

Reepham Society

# Fifteen Locals

A pub crawl through history by Joyce Cox



The Foldgate, Whitwell Common circa 1960



The Kings Arms



The Old Brewery House Hotel



The Crown

## Pub groupings (in census years) determined by reference to entries in Books of Recognisance\*

<= 1801	1811	1821	1831		
Black Lion Foldgate George & Dragon Greyhound Kings Arms Kings Head Nelson Star Sun	No change	No change	No change		
1841	1851	1861	1871		
<b>PLUS</b> Duke of York Farriers Arms Lamb	No change	<b>PLUS</b> Crown	<b>PLUS</b> Swan		
1881	1891	1901	1911		
No change	No change	No change	LESS Farriers Arms Lamb Nelson Swan		
1921	1931	1951	1961		
No change	No change No change		<b>LESS</b> Black Lion Duke of York Greyhound		
1971	1981	1991			
<b>LESS</b> Foldgate George & Dragon	PLUS Old Brewery House Hotel	<b>LESS</b> Sun			
REMAINING	REMAINING Crown		Kings Arms		

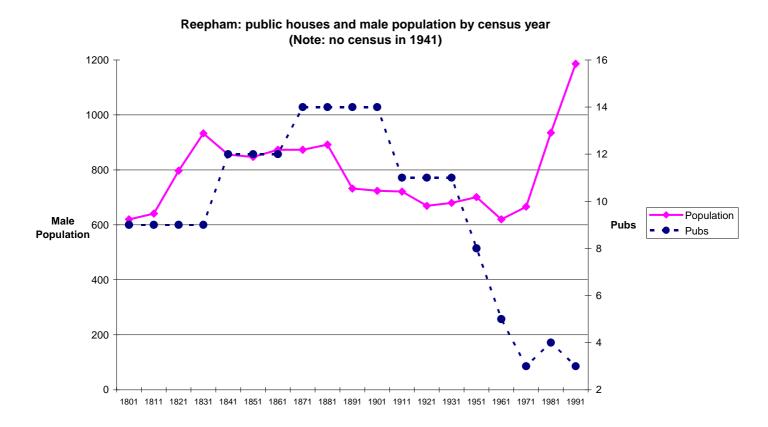
<sup>\* &</sup>quot;Books of Recognisance" are the official record of licences granted and withdrawn etc (available from 1789).

#### **REEPHAM PUBLIC HOUSES: A SURVEY**

Please note: in this survey "Reepham" means "Reepham with Kerdiston, Hackford & Whitwell". These parishes were united in 1935 to form the new parish of Reepham.

In 1853 Lord Palmerston wrote "The words 'licensed to be drunk on the premises' are by the people interpreted as applicable to the customers as well as the liquor". (Peter Haydon, The English Pub: A History).

Reepham was typical in being almost awash with ale drinkers in the latter half of the nineteenth century when 14 pubs were opening their doors. The Duke of Wellington Beer Act of 1830 had abolished all duty on beer in an effort to reduce gin drinking. Any householder was allowed to sell beer upon purchase of a 2-guinea licence from the Excise, subject to a £20 fine for selling wine and spirits. Illicit alehouses came out of the woodwork and traded legally. In addition to large numbers of thirsty agricultural workers in this area, one of the chief reasons for the downing of so much beer was the building of the two railways by navvies who "dug, blasted and drank their way through the Norfolk countryside." (See the Reepham Society magazine, "Railway" edition.). One can imagine the popularity of such situation friendly pubs as The Crown and The Star when work began in the late 1870's. In his book *The* Railway Navvies, Terry Coleman refers to an average daily consumption of five quarts of ale. Coleman also notes that navvies were paid monthly, usually in a pub and for days afterwards they "drank their pay, and sold their shovels for beer." A different effect of the coming of the railways to this area was the end of the local Bircham Brewery monopoly. (The Brewery, situated on the site of The Old Brewery Hotel, provided beer for 52 pubs.) Fierce competition resulted in its sale by auction in 1879. Drink also flowed freely at the June annual fair and weekly market when visitors from gypsies to businessmen made good use of pubs.



