly memorable street; yet the buildings in The Gallery are but a foretaste of the feast of architectural delights that await the traveller within the Cathedral Close.

Farther along on the left is the Ely Porta, the fourteenth-century gatehouse of the Benedictine priory. Pass through the archway and immediately turn left. On the left, just past an unmetalled road on the right, is the malting-house, which is now called School House. There is a medieval upstairs window in the third bay, and there are traces of medieval windows in the fourth and fifth bays.

Farther along on the right is Prior Crauden's Chapel, which was built in 1371 and is now used by the King's School. Stand at the entrance to the chapel and look around you. On your left is the Guests' Servants' Hall with its rounded Norman doorway and very narrow upstairs Norman windows. Adjoining this is the high gabled end of one of my favourite buildings, the fourteenth-century Queen's Hall. To the left of the main window is a little gabled turret with pointed windows one above the other. On the other side of the main window is an even smaller turret, which was formerly linked to the Prior's Hall by an overhead passage.

On your right, at the end of the lane, is the thirteenth-century Great Hall. Most of the windows are Georgian, but the buttresses are medieval, and some of the original windows survive in odd corners. Rising behind the Great Hall is the west tower of the cathedral. The square part of the tower was built in 1274, and the octagonal top stage was added in the fourteenth century.

Retrace your steps for fifty yards and turn left onto a gravel road with steps at the far end. This road marks the northern limit of the Common Yard, which extended from here to the monks' granary.

At the top of the steps, turn left. The first building on the left is the Prior's Hall, now called Priory House and part of the King's School. The wing on the left is fifteenth-century, and the wing on the right, which was originally the King's Treasury, is fourteenth-century. The main block, which links the two wings, is twelfth-century, but no Norman features are visible on the outside.

After passing Oyster Lane on the right, you can see some old arches in the side wall of the Prior's Hall and in the end wall of the Great Hall. Beyond the Great Hall and set farther back are the high columns and arches of the twelfth-century monks' kitchen. The kitchen was on this side of the columns, so what we are seeing is the inside of the wall.

When you reach the car-park, turn right and enter Firmary Lane, a cul-de-sac that is hemmed in on all sides by medieval buildings. On the right, before the buildings begin, are the pointed arches of the Dark Cloister, with fainter arches within them and even fainter arches within those. Farther along there are large, rounded arches on both sides of the road. These are the arcades of the twelfth-century Infirmary Hall, which stood where the road is now.

The first building on the left is Powcher's Hall, which was built in the fourteenth century and is now the home of one of the canons. The half-timbered top floor is early sixteenth-century. On the opposite side of the road is the former Cellarer's Lodging. Beyond Powcher's Hall, and linked to it by an archway, is Walsingham House, built by Alan of Walsingham in about 1335. Opposite this is the thirteenth-century Black Hostelry, built to accommodate visiting monks from other Benedictine monasteries. Finally, at the end of the lane is the twelfth-century Infirmary Chapel, which is now the residence of the Dean of Ely.

Return to the car-park and turn sharp right. On the right can be seen the stair turret that leads to the roof of Walsingham House. The path curves round to the left, passing first the end of the cathedral, then the end of the Lady Chapel, which was completed in 1349 and is the largest in England.

At the point where the path straightens out, turn right. In front of you is the Sacrist's Gate, which was built in 1325. To the right of the gate is the Sacrist's Hall, and to the left of the gate is a range of medieval buildings that terminates in the Goldsmith's

Tower, which once housed the workshop of the priory goldsmith.

Inside the archway of the Sacrist's Gate is the entrance to the Ely Museum, which was opened in 1975 and occupies three rooms of the former Cathedral Choir School. It is open on Saturday and Sunday afternoons throughout the year, and on Thursday afternoons in the summer.

After passing through the Sacrist's Gate, cross over the High Street and turn right. On the right is the buttressed stone wall of the Sacrist's Hall. Farther along on the right is the medieval almonry, now Almonry Croft, with its remarkable decorated chimneys. Opposite this is a row of shops so narrow that the pavement passes to the left of them without deviating from a straight line. The open space to the left of these shops was formerly the Butter Market.

The Butter Market emerges into the market-place, which is now a car-park. Go straight on into *Fore Hill (1)*, and continue into Waterside. This curves round to the right past a number of pleasant Georgian houses and a half-timbered house with a tiny window in the side wall.

The road leads eventually to the River Great Ouse. There are many rivers called Ouse, but there is only one Great Ouse. Already it has passed through Brackley, Buckingham, Stony Stratford, Newport Pagnall, Olney, Bedford, St Neots, Huntingdon and St Ives; by the time it reaches the Wash at King's Lynn, it will have covered 150 miles.

From the point where the road turns away from the river, you can see the nineteenth-century maltings which were converted into a public hall in 1971. Continue along the riverside by a footpath called Quai d'Orsay. On the far bank are the Ely Marina, with a crane for lifting boats out of the water, and the King's School Boat Club.

Turn right at the Cutter Inn and continue along the footpath called *Cutter Lane (2)*. The path bends slightly left and merges with Jubilee Terrace. On the right is a lovely old house with a big external fireplace and buttresses.

Turn right into Broad Street and then left between battlemented gateposts into Cherry Hill Park. On the left is a Norman motte-and-bailey castle. The bailey is defined by a low bank with two trees on it, and the motte is a high tree-covered mound called Cherry Hill. We are now in the Cathedral Close,

which is called 'the College' and is a separate parish from the rest of the city. There is a good view of the cathedral from the path, and this whole area is remarkably rural in character.

The path leads back to the Ely Porta (the gatehouse by which we entered the Close near the beginning of the trail). To the left of the Porta and at right-angles to it is an immensely interesting building with windows of different periods. This is the monks' granary, built in the late fourteenth century and now used by the King's School as a dining-hall.

Pass through the gatehouse and turn right into The Gallery (a road that's surely worth seeing a second time). Go straight on at the cathedral and left at a staggered crossroads into *St Mary Street (3)*. Where the road widens out, there is a pair of houses bearing a plaque to say that they were restored by the Ely Preservation Trust in 1980.

Farther along on the right is a door with a coat of arms over it. The arms are supported on the left by a man carrying a spade, on the right by a man with a scythe. At one time this was the entrance to the office controlling the drainage of the Fens.

Go straight on at the crossroads and sharp left at the bus-stop. On the left is St Mary's Green and on the right Cromwell House, where Oliver Cromwell lived from 1636 until 1647. Beyond the house is St Mary's Church, with its stone spire, and this is followed by a very attractive black-and-white cottage.

Here the road bends sharp right, and Palace Green lies ahead. Two paths lead across the green, one going straight on and the other bearing slightly right: take the right fork. On your right is the rambling west wing of the Old Palace, and ahead of you, in all its majesty, is the towering west front of Ely Cathedral.

Cambridge

Cambridge originated at the lowest crossing-point on the River Cam, which was where Magdalene Bridge is now. In the first century BC a Belgic settlement was established to the north-west of the bridge. By the fourth century this had developed into the Roman town of Duroliponte, which covered twenty-one acres and was surrounded by a wall. It stood at the intersection of the Roman roads Akeman Street and Wool Street. The earliest settlement on the east bank was the fifth-century Saxon town, which occupied the site between the present-day churches of Great St Mary and St Bene't.

In Saxon times Duroliponte was called Grantchester, but when the Roman town became known as Cambridge, the name 'Grantchester' was transferred to a village two miles to the south. This is the village that was to become immortalized in a poem by Rupert Brooke.

