

A HISTORY OF OLD CATTON



by

I.M. Manning

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OLD CATTON

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Foreword

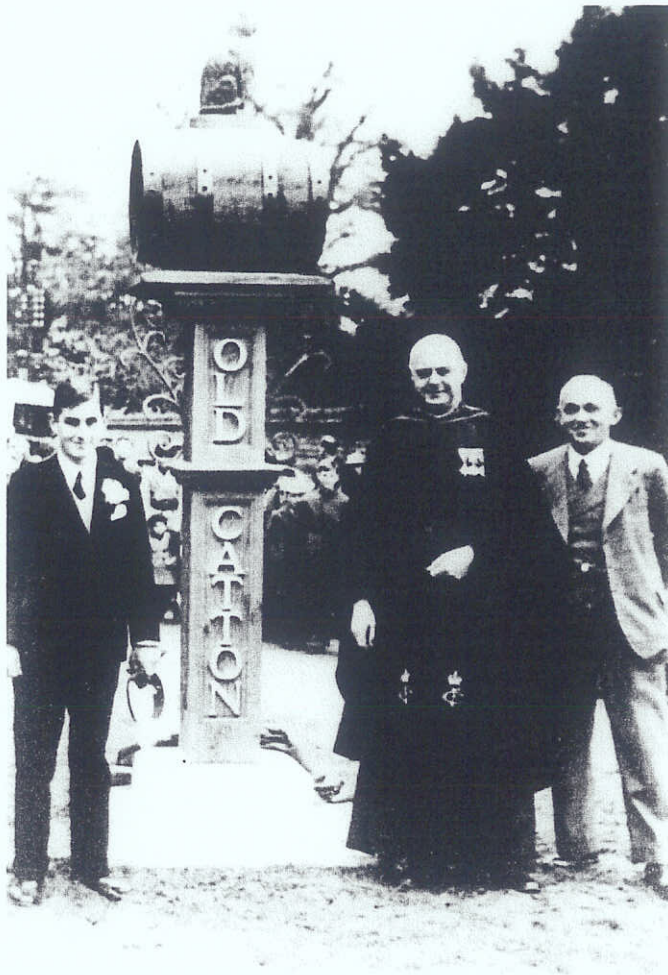
This history is an attempt to put together information which has been assembled over a number of years from Catton people, documentary sources and from research on the buildings, together with field-walking.

It is hoped that it will prove of interest to those living in the village and of use to students researching for school projects

I would like to express my gratitude to the following:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| <u>The Norfolk Record Office</u> | for permission to publish material from archival material and for unfailing courteous help from its staff; |
| <u>The Dean and Chapter</u> | for permission to publish material from the Dean and Chapter Records; |
| <u>The People of Catton</u> | for sharing with me their knowledge and memories of the village before the Second World War. |

M Manning



Dedication of the village sign, 1937.
Presented by Mr Gough for the Coronation of George VI.



Manor House, Church Street

Catton is now known as Old Catton to distinguish it from New Catton which is a suburb of Norwich. Catton stretched originally to the Norwich boundary. New Catton was formed in 1907 from part of the parish of St Clement in Norwich and part of the original parish of Catton, the remaining area of the parish being called 'Old'.

Early history can be based only on archaeological finds. Evidence of Stone Age settlement exists since numbers of worked flints and flint flakes have been found, especially in the central, higher area of the village. A chance discovery of a Middle Bronze Age burial urn was made in 1924 while ditching was in progress near Catton Hall. The urn, with its cremated remains, has been lost, but a so-called incense cup which was found with it is held in the Norwich Castle Museum. Possibly a barrow originally covered this cremation burial, but, if so, it was levelled and lost when the hall was built in 1780.

An aerial photograph taken by the Norfolk Archaeological Unit shows the crop marks of a Roman marching camp in Catton. Apart from a few sherds of Roman pottery no evidence of Roman settlement in Catton has been found.

For the Saxon period there is more evidence of settlement. The village is listed in Domesday Book (1086) as Cattuna (and as Catetuna), the latinised form of Catton. It must be remembered that the clerks compiling information for Domesday Book were Normans trying to turn Anglo-Saxon names into the official language of records – Latin. The ending -ton implies that the settlement was not one of the first made by the Anglo-Saxons, since the earliest settlements have the ending -ham. Two interpretations of the prefix 'cat' may be offered. One is that the settlement was made by a leader called Katte or Kati, and the other that the settlement was made where wild cats (ie polecats) were to be found. This second interpretation has led to the use of a cat as a badge or device at various times and by various people. The -ton has led to the use of a tun or barrel, so that the village sign today incorporates a cat and a barrel. This rebus appears also over the entrance doors to the Manor House in Church Street.

In Domesday Book we have the first written evidence of the village. One area of land was held by King William himself. This manor had belonged to Stigand, the Archbishop of Canterbury. Stigand was appointed by Edward the Confessor without approval from the Pope and he never received Papal confirmation since he did not receive his pallium personally from the Pope. He was considered schismatic and was even excommunicated. In 1070 William deprived Stigand of his office and of his estates. Stigand died in 1072. The Catton estate remained a royal possession until it was given to the priory established at Norwich when the cathedral was built in the early twelfth century. At Domesday, Stigand's land had 13 sokemen with one ploughland: 3 bordars; 3 ploughs; woodland for 12 swine. It was one league long and twelve furlongs wide, paying 8 pence and 3 farthings geld and was valued with Thorpe. (See glossary, p 30).

Other land of the King's was held by Godric, who had 2 freemen with 60 acres and two ploughs.

Eudo Dapifex of Blafelda (Blofield) had an outlying estate in Catton of 30 acres, with 3 bordars, ½ plough and 5 acres of meadow.

Ratho, a freeman, held one ploughland of this, with 3 villeins and 5 bordars and 1 serf. He had one plough on the demesne and ½ plough belonging to the men; woodland for 12 swine and

8 acres of meadow; 3 swine, and 2 sokemen with 4 acres of land.

Calp, a freeman, held 1 ploughland, with 3 villeins; one plough on the demesne and $\frac{1}{2}$ a plough belonging to the men; woodland for 15 swine and 8 acres of meadow.

All this estate of Dapifex was 1 league in length and $\frac{1}{2}$ league in breadth, and taxed at 13 $\frac{1}{2}$ pence geld.

This early division of the Catton lands into three separate estates probably accounts for the present layout of the village into three nucleated areas i.e, Church Street; George Hill; and the Lodge Lane area.

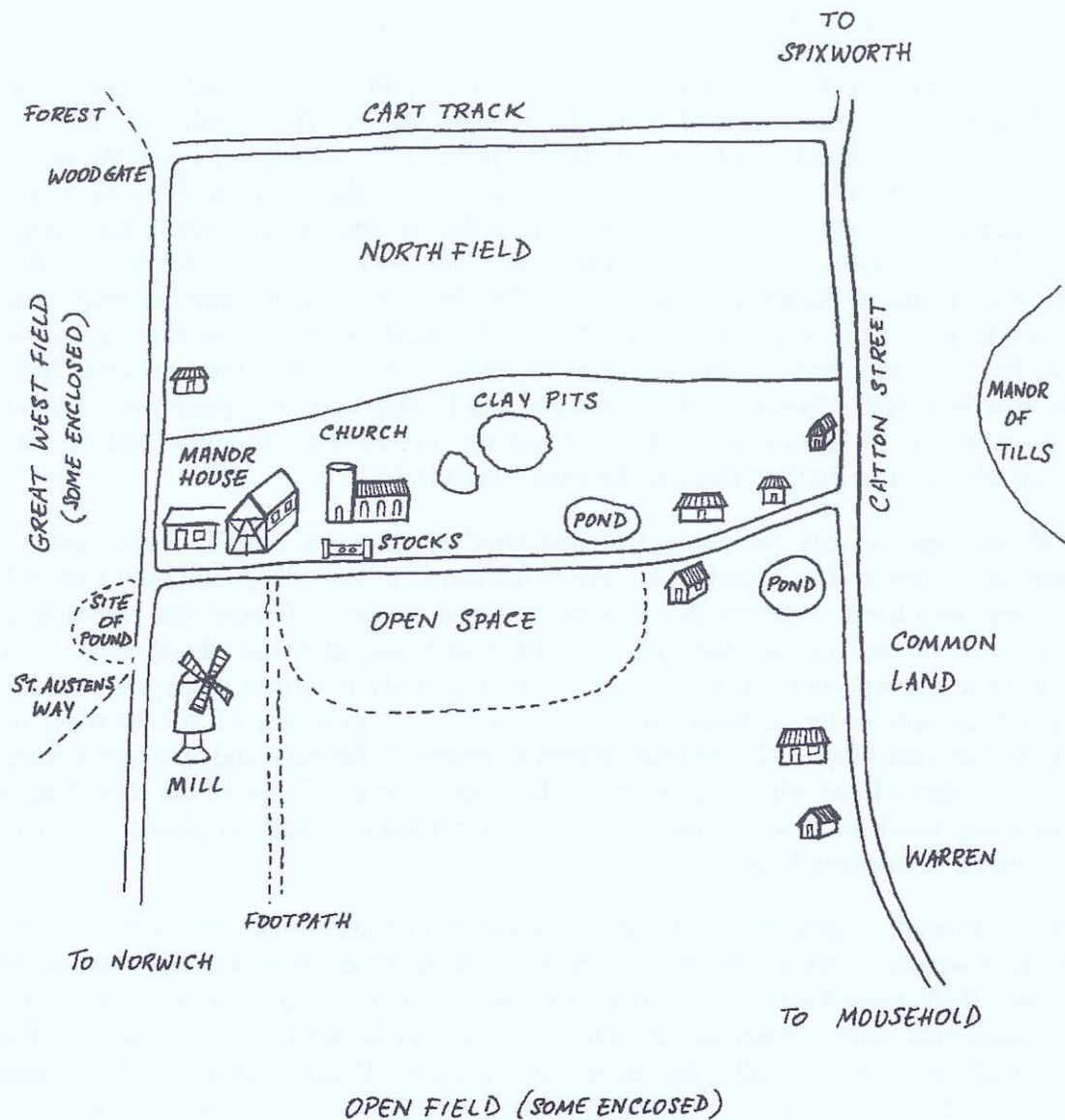
The high proportion of freemen in the Domesday record is typical of Norfolk. It is suggested that this is because Norfolk was settled by the Danish Vikings, followers of their leaders being given grants of land as reward for their service as each leader carved out a settlement for himself. These holdings remained free. Generally villages are shown in Domesday Book to have been impoverished by the Conquest, as William subjected the country to his rule. Catton does not seem to have suffered extensively. The number of ploughs on the various estates in the village was less but the value of the estates had risen (perhaps this represents inflation?). The Catton lands may have been in some measure protected as belonging to the Archbishop and then to the King himself, while most of the land in England was seized by William, as belonging to dissident Saxons, and bestowed on his Norman followers.

Catton was, and is, in Taverham Hundred. No mention of a church was made in Domesday Book, and although it is known that not all existing churches were recorded, especially on royal or church lands, it means that probably there was no church here. The present church has been much altered, added to and restored, and up to the present no trace of Anglo-Saxon work has been found.

The King's Manor was given to the Benedictine Priory of Norwich Cathedral when it was established in the early twelfth century. The prior would have the intention and the wealth to farm the land wisely and well. The Communar Rolls of the priory show that between 1296 and 1299 the church in Catton yielded £62.1.5 $\frac{1}{2}$ d for the priory, a considerable sum at that time. The poor were granted alms regularly and a parish priest was installed. The land was composted regularly to improve its fertility (for example, in 1326-7 composting cost £7.13.4d) and new building plus repairs to existing buildings undertaken. In 1301-2 a new house was erected in stud and plaster at a cost of £3.5.4d and in 1326-30 a new grange cost £14.7.10 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. The priory kept a handsome profit from Catton church: for example, of the £66.1.5 $\frac{1}{2}$ d received in 1296-99, only £9.4.5 $\frac{1}{2}$ d was spent on the village. The priory communar, whose role at the cathedral Priory is difficult to clarify, used the money from the church for alms, donations to poor scholars and other such purposes, but more importantly for repairs to the priory buildings and for the building of the cloisters. Strictly, the communar should have been in charge of expenses incurred for the common good of the priory, but at Norwich he was in financial charge of the buildings as well. The prior drew revenue from the manor lands and in 1330-31 donated £80 to the communar to make up a large deficiency in this official's accounting. This £80 came from the Catton estate, quite apart from the revenue from Catton church itself.

By 1471, when a field survey (or extent) was made, some of the strips in the fields were being grouped to form closes or small fields and this enclosure process continued during the next two hundred years. The survey of 1471 mentions Catton mill; that of 1570 a marlpit, Church Street, the mill, a brickfield and Stone Pit Hill. This hill seems to be the slope up from the

A POSSIBLE LAYOUT OF CATTON ~ c 16th Century.



