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This intermingling of estates might go some way to explain the three churches which seem to be in one churchyard; in fact each church stands in a portion of its own parish, and all three parish boundaries run through the churchyard.

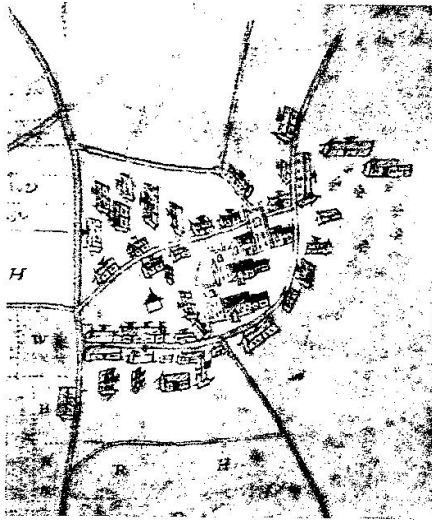


Figure 17 : Reepham Town, 17c.

The detail of the left is taken from a map in the Aylsham collection in the Norwich Record Office. (414b) Drawn on vellum, it measures 24 by 46 cm, and has 'Mr Bircham' written on the reverse. It is described in the catalogue as '17c Map of Hackford, Whitwell and Reepham showing three churches in one church yard.' The small building with a red triangular roof, seen to the left of the churches, is in the centre of the market square.

The churches depicted are, from top to bottom on the map;  
Reepham church, dedicated to the Nativity of St Mary the Virgin.  
Whitwell, dedicated to St Michael and all Angels.  
Hackford, dedicated to All Saints. Most of this church was destroyed in the fire of 1543, the tower remaining until 1790. It is intriguing that the cartographer depicted a complete church a century after the fire.

All three churches appear with square towers in the perpendicular style – which is more characteristic of Planned than Ancient landscape - but have been subject to much rebuilding; a fact which is indicative of the continuing prosperity of the parishes. And the splendour of the canopied tomb, believed to be of Sir William de Kerdiston (died 1361), in St Mary's church is an indication of the wealth and influence of his family at that time. In addition to the three churches in Reepham town, there was a chapel to St Mary close to the Old Hall moat in Kerdiston and a chapel to St Nicholas somewhere in Whitwell.