Early in the thirteenth century Cambridge University was founded. There are three universities in the area covered by this book, but only one university town. You could easily spend a week in Colchester or Norwich without noticing that there was a university, but in Cambridge the university dominates the town.

Between 1226 and 1832 the only universities in England were Oxford and Cambridge. Now there are thirty-five, the largest of which is London, with 50,000 students, but Oxford and Cambridge are still recognized as the leading universities in the country. So often are the two institutions referred to together that the term 'Oxbridge' has been coined, the other universities being 'provincial' or 'redbrick', because they were founded at a time when brick had replaced stone as the predominant building material.

The question of which of the two universities is pre-eminent remains a matter of opinion. The number of students is almost exactly the same. In 1985-6 there were 9,697 at Cambridge and

9,625 at Oxford. Even the two towns have much in common: they are both about fifty miles from London as the crow flies, and they both have a population of about 100,000. Rivalry between the two universities is epitomized by the annual boat race from Putney to Mortlake, and for many people the name 'Cambridge' means not the town or the university but the University Boat Race crew.

The one field in which Cambridge could be said to surpass Oxford is that of scientific research, for many of the world's greatest discoveries were made in Cambridge. In 1897, for example, J.J. Thomson discovered the electron; in 1918 Lord Rutherford succeeded in splitting the atom; in 1932 the neutron was discovered, and in 1967 Jocelyn Bell discovered that bizarre object, the neutron star, which is so dense that a particle the size of a grain of sand would weigh as much as an oil-tanker.

The head of the university is the Chancellor, but in practice he is only a figurehead, and the job of running the university falls on the Vice-Chancellor. Below him are various officials, including the High Steward, the Orator, the two Proctors and the two Esquire Bedells. Most of the heads of colleges are called Master, but King's has a Provost and Queens' a President. Altogether they are twenty-eight colleges, of which sixteen were founded before 1600. Of these no fewer than twelve have architecture dating from every century since their foundation.

The only way to experience the life and soul of the university is to belong to it, but you can pick up a bit of the atmosphere by just walking round. On summer weekends the River Cam is full of punts, and the traditional eccentricity of the students is still very much in evidence. On my visit in 1987 I saw someone wearing a top hat and someone else riding a unicycle along the street. On Magdalene Bridge two students were asking everybody who crossed the bridge to 'smile'.

One thing that strikes any visitor to Cambridge is the profusion of bicycles. They are lined up nose-to-tail along all the available walls and railings. If there is insufficient wall-space, they are piled up three or four deep. This is a phenomenon unique to Cambridge.

There are two routes outlined below, both starting at the Round Church at the junction of Bridge Street and St John's Street. The main route passes through a succession of famous colleges, such as St John's, Trinity and King's. The extension

leads to Merton Hall, a building of great interest that is missed by many visitors because it is difficult to find. Most of the college courtyards are open until 5.30 p.m., but Queens' College is open only from 1.45 p.m. until 4.30.

The main route is 1½ miles long (two miles including the return to the Round Church). The length of the extension is half a mile.

The Main Route

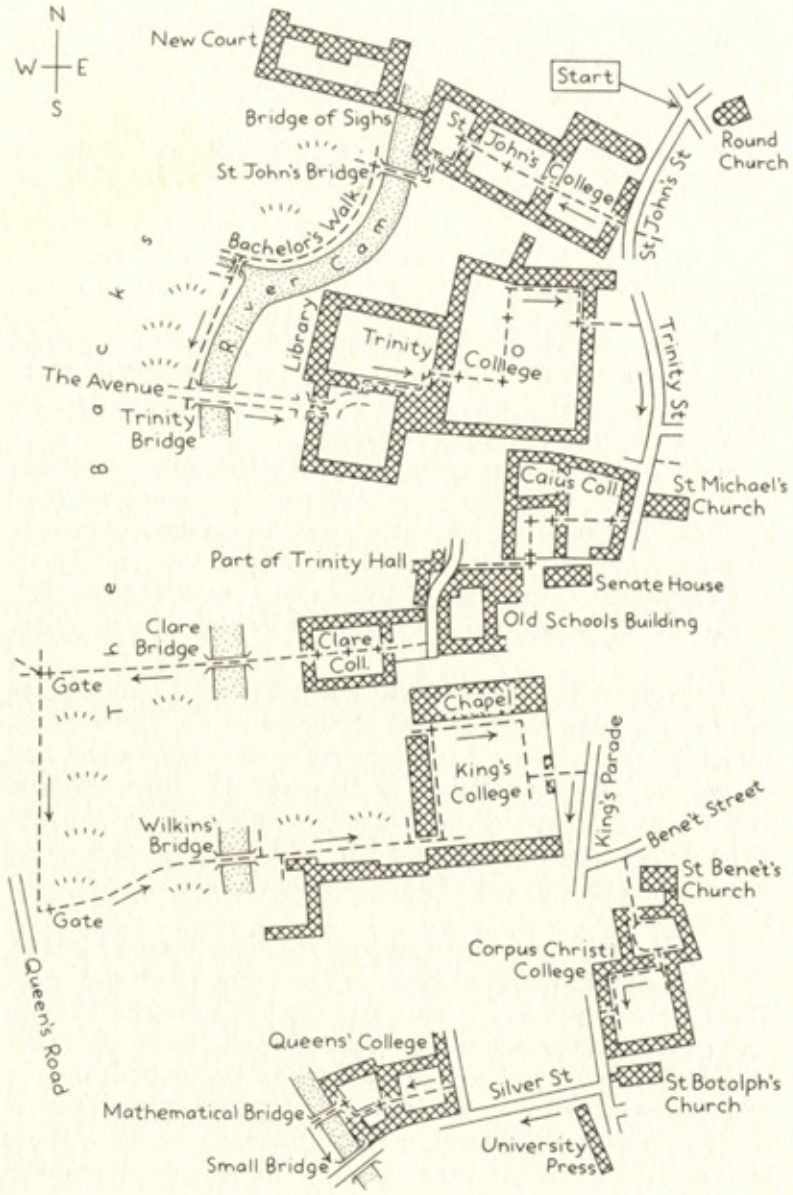
The Round Church of the Holy Sepulchre was built in about 1130 and modelled on the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem. In 1842 it was rebuilt in the Norman style, but the columns and arches inside are original.

Leave the Round Church by St John's Street. After passing St John's Chapel on the right, you come to the Great Gate of *St John's College*. This is the first of the many tall gatehouses that are encountered on this walk. Over the archway is the coat of arms of Lady Margaret Beaufort, who founded the college in 1511. The arms are supported by strange goat-like animals called yales.

Pass through the archway and enter the First Court. On the right is the chapel, which was designed in the 1860s by Sir Gilbert Scott. In front of you are the tall windows of the hall, and in the far left-hand corner is Staircase F, where William Wordsworth lived when he was an undergraduate here in the 1780s. Other famous undergraduates of St John's College were William Wilberforce, Lord Palmerston and William Barnes, the Dorset poet.

Go straight on across the court and enter the Screens Passage. This is a feature found in large medieval houses as well as in Oxbridge colleges, and it separates the hall from the kitchen. This particular passage is exceptionally well preserved. There are old doors at both ends, beautiful panelling on both sides, a marvellous carved wooden ceiling, and three stone arches on the left. Some close-studding is visible through the first of these arches, but the effect is rather spoilt by the stainless steel doors beyond.