(NOT TO SCALE).

present ring road to the junction with Fifers Lane (now a housing estate). Certainly hollows to the south-east of Catton Hall park and others now built over by the St Faiths Road housing estate suggest past gravel extraction. Inspection of the area while foundation trenches were being dug for the Norwich housing estate revealed sands and gravels under only one to two feet of topsoil (1980).

A second manor to the east of the village extended towards Beeston St Andrew and into the present Sprowston - this may have been the 'outlying estate' already mentioned. Its name is recorded as Tills. This manor has left the name Tills for the footpaths which extend from Spixworth Road beside Burma Road through to North Walsham Road.

The manor and church of Catton, remained in the lordship of the prior until the Dissolution in Henry VIII's reign, when it passed to the Dean and Chapter. The penultimate prior was a Catton man, Robert Bronde (Robert de Catton). In the 1471 survey Johannes Bronde had a messuage beside the Drove Way (a track leading to Mousehold Heath) for which he paid yearly a hen and five eggs. In an extent of 1570 Phillip Bronde was a tenant in the village. A brass tablet in the floor of the church near the Lady Choristers' vestry reads 'Pray for the soul of John Bronde and of Agnes his wife. January 26 1542'. In his will, John left forty shillings to 'Robert Bronde, clerk, my brother'. Robert Bronde used a rebus of a wild cat as his badge. Walter Rye said that bricks bearing this rebus once existed in the Manor House but they cannot now be found. Robert, then, was from this family. He was prior from 1504-1529 when he moved to St Albans, where he died and was buried. He was succeeded by William Castleton who became the first Dean at the Dissolution in 1538.¹

By 1780 a prosperous silk merchant, Jeremiah Ives² of Norwich, bought in the manor from the Dean and Chapter. He emparked an area in the centre of the village and built Catton Hall. His brother, who lived to the south of the park, was a patron of Crome, the Norwich artist. The Ives were related to the Harveys, also silk merchants, and, like them, used Jacquard looms in their silk weaving. (Incidentally the survey of 1612 mentions a silkyard in Catton. I have not been able to locate where it was, but it is early evidence of silk-weaving in the vicinity of Norwich.) Ives had road lines altered to round off his park and land was exchanged for the Poor Man's Land which had been on the Spixworth Road side of his park. Ives' park remains today much as it was, apart from a few incursions on the periphery, especially in Church Street, for modern housing.

In the seventeenth, eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, and probably earlier too, independent weavers lived in the village, mainly making up cloth to be sold to the Norwich merchants. Wills show them to have lived typically in small cottages with usually two rooms up and two down, with a wash-house. The loom, as can be seen from inventories of these times, filled one room, usually the downstairs parlour. These weavers were prosperous usually, until the textile trade moved from East Anglia to the new areas of Yorkshire and Lancashire. Until the Second World War, prosperous Norwich merchants lived in Catton and by Victorian times most of the village people were dependent on working for them as servants and farmworkers.

Today the manor lands have been sold off for housing and the hall belongs to Norfolk County Council, being used as an old peoples' home. Catton has become a dormitory suburb of Norwich. Many buildings remain which reflect the past of the village and these will be dealt with in the next section, which is set out as a walk round Catton, beginning at the church.

¹ William Castleton used a rebus of a castle and this appeared on glass in the Manor House but, it has been lost. At least we know both used the house as a residence, hence, it was known as the 'Prior's Lodging'.

² Recent research indicates that Catton Hall was built in the late 1770s by Charles Buckle and subsequently owned by his son in law Jeremiah Ives

1. The Church

The dating of the earliest parts of St Margaret's Church can only be by observation and deduction. The round base of the tower is probably Norman period, i.e. after 1066 (or maybe Norman influence in the reign of Edward the Confessor), although random brick amongst the flint suggests a later date. The round tower of many Norfolk churches was once thought to indicate a Saxon date but it is considered now that this style continued well into the post-Conquest years. Flint does not lend itself to making neat corners, unless it is faced, so that the round shape is found in this region where flint is the only natural building material occurring. As touched on in Section I, the date of the foundation of the church is not known, since it was not recorded in Domesday. Neither have I been able to find any record of the building of the church in the priory records, only that it is mentioned in the Communar Rolls as far back as 1282 as yielding income. The dedication to St Margaret does not help much with dating either. At one time I thought that St Margaret would only have been used in a church dedication after the Crusades began, since she dates to AD 306 and was from Antioch, so that knowledge of her might only have come to England with returning crusaders. Now I have found that some pre-Conquest churches, known to be of Saxon origin, are dedicated to St Margaret, notably St Margaret's at Witton near North Walsham. So unfortunately, when the church was established may never be known. The figurine over the porch of Margaret with her dragon is correct for the St Margaret of Antioch legend.

The octagonal top of the tower is from 1400-1500, being typical of its time, especially in the use of brick. St Margaret's shows brick quoins and edges, used to neaten corners and window frames. Also freestone is used on the corners of the main building to edge the flint. The porch, with its room for the priest, dates to this same period. Also it is probable that the roof level was raised and the clerestory windows added. Many Norfolk churches were enlarged and altered between c 1400 and 1500, when the county was prosperous and important because of its woollen trade.

The North aisle and the South aisle and transepts are of Victorian date. The south aisle was built in 1850 at the sole expense of Mrs Morse (the Morses then owned Catton Hall), and the two transepts to the north were built a little later, provided by Mr J. H. Gurney and donations from individuals in the village. In 1867 the north wall of the choir aisle was rebuilt. The Rev Richard Hart was the instigator of these improvements and additions, which were commonly made by prosperous and devout benefactors at this time. Mr Hart himself designed the shields which are fixed to the gallery and his original plans are in his commonplace book, now in the Norfolk Record Office. At this time medieval glass was removed from the windows, including the east window of sixteenth century date given by Prior Robert Bronde and including a figure of him. At Plumstead, near Holt, early glass has been inserted in the church windows, brought there from Catton. It is presumably that which came from St Margaret's. Mr Hart encouraged the filling of the windows, both old and new, with contemporary glass, and one such window, by Clayton and Bell, is a memorial to Hart himself. All the flintwork of Hart's extensions and alterations is since 1850.

Where the tower joins the south porch some earlier flint work can be seen, random laid and with no brick. This section is probably an original part of the church, the priest's door further along on the south wall having a Norman-style arch. The east end of the north aisle, now occupied by the Lady Choristers' vestry, was a Lady Chapel, probably dating to c1350. The gallery was put up in 1773 (Churchwarden's accounts). Many monuments in the Church were

moved to their present places during the 1850s rebuilding; hence the dates on them do not always tie up with the date of the wall which holds them (eg, Bussy Greene, 1719, on a transept wall of the 1850s). A tablet to the memory of Alderman Norman, which he specified in his will should be placed near his grave in the church, is on the north wall in the Lady Choristers' vestry, obscured by a cupboard. It can be seen by standing on a chair and peering over the top. Other tablets in the church are to various members of the Cories, Buxtons, Gurneys, etc. That to T G Adams, Esq, was exhibited in the Crystal Palace in 1851 and was then much admired. A large tablet in the vestry lists the original charities of the village, now extinguished.

At Bishop Redman's Visitation (i.e., check-up on churches in diocese) of 1597, it was reported '.... the chancel¹ is decayed ... Richard Lathe, vicar ... he serveth St Andrew's Parish in Norwich.... to he called before the Dean and Chapter Margaret Matson - she hath not received the Communion in the parish church of Catton for two years past' The church seems to have been somewhat run down at that time, probably since the vicar was holding two parishes.

Two other items in the church are worth noting. The organ was presented by the Buxton family. The pulpit is dated 1537, the Rev Richard Hart having brought it from St George's Colegate, and it is considered a fine piece of woodcarving.

The churchyard has fortunately not been levelled or despoiled and its gravestones remain as a source of interest and information, while the grasses provide an oasis for wild life in what is now a built-up area. Lichens and mosses on the gravestones attest a non-polluted air. Inscriptions and graves to note include:

The Bignold tomb - founders of Norwich Union

A Blacksmith's grave, just in front of the south porch, reads:

My Sledge and Hammer lay reclined
My Bellows too have lost their wind
By fire extinct, my forge decayed,
And in the dust my Vice is layed
My coal is spent, my iron gone,
My nails are drove, my work is done
'Prepare to meet thy God'

This inscription is to John Dixon, after whom Dixon's Fold is named, who was parish clerk.

Elsewhere, in the north-west corner, is an inscription to Mary Sewell, Anne's mother. Many stones show Catton family names - Fox, Watts, Shorten, Manning, Bunting etc.

The World War II graves strike a poignant note. The lych gate is neat and well-designed. The church records show it was erected in 1885, so it is not as old as some books on Norfolk churches have suggested.

The churchyard was extended in the 1880s.

¹ Modernised spelling

2. The Manor House, Church House (The Prior's Lodging)

At one time the date of 1423 was carved over the eastern doorway of this house, but it has disappeared very recently. It may well have been accurate as the fabric of some parts of the house is of very old construction. The south wall is of random blocks of limestone with flint and a few bricks. Limestone occurs in other walls in the village and it has been suggested that it may have come from the Cathedral either as waste or as spare stone from the building of the Cathedral and the cloisters. In Communar Roll 1042A Johannes of Worstede writes of building a new grange in Catton which cost £14.7.10½d, between 1313 and 1330, and Roll 1030 of 1288-9 mentions repairs to a grange in Catton. These items suggest that the monks had farm premises in Catton from these early dates, perhaps in Church Street.

The house has been much repaired and altered, as one would expect of so old a building. A new wing was added to the north about 1900. This wing is of rather poor construction, an attempt having been made to copy the original east face. The east face has some old timbers at the top and is of stud and plaster, later given a brick skin at the bottom. The east roof had some nice, small flat tiles of Tudor type, and it has recently been re-tiled with similar tiles. Some of the interior walls are up to two feet thick and are of flint below ground in the cellars.

An entrance on to Church Street on the south side has a neat wall of fine knapped flint around it. A rebus of a Cat and a tun, at each end of the timber lintel of this entrance is thought to have been carved during the last part of the nineteenth century by the estate carpenter, when he made the present timber door. Some bricks in the wall beside the door are narrow (two inches wide) and so probably date back to at least the eighteenth century.

In 1801 a deed of ownership was endorsed and enrolled to Jeremiah Ives:

‘The site of the manor of Catton with the Prior's Lodging. Also two cottages to the south and an enclosure to the west. The site of the rectory and parsonage, yards, edifices, buildings, glebe lands. All tithes, grain and corn, belonging to the parsonage. All tithes formerly paid to the Dean and Chapter called Anmers Tithes. Also one acre with Anmers Barn where the tithes had been collected. Warren of coniesfold, course and liberty of fold course.’

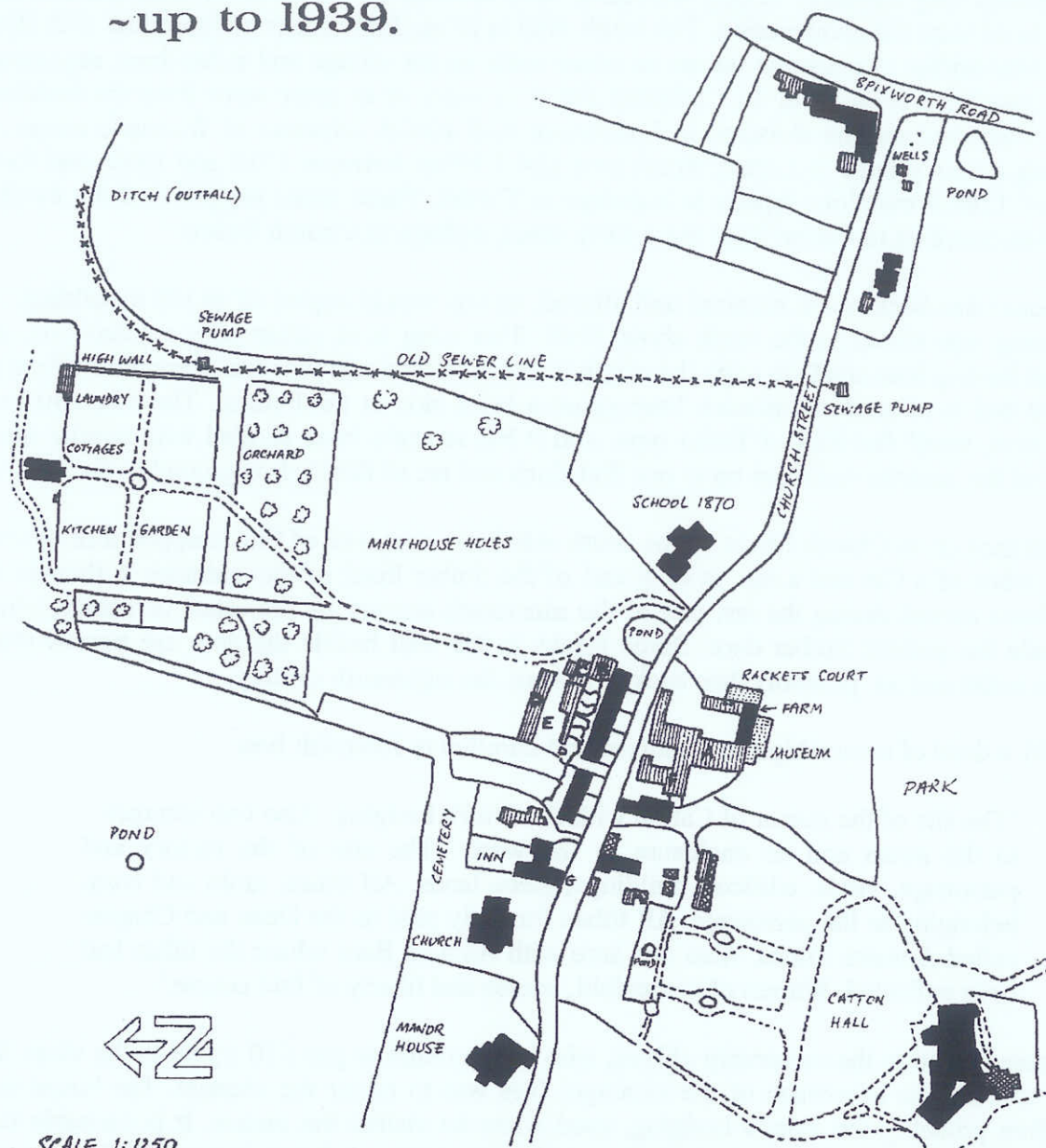
All these passed to the ownership of Ives, who had in return to pay £10 a year to the vicar, the vicar to keep the advowson of the vicarage. Ives was to repair the chancel. The house was therefore probably the Prior's Lodging, used when he visited the manor. It is probable that Anmers Barn was, and is, the barn on the south side of Church Street in the Hall Farm yards. This is the barn containing much shaped limestone.