The chart shows a comparison between the number of public houses and beer houses in Reepham and the male population at dates of national censuses, 1801 - 1991. (Data provided by the Office of National Censuses.) Local population figures between 1831 and 1881 were higher than at any other time prior to 1981. The small upward movement in population, climaxing in 1881, may be connected with the building of the railways, when four pubs lodged navvies.

On the down side three pubs closed in 1909; The Nelson, The Swan and the Farrier's Arms. The previous year had seen a hotly disputed parliamentary act, which proposed halving pub licences in rural areas from 1 per 200 population to 1 per 400. The Bill passed the Commons, which had seen an influx of new Labour MPs including many committed teetotallers, but was rejected by the Lords. Doubtless news of this debate had given publicans much to think about and in some cases they thought it best to close down, particularly as compensation for lost licences had recently been introduced. Other pubs closed in the 1950s when the novelty of television was an inducement to stay at home. By the early 1970s only the Kings Arms, The Crown and The Sun remained. The last named closed in the early 1980s, ten years after the opening of The Old Brewery House Hotel (see last page).

#### **BLACK LION (corner of New Road and The Moor)**

During the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the Moor was a prosperous commercial area and up to 200 people lived there. Hence it was a good site for a pub. (See Reepham Society magazine Spring 1990 edition). The original The Black Lion was built in 1830 in the grounds of what was later to become Moor House. In 1953 Henry Hawes, whose father Thomas, had been Parish Clerk for 49 years, wrote his recollections of Reepham since 1868. He describes The Black Lion as "a thatch-roofed building"



with small farm premises, including a barn, stable, piggeries, yard and skittle alley. On the gable was fixed a long board about 9 feet long with a lion painted on it." When Samuel Bircham built the present Moor House, he bought the pub premises, demolished them, and in 1888 funded the building of a new pub on the present site across the road. John Hever & Son built the replacement and had the road moved - hence the name New Road. The then landlord, Henry Mumford, drove passengers on Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays to Norwich, departing 8am, returning 5pm. The name The Black Lion is said to be a little unusual. There are lots of 'Red Lions' but not many Black. Local builder and brick maker, Arthur Collison was landlord at the end of the 19th century. His builder's yard was nearby. The landlord in the 1920s was John Marsh followed by Tom Horne. It closed in 1952 and was bought for residential purposes by Mr. and Mrs. Claxton, on their departure from the Duke of York.

#### **CROWN (Station Plain)** (See front cover for picture)

The Crown originally used only one of the three 19th Century cottages, that nearest to Ollands Road, and incorporated land running down to Mill Road. It later extended into the other two. The 1854 Directory lists as landlord Edward Page who was also a carrier. Only three landlords ran this pub over the next 100 years. It was popular because of its proximity to Reepham Station and the roads leading buyers and sellers from Holt, Cawston, Aylsham and Wood

Dalling to the auctions. Open all day Wednesday business picked up after lunch as return journeys began. The Reepham Society magazine Market Place edition reports "Memories still exist locally of some of the Briston dealers who regularly made their way home in an intoxicated and fighting state and who would stop and have 'one for the road'. Some local businesses were indeed cautious and Hunts Stores on Station Plain would often lock their shop doors until these particular dealers had passed by". Business was brisk attracting customers from the nearby Collison's brickyard, from the businesses in the Station area and also from the annual fair which after WW2 moved to Crown Meadow until 1980. Mr. and Mrs. Bob Smith (now living in Bawdeswell) took over in the early 1950s when there were bare floorboards, sawdust on the floor and even old unused spit pans. A wall separated the bar from the meeting room and cellar. The present front door led to a sitting room with kitchen behind. There was a men's outdoor toilet and a stable. In 1978 the stable, which had once brought in an income of 6d a day when a horse was stabled there, was used to fit electric coolers to the beer pumps -afirst for Reepham. When the Old Brewery House Hotel opened in 1972 Mrs. Smith provided bed and breakfast for any overflow and also provided hot meals if ordered. In those times pubs usually provided only sandwiches. Another difference was the rarity of women in pubs. For those who did visit The Crown there was a sitting room where drinks could be served. A very popular Summer Darts League, involving 10 teams including those from Coltishall and Buxton led to one of the Smith's daughters, Sandra (Greatbatch) playing for Wales and twice becoming Ladies' World Champion. Sandra's son now plays for England. Then, as now, The Crown benefited the local community, particularly the elderly, in its fund-raising activities, one of which was a swear box- a penny a swear word - which, with annual interest added, earned a tidy sum! Mr. Smith photocopied for me an article from The Sunday Telegraph, 18/06/1978, written by a journalist reporting on the commercialisation of public houses. He referred to an interview with Mr. Smith and the latter's refusal "to have a juke box" preferring to attract younger customers through his Darts League. Mr Smith was also quoted as saying, "There weren't such things as Bacardi when I started here 25 years ago. Beer, whisky, gin, brandy, port, sherry, lemonade and ginger beer – that was just about it". The Smiths left after 28 years.

