

Thatched cottages on Orchard Lane

By Janet Archer

The photograph below shows a row of thatched cottages on Orchard Lane, Reepham, which, according to research, was demolished in the 1930s. (The end of the row can just be seen in the Reepham Life Calendar 2021 photograph for November.)



Photos: Reepham Archive

Today there is only one example left on The Moor of a thatched cottage.

Harry Hawes tells us that many thatched roofs were replaced with pantiles in the middle of the nineteenth century by his father Thomas Hawes.

A terrace that has remained intact is shown in the picture below.



This terrace included a shop run by Martin Luther Dewing, who began his working life as a grocer's assistant in Aylsham, later setting up his own business in Dyball's Yard.

This was behind the Old Brewery House in Reepham Market Place, where a few cottages and stables had been built after the sale of the Reepham Brewery in the late 1970s.

Martin Luther Dewing's father, Thomas Dewing, ran a grocery and tailoring business in one of the cottages in the Old Monastery group. Thomas had started his working life as a tailor's apprentice, living with his family in Cawston.

The Dewing family were non-conformists and Thomas's father Martin and his brother William were early trustees of Reepham Wesleyan Methodist Chapel.

Thomas's census record in 1891 appears close to the Red* Lion public house at the corner of Reepham Moor.

By 1901 his son Martin was trading in Reepham Moor, probably taking over his father's premises after Thomas's death in 1895.

*(Bullards Brewery had apparently made a request in 1890 for the name of the public house to be changed to Red Lion and it seems that the property traded with that name for some time, reverting to the Black Lion by 1901.)

Information from Harry Hawes' memories of Reepham in the 1870s, Wesley Piercy's A Story of Reepham Methodist Chapel and Michael Black's research on Reepham Moor in the 1990s.