A small room was found built into the walls beside the south entrance with steps leading down to it. It was a concealed room. It just may have been a Priest's room but less romantically may have been a small area which got sealed off during building alterations. In an undated Parliamentary survey this house is described as ‘a large ruinous house, with divers fine rooms, near Catton church, with a yard and a court before about ½ acre, the garden to the west side of the said house containing about ½ acre. Demesne lands of the said manor enclosed’. The concealed room may have been formed in alterations, after this survey, to repair and restore the house. This survey gives ownership of house to Mary Greene, who was the widow of Bussy Greene, gentleman. She died in 1739, as shown on the monument to the Greene family in the church.

A village legend of a ghost in the Manor House has persisted to modern times. The ghost is

CATTON HALL ESTATE LAYOUT

~up to 1939.



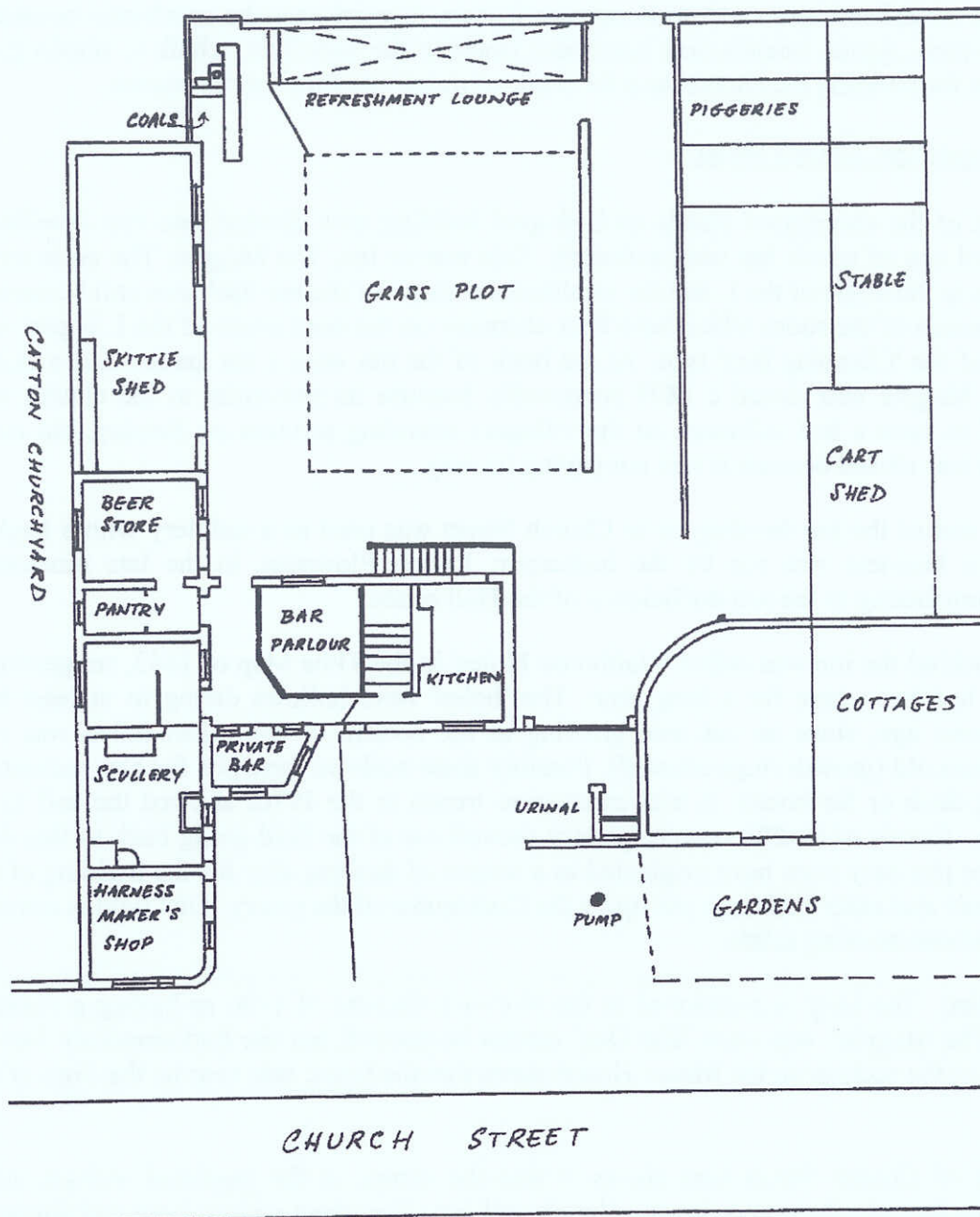
KEY:



HOUSES.
STABLES, SHEDS ETC.
GLASS HOUSES.
LEISURE.

A - BARN, HORSE STABLES.
B - SMITHY.
C - CARPENTER'S SHOP.
D - CATTLE SHEDS
E - BULLYARD
F - COACH HOUSES
G - HARNESS ROOM

PLAN OF MAGPIE INN, OLD CATTON c1890.



appropriately a monk. As with all ghost legends, a factual sighting is difficult to authenticate.

A map of 1746 shows that the road now called Church Street originally passed to the north of the Manor House, which then faced straight to the street. More recent owners of the house have been Mr James Chamberlin, Mr Bidwell of Gurney's Bank, and Col Algernon Dawson, who added the north wing. Trenches dug in 1983 by the Eastern Gas Board revealed foundations of a demolished wing, now under the road.

As so often happens, legends persist in the village of a passage from the Manor House to the church or to a nearby farm. Recent building work has failed to turn up any trace of such passages. Perhaps they were just large early drains or else the remains of chalk workings, since chalk underlies Catton and workings are known to exist near the south-east boundary with Sprowston. Again, tunnels may have been made in the underlying chalk to obtain good quality flint for building the church, and for chalk to make into lime for the mortar.

3. The Magpie Inn, Church Street

To the east of the churchyard stands an L-shaped building now divided into two dwellings, the eastward one of which has been extended. This was an inn, The Magpie. The entrance to the bar was in the angle of the L and the semicircular shape of the bar itself can still be seen in the floor boards of the room which held it. A chimney on the west angle of the L is part of a wide flue of the 'Climbing Boy' type. At the back of the inn were a tea garden and a skittle alley. The Magpie was closed c 1897 supposedly because its proximity to the church was considered to have a bad influence on the villagers attending services on Sunday, but more probably it was closed because it was not paying its way.

The south end of the inn fronting on to Church Street was used as a saddlery with a hayloft above. This business was run by the innkeeper, Robert Plowman, in the late nineteenth century, contributing to the self-sufficiency of the Hall estate.

The field behind the inn was called 'Malthouse Holes' in the Tithe Map of 1843, suggesting a beerhouse had been here for a long time. The 'holes' were hollows dating to at least two hundred years ago, since an oak tree growing at the bottom of one when felled was two hundred years old (growth rings counted). Possibly these hollows were pits for clay extraction for making daub or for bricks. A trial excavation trench in the 1970s showed the soil to be brick earth. Sherds of twelfth century pottery proved use of the field going back to that date at least. The pits may even have originated as a source of daubing clay for the building of the Manor House and other buildings put up by the Communar of the priory. This field is covered now by a private housing estate.

An inn called 'The Dog' is mentioned in the Norwich Gazette of 1706 as having a cockpit. Whether 'The Magpie' was once 'The Dog' cannot be proved, but the Parliamentary Survey mentioned in the section on the Manor House states that the house was near to 'the Sign of the Dog'.

The layout of Church Street here shows it was the centre of the medieval village, since grouped together are the manor house, church and inn. The street widens here and formerly ponds existed nearby (all now filled in). So small a village may not have had a green, but it is suggested that the widened area marks what was an open space at the centre of the village. This was the centre of the most important manorial buildings, those of the Cathedral Priory.

A well for the cottages was placed in front of 'The Magpie' and was covered over only fairly recently. The inn sign stood by the roadside where a driveway runs into the property.

4. The Cottages, Church Street

The cottages were built c 1850 by John Henry Gurney. Those nearer the inn were built first and those nearer the school a little later. Older people in the village say that the new cottages were erected behind original ones which were then demolished. If this is fact, it is another example of a modern idea in replacing buildings being in fact not modern at all. When sewers were laid to the cottages traces of foundations were revealed, which lends colour to the story. The cottage front gardens originally all had geometrically designed flower beds edged with low box hedges. Plants grown in the estate nurseries were provided for these beds each spring and autumn to ensure a planned harmony of colour in this village street. Some cottages retain these beds and it is hoped that no more will be removed, since the terraces of cottages together with the street form a picturesque whole, typical of the period which produced them. Originally the cottages had wooden shutters but these have been removed. The end cottage nearest the school was for the estate blacksmith, the smithy being joined on to it.

5. Catton Hall and its Estate

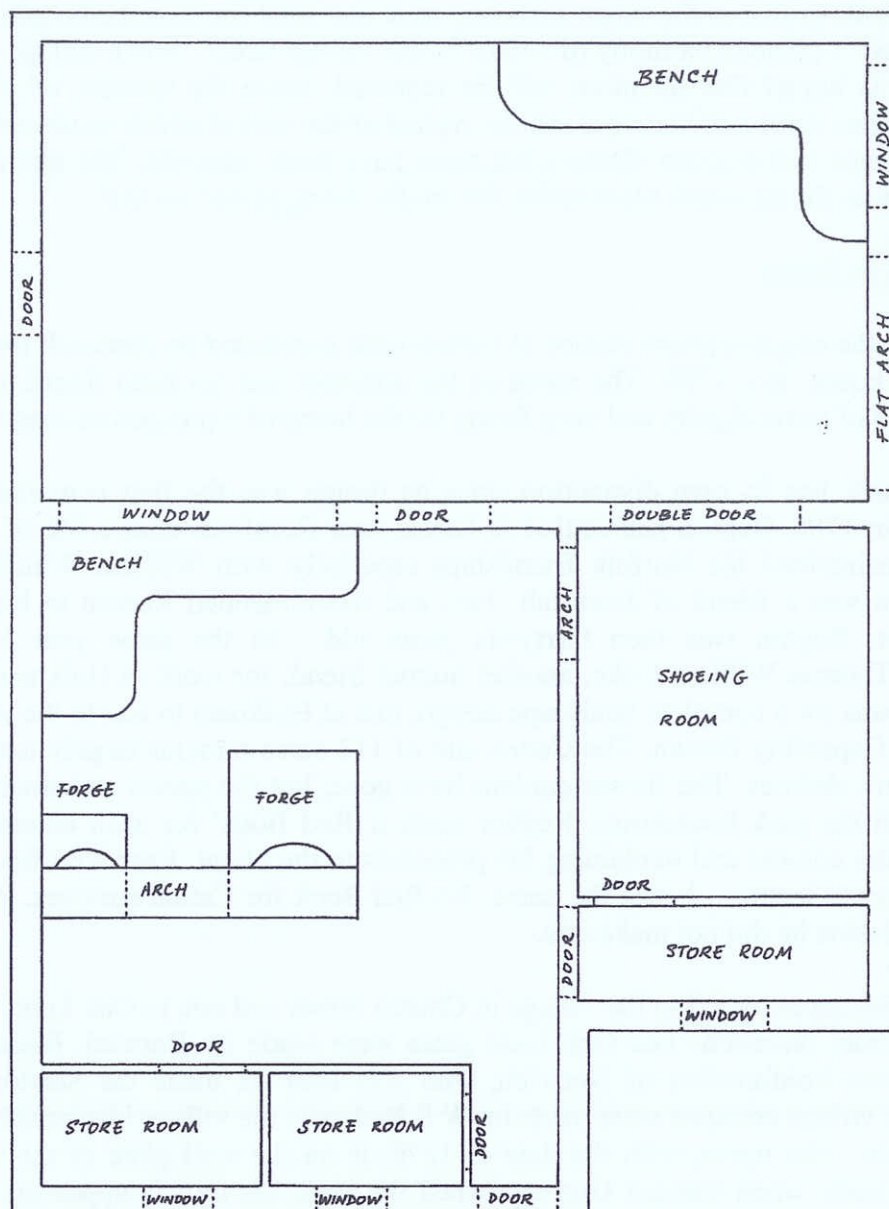
The lands forming the original priory manor of Catton were purchased by Jeremiah Ives.¹ He built his 'mansion house' in c 1780. The name of the architect has not been found. It is an unpretentious house of some dignity and very fitting for the home of a prosperous merchant.