#### **DUKE OF YORK (Church Street)**



The Duke of York, a Grade II listed building, originating in the 17th century, stands in three parishes, Hackford, Reepham and Whitwell. All the walls were rebuilt in brick when rear extensions were added around 1800. An outbuilding in the yard was once a skittle alley. It was one of several pubs in or near Back Street and Church Street, originally Reepham's main thoroughfare.

Between 1836-54 White's Directory mentions a Mr. Brett of Back Street as having a beer house. The 1864 Directory

lists a Mr. Dyball and from 1868 it was known as Tom Dyball's Tap. Its classification as a beer house continued i.e. no spirit licence. Tom was one of a family who had a large horse training business in the town. Before the last war, the Trunch brewery owned it. When Trunch closed, Morgan's brewery of Norwich took over. This was their first pub in Reepham.

The landlord from 1916-1933 was Tom Bacon, quite a character, and a publican who never drank beer. As well as having the pub he also farmed a little land and looked after poultry at the sale ground on market days, but his chief job was as night soil collector and dustbin emptier for Hackford parish. Mr. and Mrs. Charlie Claxton took over in 1933 until 1952 when the Claxtons bought The Black Lion on its closure as a pub. Their daughter, Gwen (now Hardesty) has told me how she helped wash the glasses, clean the red brick floor and scrub the bar and cellar. The large grounds, including stables and sheds (see picture), accommodated horses and carts, large lorries during WW2, even tanks, and a local car salesman, while in the Navy, left 6 cars for garaging. (The left-hand picture shows Mr. Claxton (on the right). His brother is standing in the bar



entrance.) Nearby billeting in the Town Hall and Moor House brought additional business.



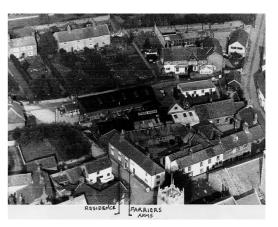


Three dances a week were held in Reepham, music provided by locals. The Claxtons also had an evacuee family from London. In 1974 Mrs. Claxton (righthand picture) with her husband and daughter Gwen) organised

the repainting and gilding of the Church clock as a memorial to her late husband. The last landlord was James McCarter who was a leader in a move to get the railway from Reepham to Norwich reopened for passengers, unfortunately without success. The pub closed in 1959 and is now known as York House.

#### FARRIERS ARMS (Ollands Road - previously known as Hall Road)

Sometimes known as the Three Horseshoes doubtless due to its blacksmith business, the Farriers Arms was classified as a beer house and situated on the site of the present Spar shop. Part of a centuries old timber framed building, some of the walls were of clay. First officially mentioned in 1836 under a Thomas Grand, its tenancy passed, on his death in 1851, to local blacksmith Robert Parker Gooch whose business included the sale of beer. He was also listed as a vet in White's Norfolk directory, kept cows and sold milk. Customers brought their horses for shoeing and drank beer while they waited, a common enough



combination at the time. (The National Statistics Office records 2490 blacksmiths in Norfolk in 1851). The pub closed in 1909. The blacksmith's business expanded into agricultural engineering and descended to Mr. Gooch's grandson, Sidney Parker Eglington. In 1931 Messrs. F. Randell Ltd. bought the business. Mr. R. Randell, the last owner of the business assisted in shoeing the last horse in 1962. The business finally closed in 1991.