The passage opens out into the Second Court, which was added in 1599. On the far side of the court is the Shrewsbury Tower with its statue of Mary Shrewsbury, the principal donor



of the court. Pass under the statue and enter the Third Court, which was built in 1671. Turn left along the side of the court, follow the path round to the right and leave the courtyard by a covered passage on the left. After passing two stone eagles on the left, turn right and cross over St John's Bridge.

This is the Old Bridge, which was built of Weldon stone in 1712. Farther downstream is the better-known New Bridge, also called the Bridge of Sighs, because of its resemblance to the famous bridge of that name in Venice.

Turn left into Bachelor's Walk. Looking back at the bridge, you can see a carving of Neptune on the panel above the first cutwater. You can also see the marks that were made to record the flood-levels of 1879 and 1947. These marks are below the level of the river bank, and I wouldn't call them *flood*-levels at all.

The path curves round to the right, following the River Cam. On the right is the first of a succession of lawns and gardens, collectively known as 'the Backs', which extend along the west bank of the river from St John's College to Silver Street.

Before long you come to a footbridge over one of the backwaters. Looking right from here, you can see the resplendent New Court of St John's College, which was built between 1825 and 1831. The ornate central lantern is popularly known as 'The Wedding Cake'. Farther to the left, but hidden by trees in the summer, is the even newer Cripps Building. The story of St John's has been one of continual expansion to the west.

Cross over the bridge and continue along the river bank. On the other side of the river is Trinity College Library, which was designed by Sir Christopher Wren in 1672. In this building are the books and papers of Sir Isaac Newton and manuscripts of works by Milton, Byron, Tennyson, Thackeray and A.E. Housman.

After a hundred yards, turn left over Trinity Bridge and continue along the Avenue to the West Gate of *Trinity College*.

More undergraduates have risen to fame from Trinity College than from any other college in the university: Byron, Macaulay, Tennyson and A.E. Housman all became poets; William Makepeace Thackeray made his name as a novelist; Isaac Newton, James Clark Maxwell, J.J. Thomson and Lord Rutherford achieved success as scientists; and Bertrand Russell became a great philosopher and mathematician.

Go through the West Gate into King's Court and bear left. Pass through the arcade separating King's Court from Nevile's Court, and turn right along a wide, covered passage. At the end of the passage, go left for a few yards and up a flight of steps to an old door. From here you can see the Wren Library with its four statues representing Divinity, Law, Physics and Mathematics. In this courtyard Sir Isaac Newton calculated the speed of sound.

Go through the old door and enter the Screens Passage. On the left is the screen which separates the passage from the hall, and on the right are three arches. The arrangement is similar to that of St John's, but here the features are less well preserved.

At the far end of the passage a door opens onto the Great Court, which is the largest university courtyard in the world. Because it has grown up gradually over the years, it is not perfectly rectangular. It is traditional for students to attempt to run round the courtyard in the time it takes the clock to strike twelve.

From the top of the steps you can see no fewer than three gatehouses. On the left, in the North Range, is King Edmond's Tower of 1430, the earliest gatehouse in Cambridge. To the left of King Edmond's Tower is the Old Library Range, and to the right of the tower is Trinity College Chapel.

In front of you in the East Range is the Great Gatehouse, which is wider than King Edmond's Tower. In the building between the chapel and the Great Gate, Thackeray, Macaulay and Newton had rooms. On your right, in the South Range, is the Queen's Gate, with a statue of Queen Elizabeth I over the archway. At the corner of the East and South Ranges is the Mutton Hall Turret.

At the foot of the steps go straight on, and left at the crossways to the fountain. From here you can study the fourth side of the court, the West Range. At the far right-hand end of it is the Master's Tower. To the left of this is the Master's Lodge, where William Wordsworth stayed in 1820 when his brother was Master. Between this and the Screens Passage is Trinity College Hall, the largest hall in Cambridge.

Go straight on to King Edmond's Tower, and then turn right along the side of the courtyard. In the antechapel on the left is the famous statue of Sir Isaac Newton by Roubiliac. There are also statues of Macaulay, Tennyson and Francis Bacon and of

two of the Masters of Trinity College.

Follow the path round to the right, and turn left through the Great Gatehouse. On the outside of the gatehouse are the shields of Edward III's sons, and a statue of Henry VIII, who founded the college in 1546.

Turn right into Trinity Street, passing Heffer's well-known bookshop on the left. After a hundred yards there is a view down Trinity Lane to the tall chimneys on the outside of Trinity Great Court.

Opposite the end of St Michael's Church, turn right through the Gate of Humility into *Caius College*, founded in 1348. Its full name is 'Gonville and Caius', and it should be pronounced 'Kees'.

Cut across Trees Court to the Gate of Virtue. The two female figures in the spandrels represent Fame (on the left) and Wealth (on the right). Pass through the gate and enter Caius Court. Turn left in the centre of the court and leave the college by the Gate of Honour, so called because the students pass through it to receive their degrees.

On the far side of the passage, to your left, is the main office of the university, Senate House, which was built by James Gibbs in 1730. Turn right into Senate House Passage and left into Trinity Lane. The building on the far side of the lane is Trinity Hall. This is not part of Trinity College, but a college in its own right, founded in 1350.

On your left is the Old Schools Building, which includes two marvellous pieces of architecture: a striking corner oriel and the stone gatehouse of 1441. This is worth studying in some detail: there are nine main statues, eight smaller faces, and masses and masses of crocketed pinnacles. The tall windows of King's College Chapel are now visible ahead.

Just before the end of the road, turn right across a small courtyard and enter *Clare College*. Clare is one of the smaller colleges, with a single courtyard completed in 1676, though it has a history going back to 1326. Its most notable features are the two-storey semi-circular windows that project out from the wall above the entrance. One of them faces Trinity Lane, the other in towards the court.

Go straight on through the second arch and over Clare Bridge. Like Trinity Bridge, this is Palladian in style. The parapets take the form of ballustrades adorned with stone spheres. Continue

along a raised path, with King's College Meadow on the left and Clare College Garden on the right. Plays are sometimes performed in the garden.

At the end of the path, go through a gate and turn left along the side of a backwater. After 200 yards, turn left through another gate onto a path that leads to Wilkins' Bridge. From this bridge is the famous view over the Great Lawn to King's College Chapel.

Continue straight on. The long, low building in front of you is the Gibbs Building, which was constructed in 1731. This and all the buildings on your right are part of *King's College*. The college was founded in 1441 and is named after King Henry VI, who laid the foundation stone of the chapel on 25 July 1446. Among its famous students were Horace Walpole, E.M. Forster and Rupert Brooke. There is a tradition that pupils of Eton go on to King's.

Turn left along the far side of the Gibbs Building. On the right is the Great Court, which is separated from the road by an ornamental stone screen. In front of you is the entrance to King's College Chapel, perhaps the best known of all the buildings in Cambridge. It is eighty feet high, forty feet wide and 300 feet long. When it was built, there were seventy students in the college. Why so enormous a chapel should have been built for so few students is beyond my comprehension. Perhaps, if the builders knew that in the 1980s it would be visited by a million people a year, they would have thought their efforts worthwhile.

The chapel is flanked on both sides by smaller chapels, of which there are eighteen, and at each of the four corners there is a spiral staircase. Inside, right at the far end, is Rubens' famous painting *The Adoration of the Magi*, which was installed in 1962. (This should not be confused with the painting of the same name by Mantegna, which was sold in 1985 for £8 million.)

At the entrance to the chapel, turn right (or left, if coming from inside the chapel). Follow the path round to the right, and turn left through the highly decorative Porter's Lodge. Turn right into King's Parade, left into Bene't Street and right at the end of the first building onto a path.