The surrounding park has its own distinction since its design was the first commission of Humphry Repton in 1788. Repton had settled in Essex, near Romford, after a life of varied pursuits, but he maintained his Norfolk friendships especially with William Windham of Felbrigg. Windham was a friend of Jeremiah Ives and recommended Repton to him as a landscape designer. Repton was then thirty-six years old. In the same year he was commissioned by Thomas William Coke, another mutual friend, for work in Holkham Park. The site at Catton was for a complete landscape design, that at Holkham to add to the work of William Kent and Capability Brown. The Catton site of 112 acres remains largely unspoiled to testify to Repton's abilities. The flower gardens have gone, but the stands and stretches of trees remain within the park boundaries. Repton made a 'Red Book' for each commission, illustrated with water colours and explaining his proposals to the client. Each Red Book was bound in red Moroccan leather - hence the name. No Red Book for Catton survives. Perhaps for this first commission he did not make one.

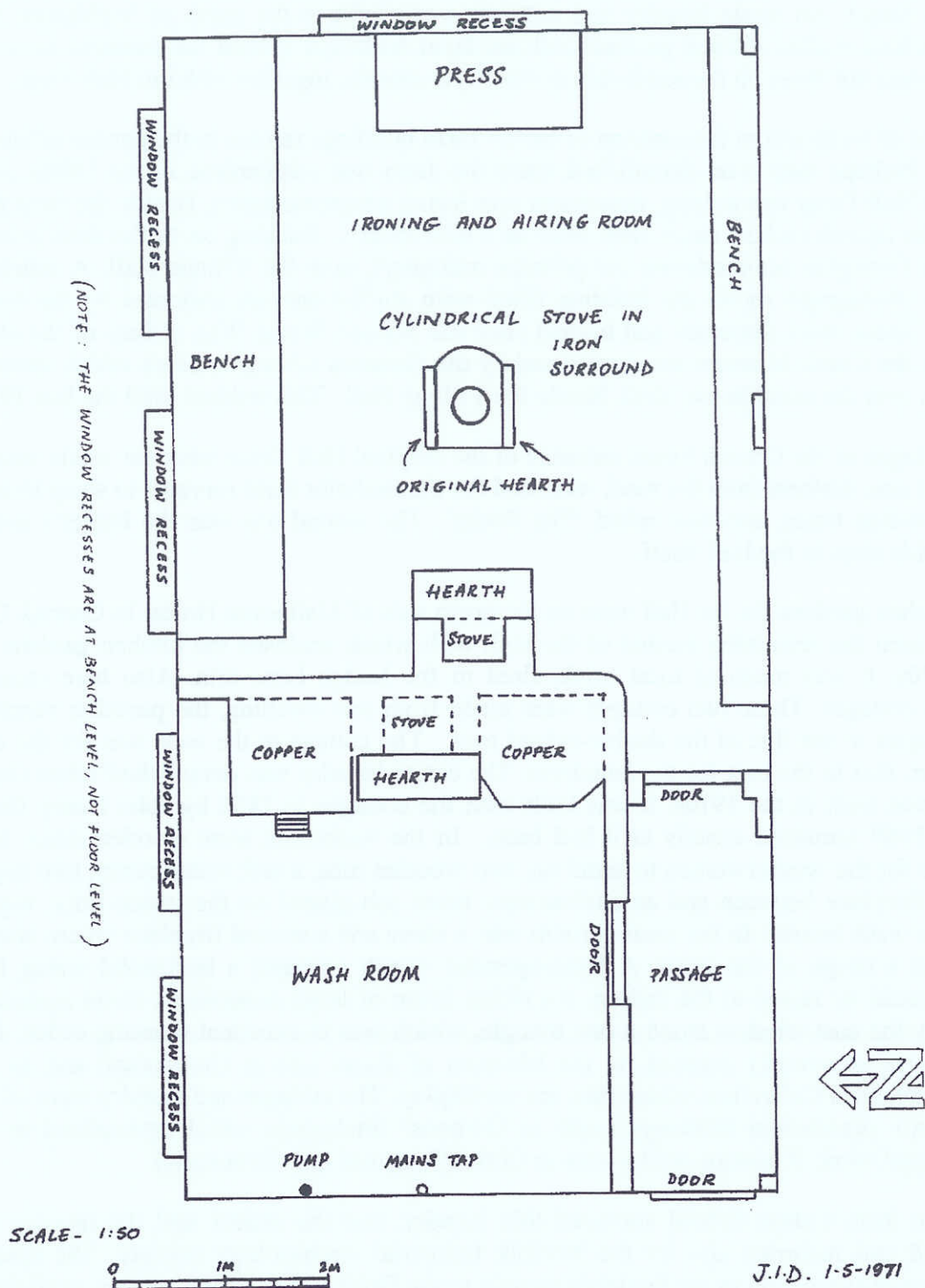
The park has two entrances, one into the village in Church Street and one to Oak Lane, facing the main road in from Norwich. The Oak Lane gates were made by Barnard, Bishop and Barnard, well known ironfounders of Norwich, who also later on made the Sandringham Gates. Those at the village entrance were made by W E Badcock, the village blacksmith in his smithy just opposite. His name, with the date of 1876, is on the wall plate of the hinges. These gates were made when Samuel Gurney owned the Hall, his initials appearing in the upper part of each gate. These gates testify to the skill of their maker. It seems likely that the railings of the cottages in Church Street were also made in this smithy and perhaps those fronting 'The Beeches' on Spixworth Road. The smithy was in use up to the 1950s but then, as with so many village industrial sites, could no longer be made to pay. It was, relatively, as it was left by the last smith when in 1970 it was surveyed by a group of children from the school in Church Street. Since then it has been used as builder's store and has been converted now into a house, giving its name to Blacksmith's Way, the access road for the housing development on Malthouse Holes Meadow.

¹ Recent research indicates that Catton Hall was built in the late 1770s by Charles Buckle and subsequently owned by his son in law Jeremiah Ives.

'THE SMITHY,' OLD CATTON



OLD CATTON LAUNDRY, Internal Floor Plan.



When J H Gurney built the Church Street cottages he also re-designed the farm premises of the Hall (or home) farm. He laid out the buildings on a plan following the ideas of the agricultural innovator, Hudson (who was a wealthy tenant of the Holkham Estate) to make for more economic farming and estate management. The stables were grouped around yards adjoining the Georgian summer house (now the village hall). Cattle stalls were included in the farm buildings, since beef cattle were at that time gaining in importance over corn. An estate smithy, carpenter's shop, bull yard, cattle and cart sheds were placed on the north side of Church Street. An estate laundry and cottages were built to the north of Malthouse Holes field, behind walled kitchen gardens. All the farm buildings behind the cottages have been demolished but those on the south side of the street remain, together with the Hall Farm.

Remains of wells and of foundations of earlier farm buildings remain in the garden of Holiday House. Perhaps they were demolished when the farm was reorganised in the 1850s. At the back of Hall Farm was a dairy, now taken into living accommodation. Beside the farm house stood the squash rackets court, now used as a bird aviary. Backing on to the farm premises was the Georgian summerhouse (or perhaps orangery), now the Village Hall. A nineteenth century photograph shows the building filled with stuffed animals collected by the Gurney family. These were dispersed and burned after the Second World War. (Many of the stuffed birds in the Castle Museum were presented by the Gurneys.) A stable clock which struck the hours is over the coachhouse block beside the Village Hall. This worked until the late 1960s.

The cottages at the Church Street entrance of the original Hall Drive were for estate workers. The end one, furthest from the road, was used for the bachelor male servants to sleep in as late as Edwardian times, and was called 'The Bothy'. The second one was the Butler's cottage. The maids slept in the Hall itself.

The kitchen gardens for the Hall were on the north side of Malthouse Holes. In Garrick Green can be seen the remaining section of the high wall which enclosed the kitchen gardens until the 1970s. It was made of local brick, fired in the Lodge Lane kiln. Also here stand the laundry cottages. These two cottages were made from one dwelling, the partition running at right angles to the line of the double-ridged roof. The cottage to the west was for the estate gardener, that to the east for the laundress. The estate laundry was demolished when Garrick Green was built in the 1970s. It was built with the cottages in 1856 by John Henry Gurney and in 1969 remained exactly as it had been. In the washroom were wooden sinks, trestle benches for the washerwomen to stand on, two wooden tubs, a soft water pump, two coppers with a fireplace between and an earthenware bowl salt-glazed on the inside only, together with the wash boards. In the ironing room was a stove and a second fireplace where was still disposed a range of flat irons. A hand-operated winch operated a horizontal airing frame which could be raised to the ceiling. An airing horse of large dimensions stood against one wall. By the east window stood a box mangle, which was in excellent working order. These items were generously donated, to the Museum of Rural Life at Gressenhall and to Dick Joice's Bygones Collection, where they are on display. The cottages and laundry were of local brick with ornamental chimneys made in Guntons' brickyards, which specialised in such ornamental work. (Guntons works were in Little Plumstead and Costessey.)

Children from Catton School surveyed this laundry, and the smithy and the laundry were surveyed and recorded also by the Norfolk Industrial Archaeology Society. The resultant survey records are held in the Society's records in the Bridewell Museum and are available for research.

Note: In 1803 and 1806 Ives sold land to the Sewells. This may be the St Clement's Hill site - now the Blyth-Jex School.

6. The School, Church Street

At a meeting of the Parochial Council in 1870 it was decided to implement the Education Act of that year and build a school for the village. The land and the greater part of the money were donated generously by the Buxton family. The site used had been a stackyard and later additions have been placed on what was a timber storage yard. The school opened in 1874. It contained two classrooms and a third room at the west end was a Reading Room for the parish. Some of the original cupboards and shelving were still in situ in this room and in use until 1977, when the original school block was remodelled when the school became a middle school. The Victorian architecture and railings remain as examples of their period.

The first schoolmistress was Miss Georgiana Jackson.

7. Holiday House, Church Street

This Estate house was built to a Gothic design with metal-framed windows and Norfolk reed thatch. It was for the gamekeeper but is now in private ownership.

To the west of the house, now overgrown with scrub and saplings, was a pumping house which had an engine (hot-bulb paraffin) to pump sewage from Catton Hall to an adjacent deep cess-pit. Twice a week the effluent was pumped out of the pit, pipes leading under the road and across meadows (now the new school buildings and the Recreation Ground) to a collecting tank to the east of the kitchen garden and thence to an open ditch which still marks the boundary of the present Recreation Ground. (The Recreation Ground was a field called 'The Croft' in the Tithe Assessment and later the 'Butter Close'.)