#### **FOLDGATE (Whitwell Common)** (See front cover for picture.)

The Foldgate or Falgate, one of the oldest pubs, is listed in the 1836 Directory under a John West, "victualler and shopkeeper." A picturesque thatched house, possibly 16th century, it was even more old-fashioned than The Star. The last tenants were Reepham residents Norman and Joan Egmore. As was common then, when pub tenancies were not profitable concerns, the wife ran the pub and the husband continued with his normal employment. Beer was sold from kegs standing on stools. The ceiling was very low with lots of oak beams, which made things rather difficult for dart players. It had the old settles round the walls, one of which contained a hole into which old George III pennies had to be rolled. Singing just for fun, with no payment involved was very popular. Cycle teams competed on an outside track. With the exception of crisps and later chocolate, which Joan introduced, no food was sold but customers could eat their own sandwiches over a drink. Bottled beer was very popular. Only one bottle of spirit was bought per month. The Foldgate closed in 1969. Joan has provided a detailed account of her 13 years' tenancy. This account is with the Reepham Society archives. The present owners, Mr. and Mrs. Viall, are making enquiries as to whether they are connected with Samuel and Hannah Viall, listed in the 1845 Directory, who ran the pub for over thirty years.

#### **GEORGE AND DRAGON (corner of Church Hill and Norwich Road)**





The top picture shows the George and Dragon (on the right-hand side of Norwich Road). The original building was replaced in the 19th century. Sidney Eglington, owner of the nearby agricultural business (see Farriers Arms) was a loyal customer. In 1930 Amos Hessman took over from George Goward and his wife. Mr. Hessman had been a farmer but had to give up due to very severe arthritis. He was a member of the Reepham Rifle Corps. The Hessmans stayed until 1949. In June 1950 Reepham held a "shopping week". The finals of a darts competition that had attracted more than 300 entries, were held here. Miss Reepham and her two attendants presented prizes. Various licensees followed for short periods in the 50's. The George and Dragon closed in 1962 when Athol Davis was licensee. The Reepham Supplement (the Deanery of Sparham magazine) dated October 1974 mentions the death of a Mrs.

Wink (nee Dunn) aged 93 who was born in the pub in 1881. The building is now a private house.

#### GREYHOUND (Back Street)

Another Grade II listed building The Greyhound has been much altered since its origins in the 17th century. Partitions, screens, doorways and details remain intact. Henry Hawes refers to the landlord Dick Badcock, one of three brothers running Reepham pubs in the 1860s and 70s. Dick was a carrier to Norwich three times a week. His quarters in Norwich were in the Moon and Stars, Duke Street. Starting from Reepham at 8am with two horses and van, he left Norwich at 4.30pm in winter and 5.00pm in summer, calling at Booton, Alderford, Attle-

bridge, Taverham and Drayton. For the next two decades the landlord, William King, a blacksmith, also ran a forge opposite. He later moved to the Kings Arms. Norwich brewer, Young's, Crawshay and Young's bought the pub and adjoining five cottages in 1901, having previously paid an annual rental for the pub and yard. This was the first pub in Reepham to belong to a Norwich brewer. By 1910 large brewers had acquired control of sales in 90% of pubs nationally. Wesley Piercy's memories are mainly of the Medlers who took over in 1929. Arthur Medler had previously emigrated to Canada, served in the Canadian army in WW1 but returned to England after the war and married. His wife was used to the licensed trade, as her father was landlord of Haveringland's Kings Head. The Medlers left in 1944. Their son, John, visited The Greyhound and related to the present owners, Canon Page and his wife, a very poignant story. When a young lad





during the war he was given a half crown on his birthday by an American airman visiting the pub, and promised a proper present the next day. Unfortunately the airman died on his next mission. Writing about The Greyhound in his book about the Reepham Home Guard, Alec Rowe refers to it as being "like the London Windmill Theatre - it never closed." The Home Guard waited there to go on guard duty at 2 or 4am. "Many has been the time when I would have to go and fetch them from the pub to go on

guard". The Greyhound closed in 1956 and is now a private house.