On your left is the oldest building in Cambridge, the Saxon bell tower of St Bene't's Church. The long and short quoins at the corners of the tower are characteristic of Saxon buildings.

The windows of the bell-chamber are original, but this is not such a good example of Saxon architecture as the tower of Holy Trinity Church in Colchester.

Beyond the church, in front of you and on your left, are the venerable walls of *Corpus Christi College*. It was founded in 1352 and has architecture from every century since. Among its famous students were Christopher Marlowe and John Cowper Powys. Housed in the college library is the finest collection of Saxon manuscripts in the world, including the original *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*.

Go straight on through a sixteenth-century passage into Old Court. Built between 1352 and 1377, it is the oldest courtyard in Cambridge and one of the best preserved. There are original doorways and windows all the way round, and some later windows.

Go through an archway on the far side of the court, up some steps and into the New Court, which was built of Ketton stone in 1827. Turn right along the side of the court, left at the corner and right through the entrance arch. Turn left into the road, passing on the left the tower of St Botolph's Church, which was built in about 1400. From here you can see the building of Cambridge University Press with its large central tower. It has recently been cleaned, showing up its beautiful cream-coloured stonework.

Turn right immediately before it into Silver Street, and then right into Queens' Lane. On the left is Queens' College, which is entered by yet another of those tall turreted gatehouses.

Queens' College was founded in 1446 by Andrew Dockett, whose patron was Henry VI's wife, Margaret of Anjou; and it was refounded by Edward IV's wife, Elizabeth Woodville. (Because there are two queens associated with the foundation of the college, the apostrophe appears after the s.) There are four courtyards – Front Court, Cloister Court, Pump Court and Walnut Tree Court, all of different sizes, and all dating from different periods. The Erasmus Tower in Pump Court contains rooms occupied by Desiderius Erasmus from 1510 to 1514.

Pass through the Old Main Gate into Front Court, which is also known as Old Court. It was completed in 1449, and most of it is unaltered. On the wall on the right is the Newton Sundial, so called because it was put up in 1642, the year of Newton's birth.

From Front Court go straight on through a doorway with an old carved door into the Screens Passage, which resembles those of

St John's and Trinity. There are three stone arches on the left, two of which have old doors, and a black wooden screen on the right.

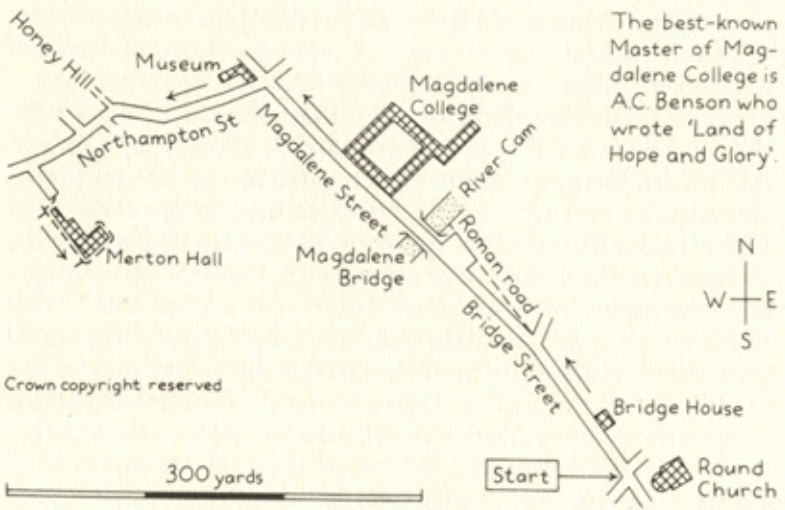
At the end of the passage, go straight on along a covered path with a flagstone floor. On the right is Cloister Court, laid out in about 1495. All along the far side of the court is the President's Lodge, which is Elizabethan. After the path bends right, there is some very attractive brown close-studding on the left. The staircase and doors are also brown.

Halfway along the second side of the court, turn left through a passage with more close-studding on the right. In front of you is the Mathematical Bridge of 1749. It is designed so that, if the bolts were removed, it would still stay up. Cross over the bridge, turn left through the car-park and then turn left again into Silver Street. From the bridge there is a good view of Queens' College and the Mathematical Bridge.

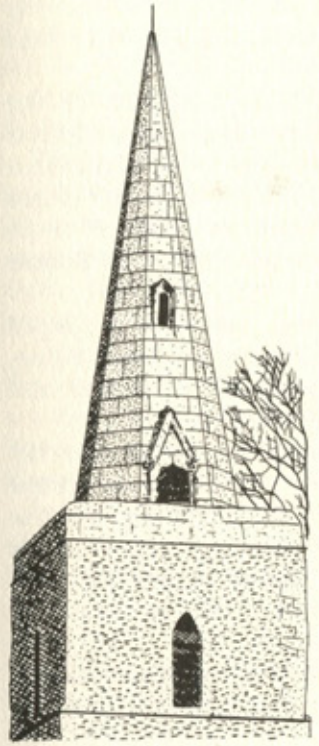
This is the end of the walk. To get back to the Round Church, continue along Silver Street to St Botolph's Church, turn left and keep going straight on.

The Extension

Leave the Round Church by Bridge Street, which lies on the line of the Roman road Wool Street. Wool Street originally ran from Colchester to Godmanchester, and it derives its name from



The best-known Master of Magdalene College is A.C. Benson who wrote 'Land of Hope and Glory'.



St Peter's Church, Cambridge

Wolvestreet, which dates from the time when there were wolves in England.

Fifty yards along on the right is Bridge House. The two upper floors are pleasantly half-timbered, with small Tudor windows and larger Georgian windows. The horizontal beams have been carved so as to resemble twisted strips of leather. This type of decoration is known as strapwork, and is also found in Lavenham.

Farther along, the road veers away from the course of the Roman road, but the line of the old road may be determined by the position of the houses that are set back by the river and by the steps that lead down to the Roman crossing-point. On the far bank of the river, and separated from it by the Fellows' Garden, is the three-storey side wall of *Magdalene College*. (There is also a Magdalen College in Oxford, which lacks the final 'e'. Both colleges should be pronounced 'Mordlin'.)

The college was founded in 1542, and it was the last all-male college in Cambridge before female students were admitted in 1987. Among its famous undergraduates were Charles Kingsley, author of *The Water Babies*, and Samuel Pepys, who graduated in 1653. The manuscript of his famous diary is kept in the college.

The road crosses the River Cam by Magdalene Bridge, the Great Bridge from which Cambridge derived its name. At one time the river marked the boundary between the kingdoms of East Anglia and Mercia. Looking upstream from this bridge, you can see the 'Wedding Cake' of New Court rising above later extensions to St John's College.