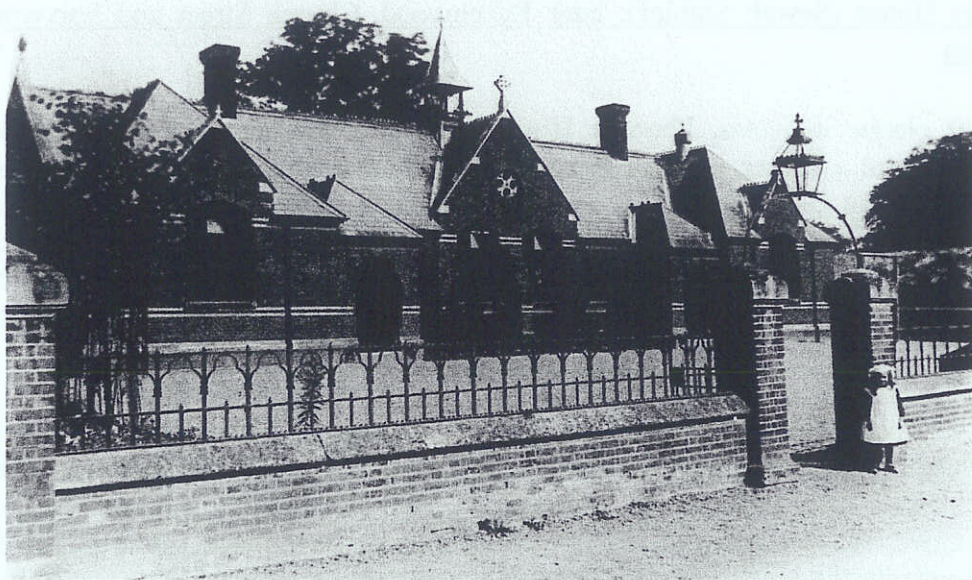
8. Phoenix House (Sewell Stables), later Beechwood, Church Street and Spixworth Road junction

As the wall plaque indicates, Phoenix House was once the home of Anna Sewell. Mary Sutton, daughter of a farmer, married Isaac Sewell, a businessman. Both were Quakers. Anna was born in 1820 in Great Yarmouth. They subsequently moved to London, Brighton, Wick near Bath, and to Catton finally. Isaac does not seem to have been a particularly successful businessman. Mary Sewell wrote improving verse and stories for children which were widely read in Victorian nurseries. Indeed, when 'Black Beauty' was first published, it was stated that it was by the daughter of the well-known authoress, Mary Sewell.

The book was begun in 1871 after the family had settled in Catton, Phillip Sewell having made a house available for them. It was published in 1878 and Anna, by now a chronic invalid, died soon afterwards, never knowing the lasting success her book was to achieve. Catton villagers like to think that she drew, not only on her lifelong interest in riding and horses, but also on the local scene for her book, especially the Deer Park. The stables of the house are dwellings now. The Howeld family, shoemakers, plied their craft in a cottage adjoining the house from at least 1841 until after the First World War.



Church Street c 1880
Note the sign of the 'Maggie'

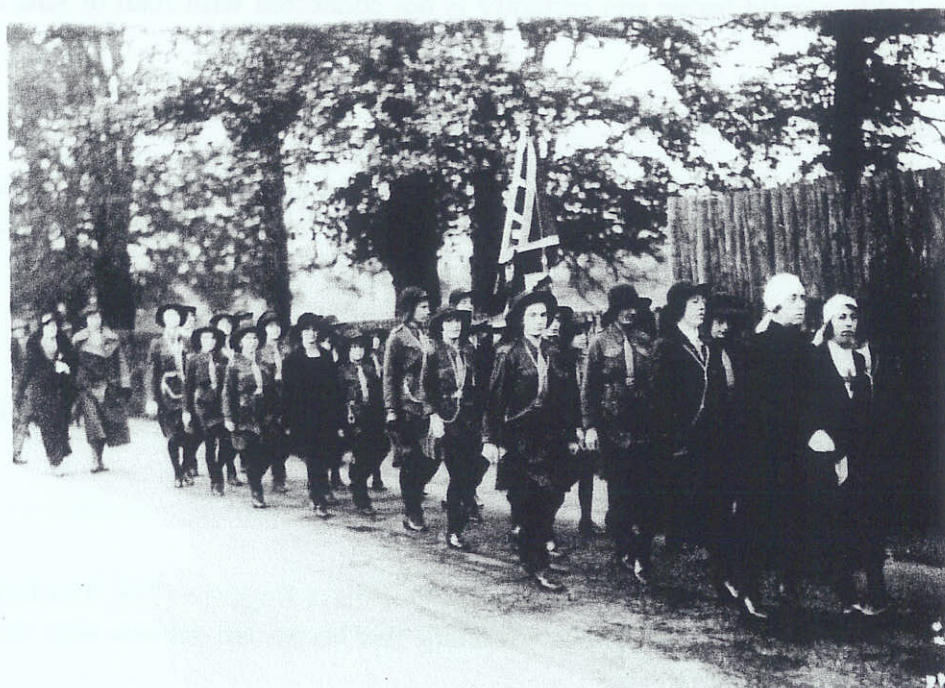


The School, Church Street c 1890
The child may be Miss Pye as a pupil.



Spixworth Road. The buildings on the right were part of the 'Warren'.

Photo P L. Colman



Remembrance Day parade 1930s

Catton Girl Guides.

9. The Deer Park, Spixworth Road

Deer were kept on the park until a severe winter in 1926 killed off the last ones. The large hollow in the Deer Park, used now in snowy weather for sledging, was probably the great Marl Pit recorded in a field survey of Catton dated 1612 and mentioned in earlier surveys. Other hollows in this meadow may be the remains of clay pits or further marl pits. The Common land of the village is thought to have extended to this area in medieval times.

The north hedge to the park abutting Burma Road has been dated by hedge-counting to about 1400. Since footpath adjustment has been made here, it is likely that this hedge may represent the boundary between the manor of Catton and the manor of Tills.

10. Spixworth Road

A pond existed by the garden of Holiday House. An aircraft, B-24J, 'A Dog's Life', of the United States Air Force, crashed on the road at the junction with Church Street on 13 February 1945. Traces of the damage can be seen on the roofs of the houses made from the outbuildings of Phoenix House on Church Street corner, where new tiles still show. Another US aircraft crashed nearby on 22 January 1945. Both events are marked by a commemorative plaque in Church Street.

11. The Maid's Head Inn, Spixworth Road

Parochial Council meetings were held here in the late nineteenth century, as at other public houses (The Royal Oak, The George). The chief interest of this inn lies in its rebus, the head of a girl. It is probably a guild badge and certainly is not connected with Joan of Arc, as has been supposed by some.

12. The Little House, Spixworth Road

This house, with its Gothic arched windows, is early. It has a brick skin over a stud and plaster earlier timber-framed house. Some of the wall-timbers are still visible encased in brickwork.

13. The Old House, Spixworth Road

This was the home of the Jewson family. Much of it is Georgian. The bell on the south wall was probably a school bell.

14. The Firs, Spixworth Road

The house, known initially as Catton Place, was built by Robert Rogers c1758. The following year Rogers was Lord Mayor of Norwich. Certainly the bricks are narrow and there are attractive Dutch-style gable ends.

15. The Beeches, Spixworth Road

An attractive late Georgian house. The wrought iron railings are well made being designed to be able to be taken down and re-erected very easily. This house belonged once to Mr Bunting, a city merchant, who owned Bunting's Drapery Shop. This shop was in Rampant Horse Street and is now Marks & Spencers. It was burnt out in an incendiary bomb raid. Re-established in London Street, the site is now occupied by Garlands.

16. The Warren, Spixworth Road

A substantial Georgian house, The Warren, was demolished to enable The Warren estate to be built in its grounds. Sir Edward Berry, Nelson's flag captain and captain of the Agamemnon (which arrived a little late at Trafalgar) retired to this house. He is mentioned in the 1806 Rate Accounts. Berry was Flag Captain to Nelson at the Battle of the Nile and took part in ten battles at sea. His father, a London merchant, died and Berry was sent to sea at the customary early age of that time. After the Battle of the Nile, King George III sympathized with Nelson over the loss of his right arm and Nelson turned to Berry and said, "This is my right arm!". He constructed a walk in his garden to imitate the bridge of his ship, so that he could walk it each day as he had when at sea.

George Hill

17. Weavers' Cottages, George Hill

These three-storeyed cottages may have been a horse-hair manufacturing site. Local people are sure some sort of textile was produced here.

18. Butcher's Shop, George Hill

This was a second smithy (see photo on page 20). Behind it stands a house which was the original George Inn. Here the first Post Office in the village was established, and later a telephone exchange was installed. Until recently a blue sign saying 'Public Telephone' was affixed to a telegraph pole in Spixworth Road pointing along George Hill to this post office. It is now in the Telecom Museum, Norwich. The George Inn gave its name to George Hill.

19. Mace Shop, North Walsham Road

Originally Mr Clarke's grocery shop. The boundary between Sprowston and Catton runs through the building and is marked by a wall plaque.

20. Buttercup Meadow, Spixworth Road

This is taken next as the route doubles back on itself to traverse the northern part of Spixworth Road. The meadow has deep hollows along Oak Lane, probably once gravel extraction pits. A hut in the coppice at the back of the meadow is reputed to have been the scene of a murder during World War II.

21. Greyfriars, Spixworth Road

Earlier this century this house was the home of the Tillet family who were related to Jacob Henry Tillet, the original editor of the Eastern Daily Press. Louis Tillet, MP, 1908-11 lived here. The gardens of Greyfriars were opened to the public for their enjoyment by the Tilletts on Sundays.

Previously this house was owned by the Lindleys in the early nineteenth century. Lindley was a nurseryman, working nursery gardens now covered by Burma Road and Moore Avenue (Moore owned the nurseries before him). His son, John, was born in c1799, became Secretary to the Horticultural Society and first Professor of Botany to London University. He was sent to Ireland to work for the government during the Irish potato famines, which are known now



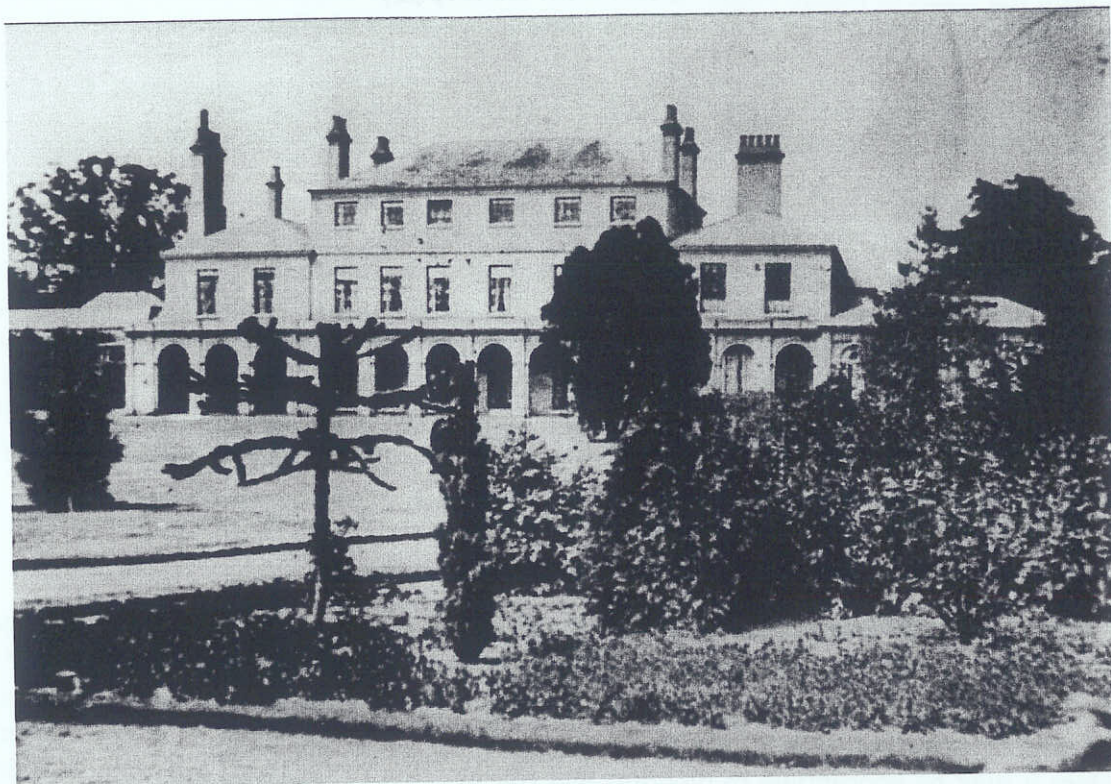
The Post Office about 1914-18 (since demolished)
House at the back is now No 125 Constitution Hill

Photo P.L.Colman

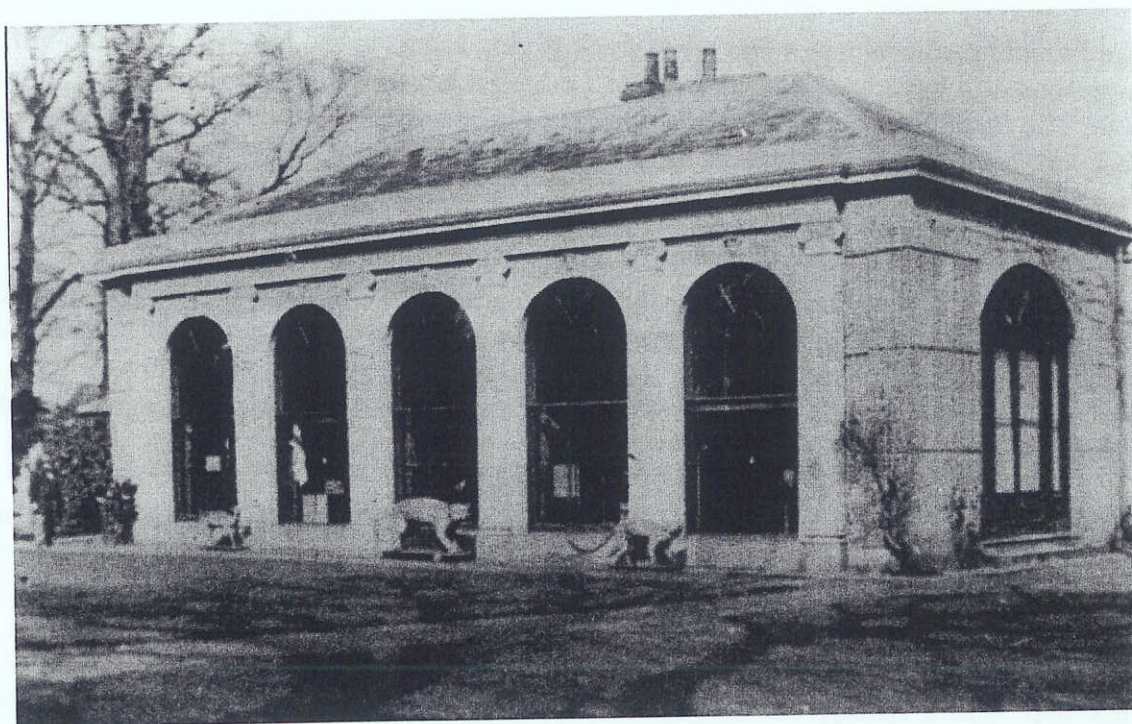


George Hill, Crossroads, about 1930.
Mr Clarke's grocery shop was the shop advertising 'Nugget'

Photo P.L.Colman



Catton House, home of Col. and Lady Mansell c1880



Georgian Summerhouse, in use as a museum c1890
Now the Village Hall

to have been the result of potato blight. It was John Lindley who suggested that Kew Gardens be taken over by the nation. One of his sons was the judge, Lord Lindley.