#### KINGS ARMS (Market Place) (See front cover for picture)



The listed building description of the Kings Arms, a former Inn, refers to 16th century brickwork and a south service wing of 17th century brickwork with a "flint wall at the centre and incorporating earlier building". This seems to refer to the east gable wall seen in Pudding Pie Alley and the attached south eastern extension. The former stables are 19th century. Many alterations have obscured its original form.

On 7 October 1794 the diarist, Parson Woodforde of Weston Longville, attended a confirmation in Reepham after which he and others had planned

to dine at the Kings Arms. However, a last minute change of plan resulted in the landlord, Joseph Bell, being compensated with a shilling from each expected guest. Before the courthouse was built next to the Police Station, the Eynesford Petty Sessions were held here on alternate Mondays. (Also mentioned in *The Diary of a Country Parson 1758-1802*). During the Swing riots in 1830 the Rev. Collyer of Hackford Hall, a parson magistrate, stood at a window and managed to quieten angry labourers gathered outside.

It is said that on one occasion the future Edward VII, perhaps on his way to Haveringland Hall from Sandringham, stopped in the Market Place. William Bircham, owner and local brewer, hurried across with a glass of his best beer, called Old Velvet.

The Reepham Society magazine Market Place edition quotes Marjorie Gibbs daughter of a local trader and a founder member of the Society, recalling early 20th century memories "At 6am the people living there were often awakened by the arrival of the mail cart and its noisy driver. The cart was like an ordinary heavy trap, with a covered-in portion behind for the bags

of mail, and was red. The horse was given a nosebag while the driver knocked up the postmaster. He came every day including Sunday." The pub hired horses and carts, used by people such as commercial travellers staying there to tour the area. Henry Hawes refers to John Badcock, publican of the Kings Arms in the 1870's. "He ran a coach and four horses to Norwich, Saturdays only, starting from the Market Place at 9am with Bugle behind, he kept better time than his brother Dick (see The Greyhound) and came home early."

Henry Hawes describes an upstairs clubroom "all along the front". In 1857 the Loyal Eynesford Lodge of Oddfellows was formed and held its monthly meetings there as did the Foresters. In 1882 a dinner was given to celebrate the opening of the railway line. Marjorie Gibbs recalled weekly dancing classes culminating in an annual dance. Wesley Piercy's earliest memory of the Kings Arms is in 1921 when he was invited to a Christmas Party given by the Hubbard family. George Hubbard, the landlord, had three children who were at school with Wesley A small shop was kept underneath the clubroom by various traders. This part of The Kings Arms (now Bonhams) was sold off in the 1970s.

There was no front bar, and only one entrance, that in the corner on the left. A Bowling Green was laid in Dereham Road, or Pound Road, as it was then known. It survived for very many years and was well supported by Market Place residents. Wednesdays were busy days for the Kings Arms, which opened all day "for the convenience of persons attending the public market." The annual Christmas sale and fat stock show ended in a sumptuous dinner for up to 100 in the clubroom sometimes followed by "entertainment with recitals or monologues performed by the more musical or artistic members of the local community." These dinners ended at the start of WW2. Most of the farmers, butchers and dealers came by horse and cart, parking their carts on the Market Place. The wife of Mr. Devlin, landlord in 1938 and 1939, had achieved some fame in her youth as the author of a book "The Young Visitors" published under her maiden name of Daisy Ashford. Mr. and Mrs. Bishop (see photograph on left)



followed until 1948 when on Mr. Bishop's retirement Mr. J. Haggerty, former landlord of The Foldgate, took over. The Haggerty family continued as landlords until 1990. In 1987 the then landlady, Pat

Chipperfield, daughter of Mr. Haggerty (see photographs on right) accepted a Reepham Society biennial award "for the successful restoration both internally and externally which had in no way





changed the appealing features of the Kings Arms. The financial efforts that the brewery owners had injected into the building and the flowering enhancement that Mrs. Chipperfield had introduced were

greatly appreciated." Pat has vividly described to me her long years as landlady, her introduction of home cooked meals, bed and breakfast for local construction builders in the eight large bedrooms and frenzied Wednesday market days.