Carry straight on into Magdalene Street. Between number 31 and the Pickerel Inn is a very attractive glimpse down an alley

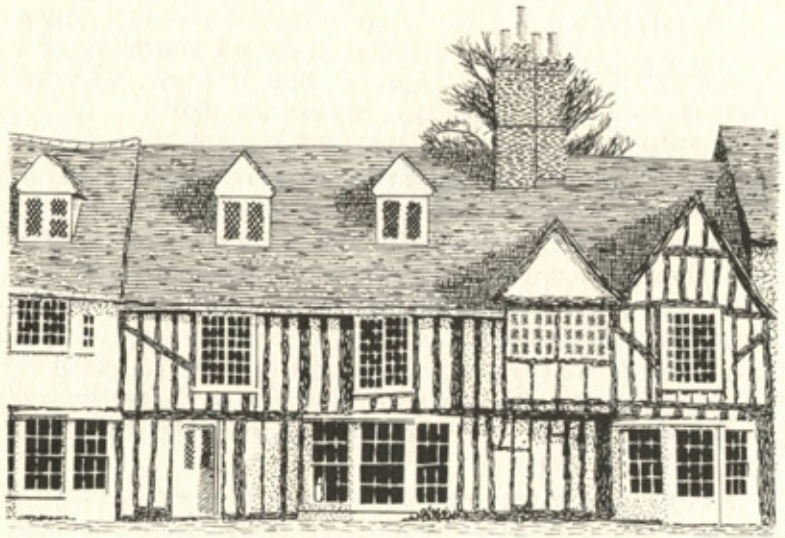
on the left. Farther on is another pleasant glimpse between big wooden doors on the left. All the houses on this side of the road are now part of Magdalene College.

Turn left at the traffic lights into Northampton Street. On the right is the former sixteenth-century White Horse Inn, which is now the Cambridge and County Folk Museum. As the road bends right, the simple stone spire of St Peter's Church comes into view. At the next bend a little cobbled lane leads off to the right. This is Honey Hill, and it lies on the line of the Roman town wall.

After passing number 30, and just before a Y-shaped road-sign, turn left. At the end of the road, go through a gate. Turn right along the end of the west wing of Merton Hall, and walk round the building in an anti-clockwise direction.

Merton Hall, also known as the School of Pythagoras, is the oldest building in the university. The buttresses at the end of the wing are eighteenth-century, but after you turn the corner the features become progressively earlier. The first part is seventeenth-century; the second part, which is half-timbered, is sixteenth-century; and the third part, built of stone, is fourteenth-century.

The third face of the building is divided by buttresses into six bays. On the ground floor are a twentieth-century door and four



Merton Hall, Cambridge (This is the new part!)

small windows, three of which are Norman, and one modern. On the first floor are three two-light windows. The one on the left is fourteenth-century, the one in the centre twentieth-century, and the one on the right Norman. Above the door is a Norman chimney-shaft.

The fourth face is the end of the east wing. The first three buttresses are fourteenth-century. To the right of these is a fifteenth-century doorway. On the first floor in the left bay is a small fourteenth-century window. Halfway along this face, turn right, then left up some steps, and cut across to the gate by which you came in.

After you have climbed the steps, you can see the side wall of the east wing. On the ground floor is a twentieth-century window built into a Norman doorway. To the right of this is a fifteenth-century cusped window, and above the Norman doorway is a two-light Norman window.

In walking round this building, we have had the opportunity of studying architectural features from seven different centuries. These features may be summarized as follows:

About 1200
Two two-light windows, three smaller windows, a doorway and a chimney-shaft.
Fourteenth century
Two windows and several buttresses.
Fifteenth century
A doorway and a window.
Sixteenth century
The half-timbered part of the west wing.
Seventeenth century
The west wing beyond the half-timbered part.
Eighteenth century
The buttresses at the end of the west wing.
Twentieth century
Various doors and windows.

So that is Merton Hall, the most historic building in a city that is crammed full of historic buildings. From about 1200 until 1271 it was a private house. From 1271 until 1959 it was the property of Merton College, Oxford. In 1959 it was bought by St John's College, Cambridge. Only in Cambridge, one feels, could it have taken them 688 years to get round to taking this obvious step.

Saffron Walden

Saffron Walden is worth exploring for its wealth of old timber-framed houses and for its decorative plasterwork (pargeting).

The earliest settlement was a first-century Romano-British village in the valley now occupied by George Street and Hill Street. When Saxon settlers came to the area in the fifth century, they called the village 'Weala-denn', which means 'Valley of the Britons', and by the seventh century the name had become 'Walden'. A new town was built on Bury Hill, and the valley site was deserted, but the name Walden was retained.

Between 1125 and 1143 Walden Castle was built on Bury Hill by the Mandeville family. A hundred years later it was abandoned, and it has been a ruin ever since.

In the thirteenth century the market-place was extended to include the area between Market Street and Cross Street. Stalls were set up in rows running from east to west, and as the stalls were replaced by shops, a series of close-set parallel streets was established. Market Row, Butcher Row and the west end of Mercer Row may still be seen today. At one time there was a fourth row, to the north of Mercer Row, with the delightful name of Creepmouse Alley.

Later in the thirteenth century an L-shaped embankment called the Battle Ditches was constructed to the south-east of the town. It was intended that the embankment would surround the town at some distance to allow for future expansion, but the expansion did not take place and the rampart was never completed. This is a classic example of 'biting off more than you can chew'.

By the end of the thirteenth century the layout of the streets was very much as it is today, and at the end of the fourteenth century the earliest surviving timber-framed buildings were constructed.

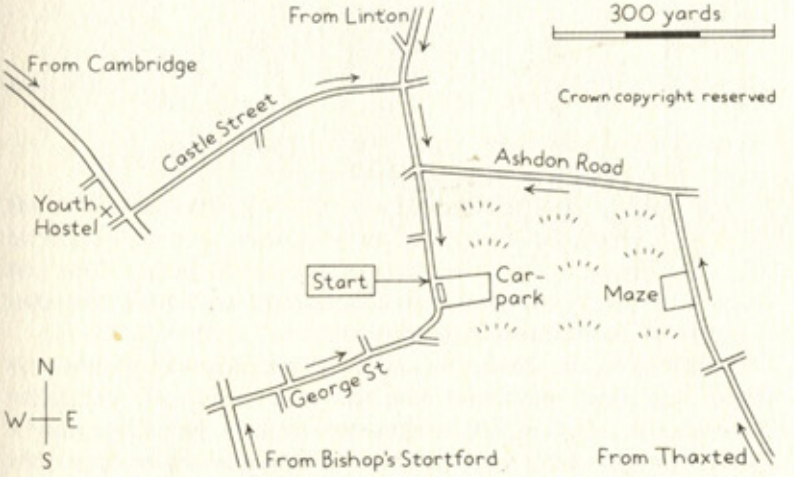
Between 1400 and 1700 Saffron crocuses were grown in the

area, and the town became known as 'Saffron Walden'. The stigmas were removed from the flowers and used to make dyes and medicines.

In 1603 the mansion of Audley End was built to the west of the town. From 1965 until 1982 it was the home of the statesman R.A. Butler, who took the title Lord Butler of Saffron Walden.

Location of the Start

The trail starts at the car-park on the common. From Bishop's Stortford, turn right into George Street (sign-posted Thaxted 7), and the car-park is signposted.



From Cambridge, turn left at the Youth Hostel into Castle Street (sign-posted 'Free Car-Park') and right at the end of the road.

From Linton, keep straight on and the car-park is on the left.

From Thaxted, go straight on at the crossroads, passing the maze on the left. Turn left at the T-junction along the side of the common, left again and then left into the car-park.