During the early years of the Second World War it was used as headquarters for Civil Defence in this area.

22. Hunters Lodge, Spixworth Road

This house is much earlier than appears from the road. It was the home of Mr Klinge after World War II. He presented a replacement cat (carved in his native Denmark) for the village sign after the first one, erected in 1937 for the coronation of George VI, was stolen. It had been taken previously by souvenir hunters from St Faiths aerodrome and recovered, but a second theft was successful and it has never been found. The sign stood until recently at the junction of Church Street and St Faiths Road, being moved to its present position to facilitate bus access to Church Street.

23. Lodge Lane / White Woman Lane Crossroads

A fifth road led diagonally northwards from the present crossroads. This right of way was extinguished by the Longes of Spixworth Hall. It can be traced in the field by a scatter of flints and gravel. Roads were originally a parish responsibility and were repaired with local material which, in Catton, means flint and gravel. Quaker Lane was made at about the same time. Here it may be appropriate to mention that the junction of Quaker Lane with St Faiths Road was the point where the medieval Woodgate finished (Gate - Danish/Viking for road) at the boundary with Horsham St Faiths. It was the road to the woods. The right of way to St Faiths was finally extinguished in the 1970s because of its proximity to the airport. It could no longer be traversed.

Lodge Lane in medieval times was a cart track giving access to the North field of the village. It is presumed to have been named for 'The Lodge', a house which was demolished to make way for The Paddocks and Three Corner Drive. This house is supposed to have had some fine leather wall hangings, but all trace of them has been lost.

24. Lodge Lane, The Old Hall

Despite its name on the Ordnance Survey Map, 'Catton Old Hall', this house is of later date than the Prior's dwelling in Church Street. A date of 1632 would seem to be correct for its architectural style. The south face to the road is of brick on a plinth of mixed flint and limestone (cf Limestone in Village). The north face is of brick with a large amount of limestone arranged randomly.

The house was built by William Bussey, a prosperous Catton merchant, whose son James Bussey has his initials in the porch (I B - I is the Latin form of J). In the eighteenth century the house and estate was bought by John Norman, an alderman and mayor of Norwich who was a prosperous brewer in that city. He died childless in 1724, despite two marriages. His will is lengthy and detailed. He wished to found a school for the descendants of his family and of his first wife's family, and to provide help to such descendants who should become apprenticed or should go to university, and also to children of the village. The trustees he appointed seem to have mismanaged affairs so that the school was never built in Catton, but much later a school was built in Norwich, near St Saviour's Church. When this closed, during the present century, a new junior school in Norwich was called Norman School in his memory. Today anyone who can prove descent under the terms of his will by a family tree can be given financial assistance with schooling, further education and apprenticeships. The

Charity, as it is now registered, is administered by local trustees, who by careful management and by the sale of some of the original lands of the estate in recent years, have maintained the funds at a high level. Claimants have come from far afield as the USA and Germany.

The will itself is very interesting, giving instructions for the food, clothing, hygiene and education of the boys; a good example of a wealthy man's will of the period in its care and attention to finicking detail, and also for the insight it gives into diet and prices of the time.

The name Norman Drive has been given to an estate road in a housing estate built recently on John Norman's land. A farm in the village on the St Faiths Road is called Norman Farm and was also part of the Norman estate. Alderman Norman's memorial tablet is in the female choristers' vestry in the church and is largely concealed by a Victorian cupboard. The brass to his first wife is mentioned in the section on the church. For some reason, now lost, he did not include descendents of his second wife in the terms of his will. A further tablet to John Norman in the floor was uncovered during repairs in 1977 but concreted over before the author could see it. This must mark his grave.

Before the 1939-45 War the house fell into disrepair and was used as two cottages for farm workers. During the late 1960s it was sold and the present owner has made it again into one dwelling, skillfully and carefully, so that now it looks much as it must have done in Alderman Norman's lifetime.

Sir Thomas Bignold, of the Norwich Union, lived in this house when he was newly married. The Bignolds sustained an interest in the village and their family tomb is at the south-east of the church.

25. The Brick Yard, Lodge Lane

The brick yard, demolished in the 1960s, was large and important. It had a Hoffman kiln, a type of continuously burning kiln. Clay was dug from pits on the site from the good quality Catton brick earths. The site has now been levelled and the pits infilled, first by rubbish from the St Faiths and Aylsham Rural District Council then by the developers who made part of it into a modern housing estate. The area of the site where the kiln and the brick drying sheds once stood is now occupied by a new infants' school, Lodge Lane First School.

(A detailed report of this brickworks can be seen in the records of the Norfolk Industrial Archeology Society, Bridewell Museum, Norwich.)

26. White Woman Lane

This lane is so named because a ghost of a woman in white was supposed to haunt the area. The basis of the legend is lost in the past but some can still be found who claim to have seen her. The road now has been widened and the whole area is being developed for modern housing estates, as Catton, once the home of a few rich Norwich merchants, is now a dormitory area for Norwich. The land to the north of the road was part of John Norman's Catton estates.

27. Norwich Airport, Industrial Estate, RAF Married Quarters and the University of East Anglia Residences

A very large area of what was in medieval times the great west field of Catton was taken by the Ministry of Defence in 1939 to establish an aerodrome north of Fifers Lane. It has now been released and forms a large industrial estate for Norwich. A small area has been retained

by the RAF for married quarters. Norwich Airport occupies part of the aerodrome and the UEA has taken over some of the original officers' quarters and added new buildings for student residences. Some industrial development has also been allowed on this part of the site.

The famous Bullock Hill where cattle were sold at the great cattle fairs of Horsham St Faiths was one of the sites leveled. It stood at the north-east of the present airport and the lane which led from Catton to it and to Horsham St Faiths was finally closed in 1976.

The rest of the great west field bordering St Faiths Road was awarded to Norwich Corporation in a boundary realignment scheme in the 1960s and is at present (1982) being developed as a council housing estate. A field track called St Austen's Way gave access to this stretch of farm land from medieval times. It led towards St Augustine's Gate into Norwich (Austen is a shortened form of Augustine). A part of this ancient track is followed by Mallory Road and Ives Road, showing where it crossed what is now Fifers Lane.

St Faiths Road

28. The Red House, St Faiths Road

During the early part of this century the Red House was the home of Colonel Finch.

29. Wolsey House, St Faiths Road

At Wolsey House lived Mrs Donald Steward, widow of one of the brewing family who owned Steward and Patteson's Brewery in Norwich. Originally the brewery was Steward, Patteson and Finch. The village seems to have been a home for a good many Norwich brewers.

This was not a farm. Later Mr Musselwaite lived here, then it was a poultry hatchery and rearing unit.

30. Crome House, St Faiths Road

Unfortunately no connection with John Crome the artist has been found, although certainly he painted pictures for Jeremiah Ives and his brother, and in the Tithe Assessment it is recorded that Crome rented a field in the parish. Formerly this house was called Gardenhurst and its grounds occupied the frontage on St Faiths Road from the footpath leading to Catton Chase to the boundary of the Red House grounds, and all the land at the back of this frontage to the aerodrome boundary. Before World War II the then owner, Mr Gough, a Norwich businessman, used a field, now part of Catton Chase, as a small private airfield. The house is late Georgian but the north end, now a doctor's surgery, is much older and is shown on a map of 1746. It was once owned by Mr Bishop of Barnard, Bishop and Barnard, Ironfounders, Norwich.

31. Catton Court, St Faiths Road

Lady and Mr Chevallier, who were Swiss, kept a private school here until c1914. A mule corps, was stationed here during the First World War; also the Black Watch.

32. 217, St Faiths Road

This was a dairy and farm premises until World War I. Older residents can remember being sent to this farm to buy skimmed milk at a penny a pint.

33. Fifers Lane

Named from two fields in the Tithe Assessment - Great Fifers and Little Fifers. Fifers Lane was narrow, with high hedges, until the aerodrome was established. Kett is supposed to have led his men from Drayton via Catton to Mousehold Heath during his rebellion. This is likely to have been the road he used to enter Catton, then following the Drove Way which led to Mousehold Heath.

34. Windmill Site

The medieval mill would have been a timber post-mill. It stood on the high point of the village at about where St Faiths Road and Fifers Lane meet. Here, too, was the village pound, recalled by a field 'Pound Close' in the Tithe Assessment, where straying cattle were penned waiting for the owner to claim them.

35. Catton House

This was demolished after World War II. It was the home of Col. and Lady Mansel, and stood in 30 acres of parkland. It is commemorated by Mansel Drive.

36. Eastwood House, Constitution Hill

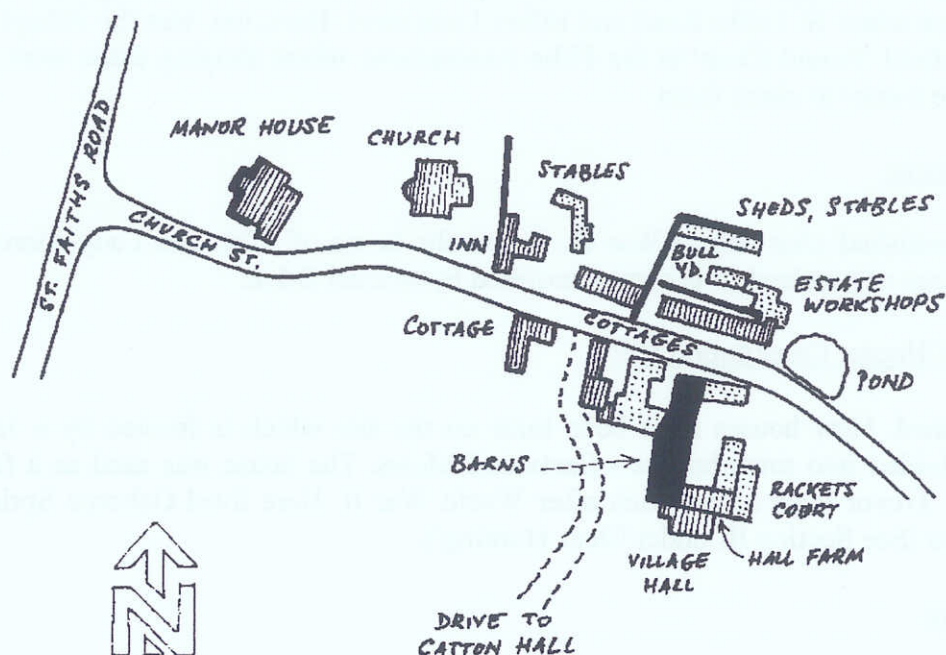
Now demolished. New houses have been built on the site which is fronted by a Jacobean house now divided into town houses - Eastwood Mews. The house was used as a furniture repository by Trevor Page of Norwich after World War II. Here lived Osborne Springfield, cloth merchant (See Section III under 'Deer Hunting').

37. The Grove

This gives its name to Catton Grove. In the latter part of the nineteenth century it was run as a private asylum by Thomas Rackham, Esq.