#### **KINGS HEAD (Booton)**



Listed as an alehouse in the 1789 Book of Recognisance under a John Bircham, the Kings Head was owned by the brewers Chapman Ives of Coltishall. A Mary Coxford and Francis Bircham occupied the two cottages that in 1900 were developed into one building. By 1832 the cottages had been transferred to local landowner Samuel Sewell; the John Bircham mentioned above still living there. The last landlord was Reginald Gray. His wife Mabel gave hunt dinners and receptions.

During WW2 she sold home-baked food to American airmen and RAF personnel stationed at Haveringland. The pub closed towards the end of WW2 and is now a private house. (Photograph, looking towards Reepham from Booton, showing pub sign.)

#### **LAMB (Lamb Hill, Hackford Vale)**

The Lamb on Lamb Hill was a beer house that White's 1836 Directory associates with Mr. John Neale. The 1864, 68 and 76 Directories link it with Mrs. Springall, whom Henry Hawes also mentions as occupier. The 1881 census records The Lamb taking boarders including five navvies. Conveyances in the early 1900's refer to a "dwelling house formerly a public house". A cellar complete with delivery hatch to the road, room above with settle bench and serving hatch into the lounge were revealed in redecoration. It closed by 1902 and is now a private house.

#### **NELSON (Back Street)**

A listed early 18th century building, The Nelson in Back Street was originally called The Nelsons Head. An attached blacksmith's shop was later demolished. The original building had a thatched roof and was very old. Henry Hawes remembered it when occupied by landlord Sam Howes in the 1860s and 70s. It was Mr. Hawes who stripped off the thatch, re roofed and tiled it and coloured the walls. The Nelson closed in 1909 and is now in private occupation as two cottages.

#### **STAR (Whitwell Street)**

The Star, once known as The Cock, was very old-fashioned with sand on the floor. There was no bar counter; all drinks had to be brought up from the cellar. It was also well known for selling vinegar. The last landlord, William Morris, had been a "clicker" (he hand-cut shoes) in a Norwich shoe factory. Henry Hawes writes of its Whitsuntide Tuesday sports. Whitwell Street was used for races and a small field belonging to the pub for a ploughing match. The Star closed in 1935 and is now a private house known as The Old Star - but no longer permitted by its deeds to sell vinegar!



#### SUN (corner of School Road and Market Place)



Positioned in the Market Place The Sun, known as an Inn, was an extremely popular venue for traders and sometimes referred to as "the posh pub" popular with drinking schools. The 1854 Directory referred to "The Hero" omnibus leaving for Norwich on Wednesdays, Saturdays and Sundays at 8am. Carts were hired in pre-railway days. Wesley's great grandfather, James Piercy, after working on a farm as a horseman and later as a steward ended his working life as ostler at The Sun. Among his duties was driving young Sam Eglington (son of a local landowner and businessman) to school

in Norwich. Mr. Eglington, then over eighty related this to Wesley in 1950. Marjorie Gibbs wrote, "My very early recollection of the Sun Inn ...was of 'Charlie Colling', the dog, so named because Mr. Colling was the landlord. I think someone else followed him for a short time, but then came Mr. and Mrs. Fred Watson (see picture above taken 1920) and they were landlords there for a number of years. Mr. Watson was a most efficient painter and decorator and worked for Mr. John Wright who lived in Norwich Road. Mr. Watson continued with his work for some years but later gave it up to work entirely in The Sun. Mrs. Watson was a woman of great character, and very much respected by all her customers. She was a kind, motherly soul and during the War(WW1) was known to the forces as "ma". She was extremely good to all service men, whether Army, Navy or Air Force, especially if they were home sick or lonely."