The Trail Length 2 miles

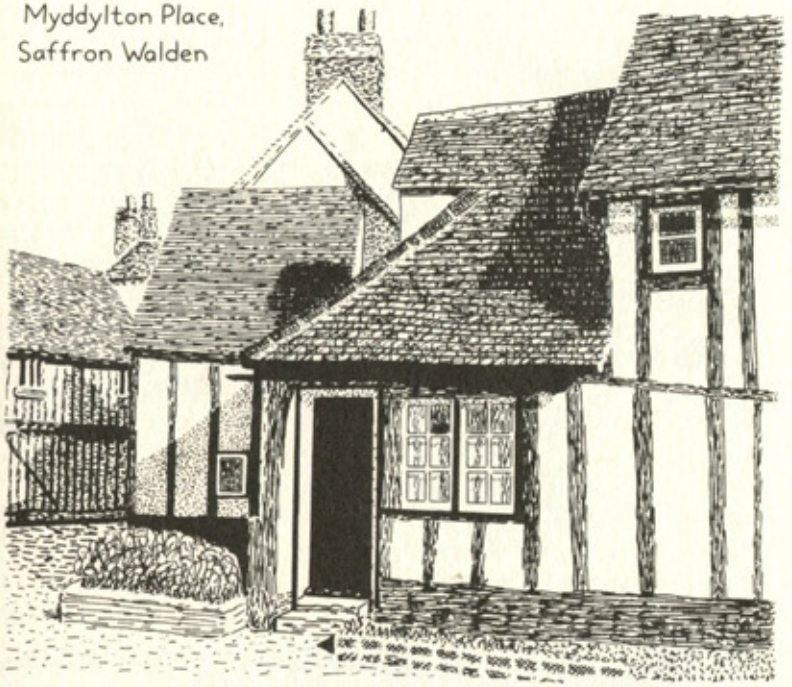
On leaving the car-park, cross over the road and turn right. As you pass Emson Close, the ruins of Walden Castle appear

ahead. Although they rise to a considerable height, no architectural features are discernible.

Go straight on at the junction with Church Street and turn left into *Castle Street (1)*. The curved row of cottages on the corner of Museum Street follows the line of the castle bailey. The last three cottages, with their low overhangs and wide wooden shutters, are late fifteenth-century.

Continue along Castle Street, where nearly every house is worth studying, and cross over the main road into *Myddylton Place (2)*. On the right is a fifteenth-century building, now a Youth Hostel. At the level of the overhang you can see the ends of the joists. The thicker ones are called bridging joists, and the thinner ones common joists. Halfway along on the top floor is a sack-hoist which dates from the time in the nineteenth century when the building was used as maltings.

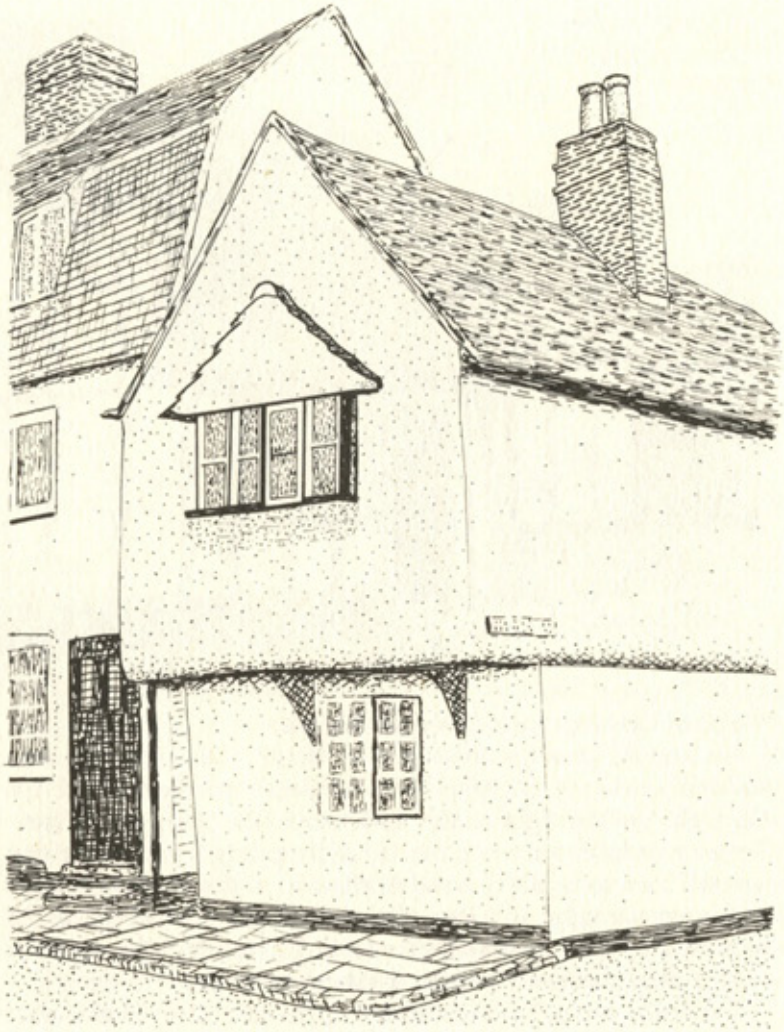
Follow the road round to the left, past an attractive timber-framed cottage, and turn left into a path. At the end of the path, turn right for a few yards, and then turn left into a path with a brick wall on one side and a timber-framed house on the other. Apart from one of the curved braces, all the timber is sixteenth-century. Continue through an avenue of horse-chestnut trees to the church and turn left. Follow the path round the side of the church and bear right across the churchyard. Go straight on into *Museum Street (3)*, and notice how the wall on



the right has been painted to look like windows.

Go straight on at the crossroads to Market Hill. When the road suddenly widens slightly, turn left into an alley called the Cockpit. On the right is the wall where the late Alec Clifton-Taylor was given a demonstration of pargeting for the television series *Six More English Towns*. At the end of the alley, turn right and carry straight on along the side of the market-place. All around are Victorian buildings, and in the centre of the square is an intricately carved Victorian drinking-fountain.

Continue along Market Street, and note two roads close together on the right. These are Butcher Row and Market Row. Market Row was known as Cheesehill in the sixteenth century and as Pig Street in the eighteenth century. Turn right into Market Row, and right again into Market Passage, which side-steps to the right by no more than the width of the lane. Ignore Butcher Row on the right and turn left into Mercer Row. This formerly continued to the right, making three parallel roads close together. (A mercer was a dealer in silks and other fine materials.)



Corner of Bridge Street and Freshwell Street, Saffron Walden

On the left is Mercers Restaurant, which is older inside than outside. Already there is an interesting view ahead of the buildings in Cross Street, and when you turn right into this street, you can see fifteenth-century shop windows on both sides of the road.

Turn left into *King Street (4)*. The last building on the right is

the fourteenth-century Cross Keys Inn, which has thick joists and studs, curved braces and cusped leaded windows.

Cross over the High Street and enter Park Lane. This is uninteresting at first but, after the road bends right, you can see across the duckpond to the line of tall lime trees that mark the limits of Audley End Park. Beyond the pond are a number of attractive houses in *Freshwell Street (5)*. Opposite Freshwell Gardens is a sixteenth-century doorway built of small bricks and known as the Monks' Door.

At the end of the road, turn left into Bridge Street. On the right is the sixteenth-century Eight Bells Inn with its ornately carved bressumer and window-sills. Farther along on the right is a very attractive seventeenth-century group with jetties at various levels, including one that is low enough to bang your head.

Retrace your steps along Bridge Street, and go straight on at the junction with Freshwell Street. The house on the corner has a shallow oriel window with a little gable only one tile deep. Number 7 on the right is so close-studded that the studs are wider than the gaps.

Go straight on into the High Street. Just past Castle Street on the left is a fifteenth-century house called The Close, which has an old nail-studded door at the far end. Beyond the park on the left is a sixteenth-century house with twin gables, and after that comes the Saffron Hotel. All the woodwork, including the joists over the carriage entrance, has been painted to produce a black glossy surface, which I find less pleasing than the black matt surface of the Cross Keys.