OLD CATTON – CHURCH STREET

Incidence of Limestone Blocks in walls c1970



SCALE - 1:1250

KEY

-  HOUSES, CHURCH, COTTAGES ETC.
-  BARNs, STABLES, SHEDS ETC.
-  BARN WITH MUCH LIMESTONE. (GRID. REF: TG 23151225).
-  WALLS WITH LIMESTONE.

NOTE: NEW HOUSES BUILT IN AREA BETWEEN VILLAGE HALL AND ST. FAITHS ROAD
SINCE 1969.

Section III

Miscellaneous Limestone in the Village

In 1850 the Rev Richard Hart reported the finding of limestone in barns in the village (Norfolk : Archaeology IV). Shaped pieces of limestone can still be seen in some buildings:

- a) The Manor House: in the south wall between the entrance and the western end, facing Church Street;
- (b) Hall Farm Barn: the north gable facing Church Street is of brick and random flint with many pieces of limestone visible. Further limestone pieces occur in this barn, both inside and out, many of them shaped, some having masons' marks and many showing sawmarks from the masons' saws;
- (c) In an outhouse wall of a cottage in Church Street;
- (d) In the wall bounding what was Malthouse Holes fields towards the church end;
- (e) Formerly in cattle sheds on Malthouse Holes, now demolished;
- (f) Wolsey House, St. Faiths Road: a few pieces used for ornamentation.
Other residents nearby have found pieces in their gardens;
- (g) Catton Old Hall, Lodge Lane - limestone in the flint plinth and in the north wall.

Two explanations occur. Walter Rye suggested that there had been a prior's chapel in the village, demolished in 1700, the stone being re-used. This seems unlikely since no mention of such a chapel has been found. Alternatively, the priors had access to a great deal of stone, from the building and repairing of the priory with its cloisters and cathedral. Waste material could have been brought in for the manor barns and buildings; or, at the Dissolution, stone from the demolished priory buildings was available in plenty. Such use of demolished material occurs everywhere in England after the Dissolution of the Monasteries. The stone seems to be Caen limestone from Caen in Normandy, by its colour and texture; but as I lack specialist knowledge, it may just be English stone which was also used in the cathedral buildings, eg Barnack stone.

Noteworthy Residents

1. Owners of Catton Hall

Jeremiah Ives	1780-1820
Mrs Francis Ives	1820-1835 (widow)
George Morse	1835-1852
John Henry Gurney	1852-1866
Samuel Gurney Buxton	1866-1909
Edward Gurney Buxton	1909-1929
Desmond Gurney Buxton	1929-1948
Norfolk County Council	1948

2. Merchants and Businessmen of Norwich

Jeremiah Ives (cloth)
John Norman (brewing)
Osborne Springfield (cloth)
Thomas Bignold (Norwich Union)

Augustine Whall
Thomas Pettus

and by family name :-

Buxton	Tillett	Chamberlin
Gurney	Jewson	Steward, Patterson & Finch
Morse	Bunting	Bussey
Corie		

Some of these have been mayors of Norwich.

3. Others

Mary Sewell
Anna Sewell
John Lindley
Sir Edward Berry

Some Early Records

Building a Grange in Catton date between 1313 and 1330

Roll 1042A

	£	s	d
Timber bought for the Grange	4	2	6
Roof spars and beams and other items (illegible) and planks			illegible
Wages for the carpenters	2	17	0
Iron nails and other iron items		14	8
Wages for thatchers and plasterers	1	11	6
Pods, sieves and pins		8	6
Thatching straw bought for the Grange	2	14	0
	<u>14</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>10½</u>

Building a New House at Catton 1301-2

Roll 1037

	£	s	d
Carpentry for the house	1	0	8
Timber	1	7	1
A thousand laths		5	2
Three thousand nails for the laths		2	0
One hundred spikes			3
One hundred medium spikes			5
For splines (or perhaps laths again?)		1	0
Nails			5
Plastering and puddling clay		7	8
Rods bought			8
	<u>3</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>4</u>

Taken from the Communar and Pitaneer Rolls of
Norwich Cathedral Priory

From Communar Accounts, Norwich Cathedral Priory:

AD 1302-3	Received from Catton Church	£18	10	0
	Alms for Catton and other places	£1	3	11½
1298-9	Received from Catton Church	£29	11	4½
1288-9	Expenditure for a wall in a new barn in Catton	£0	16	10¼
	Given alms to poor in Catton	£0	3	6½
1283-9	A new robe for a monk	£0	14	6
1290-1	Expenditure at Catton —			
	In alms		6	0
	In mending water channel	1	10	0
	Master Radulfo of Oxford for one year	3	0	0
	Tithes for Catton		16	0
1294-5	To build a house at Catton	3	4	10½
1316-7	To mending windows with glass at Catton			4

Some Early Wills and Inventories

1. Will of Agnes Wrongey – Catton – Widow 1508

In the name of God, Amen, the 21st day of the month of July in the yere of our Lord God 1508 I Agnes Wrongey of Catton Widdow hole of mind, and in good remembrance of God be lauded at Catton aforesaid make my testament and last will in this wise. First I commend my soule to God almyghte our lady saynt mary the virgin, to seynt margaret my advowes and to all the holy company of heaven and my body to be buried in the mydde aly of the church of Catton aforesaid. To whose high awter for my tythes negligently forgotten I bequeth 111 shillings IV pence.

To the light of seynt Katerine there 2 shillings. Item to the light of oure lady in the said church XII pence. Item I bequethe to the guyld of seynt John a combe of malt. Item to seynt margaret guyld a combe of malt. Item I bequethe to iche of the 4 orders of freres in Norwich - (money)¹ if it may be borne of my goods. Item to the house of lepers at the gates of Norwich 12 pence. Item I bequethe to the holy masse of John celebrated in the parish church of seynt petyr of Mancroft in Norwich 4 pence. Item I bequethe to Robt Bennes my servant 3 acres of free land lying in the shorte furlong at Catton aforesaid to hold to him his heirs and assignes for ever. Item I bequethe to the same Robt Bennes in money 40 shillings. Item I will bequethe to Johanne Grynt if she shall live longer than I a brasse pottle broken the hypp a pair of shetes neither the best nor the worst a kytell and a brasse panne. Item I will have Sir Harry Abelyn preest to syng for my soule and all good cristen soules in the said church of Catton by the space of 2 yeres and I will he have for his expense 8 marks a yere.

The will goes on to dispose of her land and property in Catton and elsewhere. I have retained much of the original spelling.

Dean and Chapter Records 4117. Norfolk Record Office.

¹ illegible

2. Summary of the Will of Eliz: Whall 1621

To Mr Thomas Whalle, her sonne, a guilt salt without a cover and a trencher salte guilte. To Austen Whall sonne of Thomas Whall one silver and one guilte cuppe. To his brother William Whall, son of Austen Whall deceased, two white silver pottes and one silver and guilte cuppe. To her grandchild Austen Fincham a silver potte with a cover guilte. To her daughter Fisher a silver taster with the cover.

The rest of her plate and 'gold stuffe' was left to her son and son-in-law.

3. Summary of the Will of John Stalworthy. Husbandman 1662

To eldest son, one black heifer called by the name of Blackdoug. To son Levick Stalworthy, one brown cow by the name of Shorte hornes. To Alice Quanery, daughter, in Catton, worstead weaver, 20 shillings. To grand daughters Anne and Diane Clarke, 10 shillings each. All the rest he owned to his loving wife Dorothy.

4. In his will dated 1675 William Wiggott, worstead weaver, left over £280 in cash alone a considerable sum then.

5. The wills I have looked at show that many Catton people were connected with textile trades, as one would expect in Norfolk and near Norwich - eg, Linen weaver, worstead weaver, taylor, twisterer, woolcomber. Other trades mentioned include brickburner (1678) and beerbrewers. Yeomen, husbandmen and gentlemen occur, many of them wealthy, eg the Bussey and Greene families who were linked by marriage. William Bussey (Bussey) whose will is dated 1638 was born in Blofield in 1569. He was admitted freeman of Norwich as a mercer in 1596. He was sheriff in 1612 and Mayor in 1633. His first wife Mary Hudson has a brass effigy in the north chapel in St Peter Mancroft – "Mary that late was William Bussie's pride". (Note the varied spellings of Bussey). His second wife was Elizabeth, daughter of Simon Davye, sheriff of Norwich. John Bussey of the hall in Lodge Lane was his son.

6. An inventory of Samuel Stynnett, dated 1683, provides an interesting picture of the contents of one house in Catton. It has not been possible to find which house it was. The total value of the inventory was £28.13.6. I have modernised much of the spelling but have retained one or two good examples of Norfolk idiom:

In the chamber over the kitchen:

Wearing apparel linen and woollen
A feather bed, bolster, 2 blankets and a rug
Curtains, vallances and curtain rod (for the bed)
A bedstead
Chest of drawers
A little table
A looking glass
6 low Chanay chairs (chanay - Chinese style)
A pair of bellows
A pair of brass and irons
A child's cradle and rug
A deal box

In the parlour chamber (bedroom over the parlour)

A bedstead, mat¹ and curtains for the same
A casket
A coffer box
5 pairs of new sheets
3 pairs of old sheets
3 pairs of old, coarse sheets
Napkins of hucking and diaper
5 pillow cases
6 towels
6 coarse cloths
20 coarse ordinary napkins
An embroidered curtain
A silver spoon
A razor

In the kitchen

A coal cradle (box)
Iron tongs and a purr (poker)
A jack, line and pulleys (the turnspit)
A little spoon and two little forks
A warming pan
4 pewter dishes
A pewter plate
A cullender
A spanish table
Dozen earthen plates and other earthen ware
A frying pan
6 chairs
A washing basket
An iron pot
A salt box
A smoothing iron
Pans, a strainer and a peel (of baker's peel or shovel)
2 pails
A candlestick
Bellows
A wooden chair
A 'kitle and a swasepan'

In the parlour

A little table with a drawer
A loom with all that belong to it
A crib for a child
A sleek stone and skimmer (used in butter making)

(obviously the loom took up all the space in this room)

¹ A mat was an underlay of woven straw placed over the cords which were strung over the wooden bedframe, serving the function of today's mattress and springs

In the wash house

Apparel of coals
A bowle
Several old tubs
Lumber
A brass sundial
5 guitars
A bible and other books

Obviously a weaver of wide interests with his 'channy' chairs, spanish table, brass sundial and the five guitars

Miscellany of Events and Information

These items do not fit in any other section.

1. April 25, 1882 Mary Ann Plunkett, aged 19, was murdered at Mill Hill, Catton by a youth of 22 named William George Abigail. Executed inside the Castle by Marwood, May 22. Marwood was the Chief Executioner at that time.

2. November 24, 1798 (from 'Norwich Mercury'): The gentlemen of Catton regaled about 300 parishioners with a plentiful dinner of roast beef, plum puddings and 4 barrels of porter, all of which was gratefully and joyfully received in a barn, which J Ives lent for the purpose. (Was this the barn in Church Street?)

3. June 25, 1803. The Festivities of Catton Guild were on Monday celebrated with their accustomed solemnity and decorum. (Guild Day - June 20).

4. The Dog

(a) An undated Parliamentary Survey (Document 2669, Dean and Chapter Records) mentions the site of Catton manor, leased to Mary Greene. Its date is probably c1730:

'A large ruinous house with diverse fair rooms near the church of Catton with a yard, a court before and about ½ acre of garden (Other lands) and a piece of arable land lying near the Sign of the Dog.'

This house was the Prior's Lodging (now the Manor House) and the document seems to confirm that the old Magpie Inn in Church Street was originally The Dog.

(b) From the Norwich Gazette, March 5th-8th, 1706 -1707

This is to give notice to all Gentlemen and others, that there is a Licensed cockpit at the Dog of Catton, and Penns convenient to put their cocks into, and there is a match to be fought there on the 10th of this March; and this is likewise to certifie all Cockers, that have fought elsewhere within ten miles of Catton Dog, that they are to ask Leave of Mr Butteress or purchase the same as he has done.

5. A Hunt in the village (from 'My Memories', 1830-1913, Lord Suffield)

"On February 12th the meet was at Mr Henry Birbeck's Stoke Holy Cross, where, notwithstanding the unpropitious state of the weather, nearly a hundred sportsmen assembled, and after justice had been done to his well-known and splendid hospitality, the deer (from Mulbarton) was uncartered in a field at the back of the Hall. The usual law being given, the hounds were through the lowlands of Stoke, the fencing of which was found to be both wide and deep. Onward they went, through the ground of Messrs G B L Knight, and William Jex of Framlingham, and here a short check enabled the field in more respects than one to collect their scattered senses; but forward was the cry, and away went the hounds properly denominated 'flyers', through Poringland, touching on Kirby, to Bixley Park, and Mr Culling's farm. The time up to this point was thirty-five minutes, and the pace most severe. Onward went the chase through Bixley, Trowse, to Crown Point (General Money's), straight down to the river, which the stag crossed to Thorpe, and pursued the even tenor of his way through Sir William Fisher's plantation towards Plumstead, over the old race-course¹ via Sprowston. After hanging on the confines of the land of Osborne Springfield, Esq, at Catton, he turned his face to the ancient city of Norwich, where he was taken after a capital run of sixty-eight minutes."