Extensive alterations were made in the 1920s or early 30s, including the demolition of the old stables. New ones were built opposite on School Road, but due to the advent of cars, not used for long. The stables were converted to a hall, which was used for functions where various organisations such as The Bowls Club and the Fire Brigade held their excellent annual dinners, catered for by Violet Watson. Violet and her husband Clifford, son of Frank, took

over in 1922 and were landlords until Violet's death in 1964. Irelands the auctioneers favoured The Sun. They had purchased the orchard in Station Road from William Bircham who owned the Reepham Brewery (now the Old Brewery House Hotel). This site became the Reepham Auction Market (or Stock Market) finally closing in 1972. In 1924 permission was granted to sell intoxicating liquors between 2.30-5pm on Wednesdays. This was for the benefit of those involved in cattle market trading. A board had to be displayed on the outside of the premises indicating this particular licence. During WW2 The Sun was popular with American

servicemen stationed at Whitwell Hall and nearby airfields People who remember the Watsons describe them as "perfect landlords". Ben Stimpson affectionately referred to Violet as a "disciplinarian". She was captain of the Reepham Women's Bowls Club which played on The Sun bowling green next to the Sun Hall. Four of its players represented Norfolk. The photograph shows Violet holding the runners up trophy in the ladies National English Bowls Association final, the first time a national trophy had come to Norfolk. The green now belongs to the Reepham Society, in use by Reepham Bowls Club.



At the beginning of the 1980s Watneys decided to close down either The Crown or The Sun. The closure of the weekly cattle market in 1972 had reduced trade and as then tenants Mr. and Mrs. Barnes wished to retire the choice was easily made.

#### SWAN (Corner of Dereham Road and Smuggler's Lane)



Records of The Swan, a beer house, are few. The 1868 Directory links it with a Henry Russell, watchmaker, whom Henry Hawes also mentions as occupier at that time. The Swan closed in 1909 when the licensee, Arthur Palmer, forfeited his licence. The owner at that time was a Mrs. Robert George of Bawdeswell who also owned other property in Reepham. Her daughter Kathleen married Sam Eglington in 1925. It is now a

private house, known as Cob House. Recent redecoration by present owners Mr. and Mrs. Clive Elgar has revealed a bar with hooks above used for the hanging of glasses, also a staircase leading to what would have been the cellar for storage of beer barrels.

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#### THE OLD BREWERY HOUSE HOTEL (Market Place) (See front cover for picture)

The Old Brewery House hotel is included in this report for completeness although, because its establishment as a public house / hotel was comparatively recent, it has not been researched. The following is derived from the hotel's own literature.

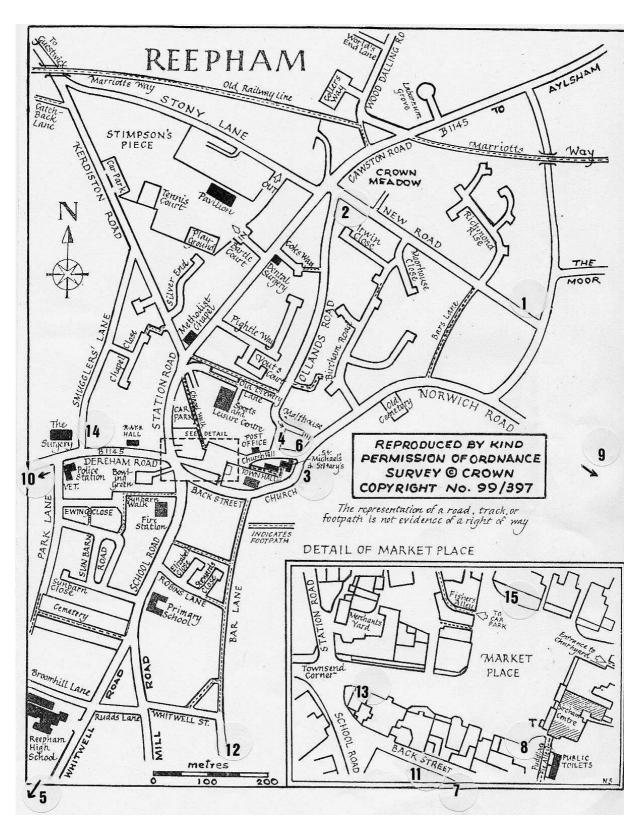
The listed Georgian building was built in 1729 and originally named the "Dial House" because of a large sun dial over the front door. This can be seen as a white square in the photograph on the front cover. In 1972 the house was converted to a commercial hotel and renamed The Old Brewery House Hotel to recognise its previous rôle as residence of the Bircham family that, for generations, had run a brewery in Reepham, and because one of the hotel's principal rooms used to be the brewery.

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