Turn left into Church Street. On the left is a good view of St Mary's Church between a row of sixteenth-century cottages and a small park. This is the largest church in Essex. Most of it was built between 1450 and 1525 in the Perpendicular style, and the steeple was added in 1831.

Farther along on the right is the celebrated Old Sun Inn, a marvellously chaotic building with seven gables. The gables are of different sizes and set at different levels. Some overhang more than others, and even the pitch of the roof varies. The Sun Inn is renowned for its pargeting, which is dated 1676, but the building is much older than that. Most of it is fifteenth-century, and the main door with its long strap hinges survives from the late fourteenth century.

Go straight on at the crossroads and turn right into Common Hill, which leads back to the car-park.

Extension

From the car-park follow a line of lime trees along the south side of the common. At the children's climbing frame, bear left to the Walden Maze, the largest turf-cut maze in England. In 1979 it was relaid with bricks in a continuous line almost a mile long.

Thaxted

Thaxted is situated on a hill between the River Chelmer (which here is no more than a stream) and one of its tributaries. Although the population is only 2,300, it is always referred to as a town. In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries it was a centre of the cutlery industry. In 1556 a mayor, two bailiffs and twenty-four burgesses were appointed to form a Court of Common Council.

Gustav Holst came to Thaxted in 1914 and composed *The Planets* when he was living in a thatched cottage in Monk Street. As a result Thaxted became an important centre for music, and Sir Adrian Boult and Yehudi Menuhin have conducted concerts in the church.

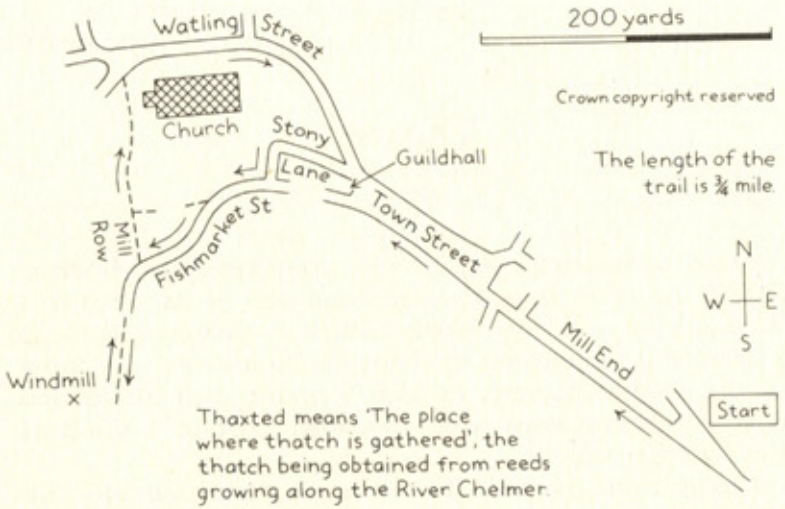
Thaxted is also a national centre for morris dancing, and once a year 200 dancers from all over England assemble in front of the Guildhall. The morris dancing is followed by a Horn Dance, in which six of the dancers carry antlers mounted on carved wooden heads.

The Trail

Thaxted is best approached by the Dunmow road for the view of the Guildhall with the church rising behind it. Just past the turning to Great Bardfield, the road splits into Mill End and Orange Street. In the sixteenth century these were known as Middle Row and Back Street respectively.

Continue along the main road. After a hundred yards the two forks converge and become Town Street. On the right is the green-painted Town Pump, which was the main source of water in the town before 1926. Immediately past this on the left is the Little House, where the builder has tried to squeeze two gables into a space wide enough for only one.

A few doors along is the three-storey Recorder's House, now the Recorder's Restaurant. The proportions and jettying show



its fifteenth-century origins, although no beams are exposed. Below one of the first-floor windows is the coat of arms of King Edward IV. Next door to the restaurant is the Manse, where Gustav Holst lived from 1917 until 1925.

In front of you is the best-known building in Thaxted, the Guildhall, which was built for the Guild of Cutlers in the last decade of the fourteenth century. Now it is used for meetings of the Parish Council, and it is open to the public on Sunday afternoons in the summer.

Keep right of the Guildhall and go straight on into Stony Lane. This was originally the main road and, because the main road was diverted long ago, it retains its old stony surface. On the left is a row of three fifteenth-century cottages with three storeys, all at different levels. The whole frontage is close-studded, and the dark grey of the exposed beams contrasts well with the white of the infilling. In my opinion this is the best group of medieval houses in East Anglia.

Just before you get to the church gates, turn left into Old Market Street and then right into Fishmarket Street. From here you can see the back of the medieval cottages in Stony Lane. The two paths leading off Fishmarket Street on the right define the area covered by the former market-place. When you come to the end of the road, continue straight ahead to the windmill.

The Thaxted tower-mill was built in 1804 and worked for

about a hundred years. In the 1930s it was used as a youth club, and since 1976 it has housed the Thaxted Museum. The original millstones and machinery are still in place. The windmill is open from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. on Saturdays, Sundays and Bank Holidays.

Return to Fishmarket Street and, at the point where the road becomes metalled, bear left into Mill Row. After fifty yards this passes between two rows of almshouses. That on the right, known as 'the Chantry', was originally a priest's house, then it was converted into four almshouses, and later it became a single dwelling again. In 1714 a row of eight almshouses was built to the left of the path; in 1975 they were converted into three cottages.

Beyond the almshouses is the church, which was built between 1340 and 1510. The spire rises to a height of 180 feet and is ventilated by three-light, two-light and one-light lucarnes.

The path comes out into the small open space called 'the Bullring'. Turn right here into Watling Street. On the left is an attractive half-timbered cottage, and opposite this is the north porch of the church. Between the windows above the entrance is a niche that has been enriched with some very intricate carving. It is amazing that anyone would bother to use such tiny carving to decorate so large a building.

Beyond the church the road curves round to the right and returns to the Guildhall.

Country Trail – Hatfield Forest

On 22 July 1986, after a week of preliminary work on the towns of East Anglia, I found myself near the house where I was born, and I felt a sudden yearning to revisit the places I knew in my childhood. Very often, when I have returned to an area after a long absence, I have been disappointed, but on this occasion I was overwhelmed by the beauty of the scenery that forty years earlier I had taken for granted. I parked in the car-park at Bush End and wandered through Hatfield Forest without any particular route in mind, yet, when I decided to finish off this book with a country walk, I found that I could not do better than to describe the route I took that day.

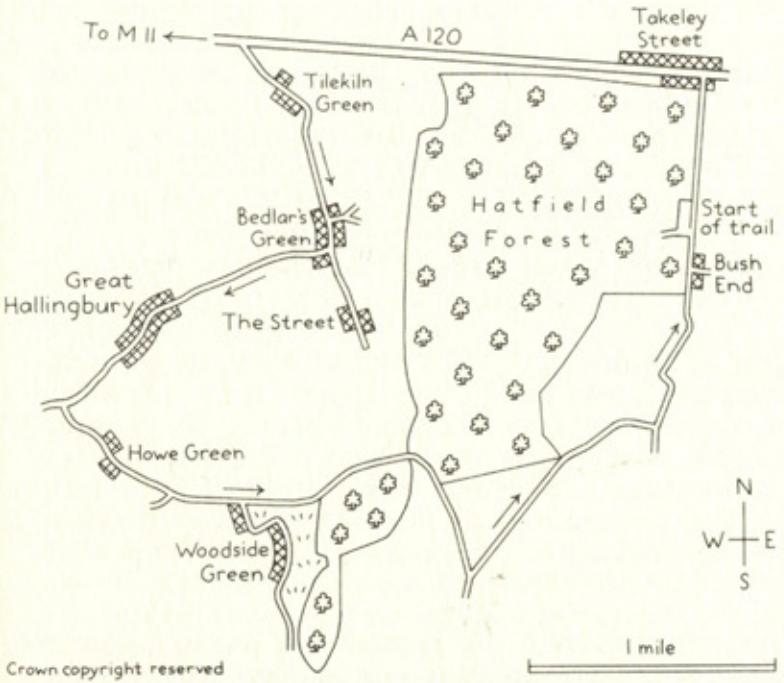
Approach to the Start of the Trail

Leave the M11 at Junction 8 near Bishop's Stortford. Take the road signposted 'A120 Colchester', and turn right at the Esso filling-station. Just past the lake on the left is a house called Great Hallingbury Manor. It looks as though it has been there for centuries, and yet in 1950 it wasn't there.