Osborne Springfield of Eastwood House was mayor of Norwich in 1863.

6. Jeremiah Ives

Jeremiah Ives was mayor of Norwich in 1786 and 1801. His sister married Robert Harvey, who, by calling himself 'Baron Harvey', obtained an interview with Napoleon. This Robert was the grandson of Robert Harvey, mayor in 1738, who was called 'Snuffy Bob' because he used to stand near his house in Colegate taking snuff from his waistcoat pocket. 'Snuffy Bob' later lived at Catton House. During his mayoralty the Castle ditches were levelled.

7. First Norfolk Flight, c1910-11

The first aeroplane to take off and land in Norfolk was owned and flown by B C Hucks. He used a field between White Woman Lane and the Royal Oak. The date was before 1912, as authenticated by H Alden of Blofield and Mr Kemp who still lives in Catton.

8. Long-Serving Teacher at Old Catton School

Miss Blanche Mabel Pye seems to hold the record in a school noted for the long terms served by heads and staff alike. Miss Pye, born in 1881, went to the school when she was five years old. She became a pupil teacher in 1897. In 1900 she won a Queen's Scholarship. She gained her certificate in 1903, working for her exams while teaching in the school. She taught for fifty-two and a half years.

(Information supplied by her nephew.)

¹ The old race course was on Mousehold Heath

9. Church Records - Some Extracts

- 1782 For prayer for Rodney's victory.....6d
- 1806 Sir Edward Berry mentioned in the rate accounts
- 1849 6d levy in the pound on ratepayers to provide a loan for eight poor people to emigrate to Australia (to be repaid)
- 1852 Rev Richard Hart won the right to appoint a Vicar's Warden. Previously both Wardens had been parishioners' appointments.
- 1883 Sparrows killed, paid for at rate of 4d a dozen:
In 1883 - 222 dozen killed
1884 - 451½ dozen - at 6d a dozen
This was one man's job.
- 1764 Desk pulpit bought. Expenses met by Robert Rogers (£6.10.0)
Great Bible bought. Paid for by Robert Harvey, Esq.
- 1768 New Tenor Bell hung
- 1773 Church whitewashed, £2.2.0
Two bells sold
Gallery erected
At the Bishop's visitation the parish was fined for having no bier, no burial cloth, and no hood for the altar and for rubbish in the churchyard. (In 1775 - a line for the same offences!)
- Between 1770 and 1780 Various repairs to the fabric of the church
- March 29, 1727- March 21, 1728: There were thirty-eight deaths in the parish. In most years there were between three and nine. Obviously an epidemic since all ages died and members of the same family eg Edward Denny and two sons.
- 1865 Church wall shored up on North side. Cost £4.10.0.

The central part of Catton the Church Street area - is on higher land to the north of Norwich. The southern edge of Catton Hall Park, abutting on to the ring road, shows a markedly steep slope up. It is in this higher, central area that worked flint has been found by field walking and from here too comes a solitary find (made in 1924) of an urn burial with an incense cup, dating to the Bronze Age and probably from a ploughed-out barrow. The higher land would have been a suitable place for prehistoric settlement because of its elevated defensible position and because of the structure of the soils. Water supply presents a problem since no available records mention a stream of any kind, although a small stream once flowed into the Wensum, called the Dalimunde, which rose apparently south of Catton and north-east of Norwich. Ponds could have provided water and water was readily available in the underlying chalk, once the ability to dig a well had been found. And those who could mine flint as at Grimes Graves must have realised the potential of underground water supplies.

Catton stands on the great sweep of chalk which runs from Hunstanton, where it is visible at the surface, sloping eastward and southward throughout the county. In Catton the chalk is overlaid by glacial deposits of clays and gravels, the clays being excellent brick earth. Pits and early surveys reveal that gravel was dug for roadmending ('Stone Pits' - see Extent of, 1612); marl (an under lying chalky clay) for manuring the land; chalk for making lime mortar and later for agricultural liming; flints for building; and clays for brickmaking and for the daub for timber-framed houses. The clayey topsoil makes good loam for agriculture and the village has fertile farmland round it even today, when so much of the original parish lands are built over with modern housing estates, an industrial estate and the extensive area of Norwich Airport. The soil is chalky and does not lend itself to the growing of acid soil plants such as heathers and rhododendrons, as many of the new inhabitants have discovered in planting out their gardens in the housing estates.

In a sociological aspect, Catton has been a place of residence for those working in Norwich, for nine hundred years: from the Benedictine monks of Norwich Cathedral who took over the manor and regarded the people as 'ours' in a family sort of way through the rich merchants like Thomas Pettus and Augustine Whall and William Bussey who farmed much land here; John Norman, Lord Mayor and brewer, who left his Catton estate to found the charity which bears his name, Robert Ives, silk merchant, who built Catton Hall in 1780 and others mentioned elsewhere in this book; to the present population of people who work in Norwich and live in Catton as a dormitory suburb.

Bullock Hill, the cattle market of Horsham St Faith, which was a focal point of the droving trade bringing cattle from Scotland and the North to be sold for fattening in the Norfolk pasture lands before being moved on to the London meat markets, stood near the boundary between the two villages. It has been lost under the levelling processes in the construction of the World War II airfield which is now Norwich Airport.

Catton's position near Norwich, with no natural routeways through it, has meant that it remained, for most of its known history, a quiet unchanging, small village. The change to dormitory suburb has been all since 1950.

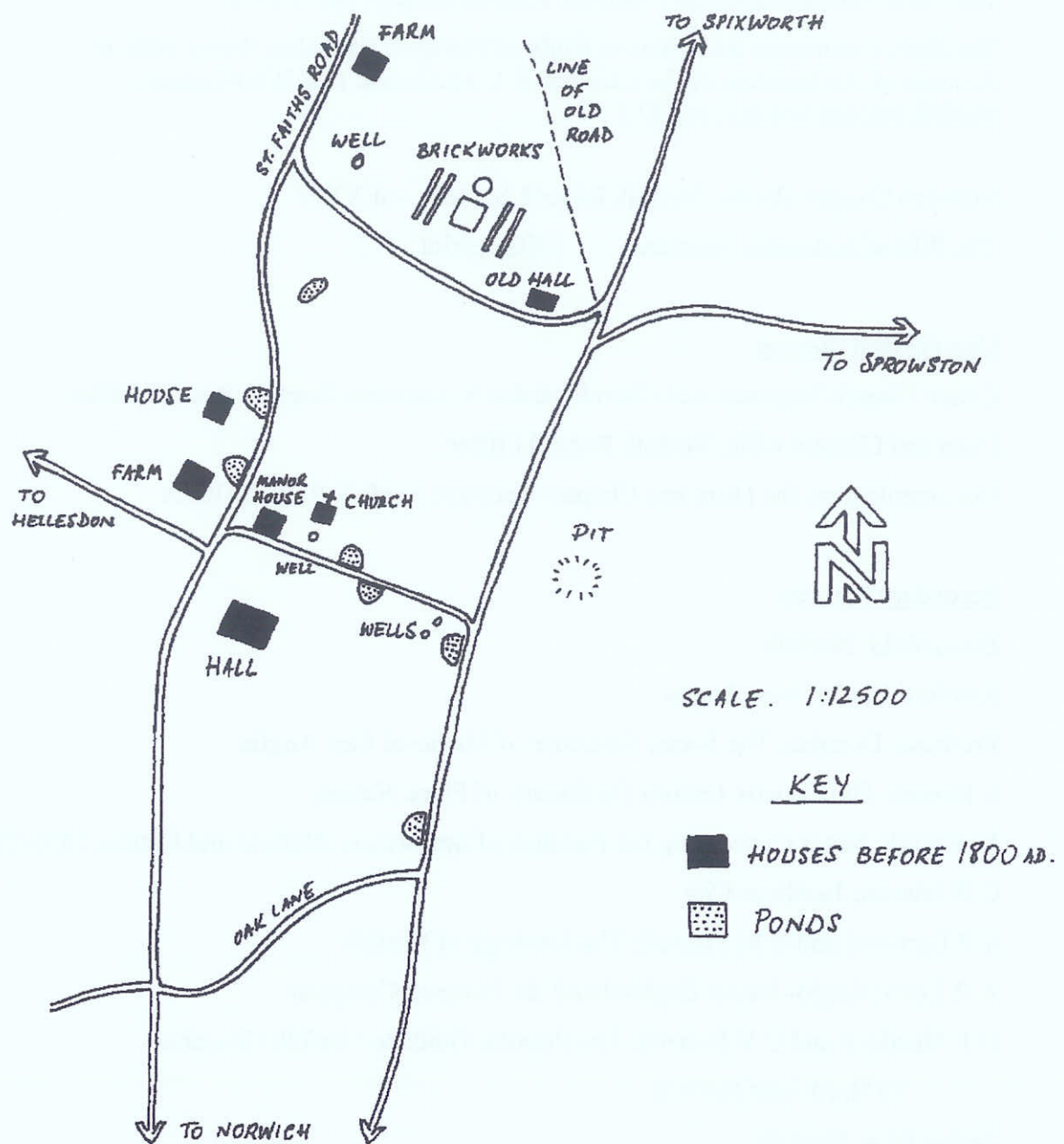
The brick earth led to a localised brick industry. Some kilns exploited the clays to the east of the village running into Sprowston. An early brickfield, almost certainly using clamp kilns, existed in the time of Elizabeth I approximately where Fiddlewood Road enters the new city housing estate on St Faiths Road. The first continuous-burning Hoffman kiln in Norfolk stood

in Lodge Lane where a housing estate and a First school now cover its site and the clay pits once surrounding it. (It ceased working in the 1960s.)

Chalk was extracted from sites along St Clement's Hill at the Catton end and also from quarries in what is now Catton Grove and Elm Grove Lane. The chalk was of good quality and was burnt in lime-kilns to produce agricultural lime and lime for mortar and whitewash. The only other industries apart from those of demand and supply like baking, cobbling, smithing, etc were agriculture, extensive areas of nursery gardens and the possible horsehair manufactory. Of course, today the industrial estates leading off from Fifers Lane are on land which belonged to Catton parish until the 1960s.

OLD CATTON

Incidence of ponds



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B Unpublished Sources

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Victorian County History, Vol II, Norfolk

D Documentary Sources

Students who wish to follow up documentary evidence for project work should consult the map and document indexes in the Norfolk Record Office and the index in the Local History Library. This list is provided to help.

Maps:

<u>Document No</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Information</u>
DS 45	Catton 1800	Based on earlier map c1746 (now lost). Shows field strip patterns
	Tithe Map 1843	Shows whole village
10A 987	Plan of Alterations to Roads in Spixworth and Catton, 1815	Road alterations
Box 20, No 3	Alteration to footpath, 1855	Footpath in Deer Park
MS 4456	Map of Magdalen Chapel Area, c1719-43	Shows way from Catton to Magdalen Chapel

Documents

CM 62 97p	Rev Richard Hart	Commonplace Book
*D & C 2887	Terrier (Land Survey)	Lease of manor house and lands
D & C 2669	Parliamentary Survey	Site of Manor of Catton
D & C 135456A	Catton Court Minute Book	General
*D & C 135449 to 135457	Norwich Chapter Estates	Court Rolls
*D & C 1 Ø 24	Catton Survey, 1570	Manor Survey
*D & C 1 Ø 20	Catton Extent, 1471	Manor Survey

Catton Church Registers – recently deposited in Norfolk Record Office.

* written in mediaeval Latin or hand written and not easy to decipher

Glossary

Bordar -	cottager, holding a few acres and working as a labourer as well. Some might be village craftsmen.
Carucate -	the amount of land which could be ploughed in one year, using one plough and supporting a family. (Also = a hide)
Crop-mark -	outlines of an early site revealed by aerial photography
Geld/gelt -	tax paid to the king, originally to provide money to pay to the Danes to bribe them not to make attacks on England. The amount levied on each village or town was towards each pound paid by the hundred.
League -	given in some reference books as equalling three miles. I prefer an interpretation for Catton that league meant a set of strips in the common field running in one direction.
Pallium -	a narrow strip of cloth to wear about the neck, with a pendant piece at both front and back, bestowed on an archbishop by the pope to signify papal approval of his appointment.
Pannage -	right to pasture pigs in the lord's woods on payment by the tenant
Ploughland -	usually the same as a carucate
Serf -	the lowest rank of worker - virtually a slave
Socage (sokage) -	form of free tenure of land
Soc (soke) -	free tenure of land
Socman (sokeman) -	freeman holding land in free tenure. He had to pay rent to the lord and to attend the soc/soke court, but he was free to sell his land outright if he wished. The lord had jurisdiction over the socmen/sokemen in his holding and they would expect his protection.
Villein -	villager, not free but farming his own land and paying the lord for it in service and produce, eg so many days a week working on the lord's land.