In half a mile you come to the hamlet of Bedlar's Green, which is part of Great Hallingbury. Just past the turning on the left is the Elizabethan cottage where I spent the first eight years of my life. It is called 'Pryor's Peace' now, but when I was there it was called 'Whistlefield', and it had a thatched roof. From the hole in the hedge at the back of the house you can see the forest, only a quarter of a mile away.

A hundred yards past the cottage the road bends right. From the bend a lane leads down to the smaller hamlet called The Street. A quarter of a mile along the lane on the left is the magnificent half-timbered house where I first went to school. It is now modestly called 'The Street Barn'. To me this was just an ordinary house, the sort that most people lived in.

From the bend the road continues to Great Hallingbury



village. (The 'a' should be pronounced as in 'shall', and not as in 'hall'.) On the left is Tudor Cottage, which used to be the post office. I thought that this was a typical post office. I don't remember its being so ridiculously picturesque.

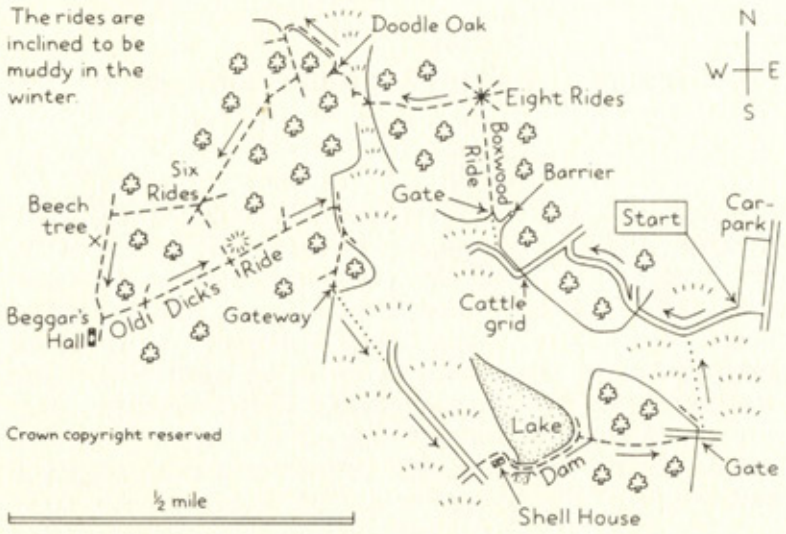
Beyond the village the road crosses a stream and passes two horse-chestnut trees on a bank on the right. There used to be a third tree here, and we knew this spot as Three Tree Bank.

Take the next turning on the left, which passes through the hamlet of Howe Green. In about a mile you come to another hamlet called Woodside Green, and this is absolutely beautiful. Just before you get to a group of horse-chestnut trees, you can look down the length of the green on the right. It stretches away for more than half a mile, with woodland along one side and widely spaced farms and cottages along the other.

After about a mile, take a turning on the left, signposted to Hatfield Forest. After another mile, turn left, keeping on the 'mainer' road. Ignore the turning to Bush End, and turn left into the car-park of Hatfield Forest.

The Trail

Length 3 miles



Leave the car-park by the metalled road that heads into the forest. At first it crosses an open space dotted with trees, some of which have been recently pollarded. Then it enters Elgin Coppice. Bear left at the fork and left again at the next junction. When the road leaves the coppice, it bends right. When you come to a slight left-hand bend, cut across to the right and enter Spittlemore Coppice by a five-barred gate. Ahead of you is one of the broad grassy paths ('rides') that make a walk through Hatfield Forest such a delight. This one is called Boxwood Ride, and it leads to a lovely corner of the forest which we knew as the Eight Rides.

Turn left at the junction and immediately bear right along a narrow ride. After this bend slightly right and then left, there is a tangled mass of Old Man's Beard on the right. Leave the coppice by a stile and bear right. Cross over Shermore Brook and turn right along a path that leads to the Doodle Oak. This is the successor of a tree of tremendous girth that was mentioned in the Domesday Book and survived until 1858.

Bear right at the tree, and then left along the side of the open space called Elman's Green. Take the first ride on the left and enter Hangman's Coppice. As you enter the wood, there is a

turning on the right. Ignore this, but take the next turning on the right, which is a broad ride. Go straight on at the crossways (bearing slightly left). After a quarter of a mile you come to the Six Rides, where two rides lead off to the left, and one to the right. Turn right here, into Hangman's Ride. I remember coming here in my childhood and finding it full of foxgloves and red admiral butterflies.

At the end of the ride, turn left along the edge of the forest. On the right is the tree that we knew simply as the Beech Tree, and which I found exactly as I remembered it when I revisited the area in 1986.

Just before you get to Beggar's Hall, turn left into Old Dick's Ride. Cross over a broad grassy ride and go straight on at a crossways. We used to walk very quietly at this point in the hope of seeing deer or rabbits in the rides on either side. Just past here, on the left, is an area of low mounds and ditches that comprises the prehistoric earthwork of Portingbury Rings. On the other side of the ride is a group of four silver birch trees that was one of our favourite spots in the forest; now the area has been invaded by scrub. (I am informed that one of the birch trees has since been blown down.)

The ride leads eventually to a wide, open space called a chase, which is a characteristic feature of the forest. Turn right along the edge of the chase. When you come to a Y-junction, take the right fork, which re-enters the wood. Ignore a wide ride on the right and go through a gateway. When you reach the edge of the wood, bear slightly left and cut across the chase until you come to a metalled road. Continue along the road to the car-park and take a path on the left which leads down to the lake. On the right is a pavilion where refreshments are usually available.

The path bends round to the right along the front of the Shell House, which was built as a summer-house in 1757 and which now houses the National Trust information room. Beyond the Shell House the path passes between two 'erratic' boulders, relics of the last Ice Age, and passes along the top of the dam. The dam was built in 1979 to raise the level of the lake. The original dam may be seen on the right.

At the end of the dam, turn right through a wicket gate and enter Gravelpit Coppice. Close to the path on the left is a giant redwood. Its trunk is similar to that of the Wellingtonia, but it may be distinguished by its twigs, which bear strap-shaped

leaves like those of the yew.

At the end of the wood the path merges with a road. Carry straight on, leaving the coppice by a gate, and turn left. Ignore a broad ride on the left which follows the edge of the wood, and continue across the chase until you come to a metalled road. Then turn right for the car-park.

When I did this walk in 1986, the words of a song kept running through my head. It began 'Why is my heart so light?', and it exactly fitted the mood I was in at the time. To walk for so long without a house in sight is a tonic.

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