

# WITCHFORD

AND ITS EVERYDAY LIFE



INCLUDING PHOTOGRAPHS FROM 1892-1993  
BY W.T. MASKELL

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2

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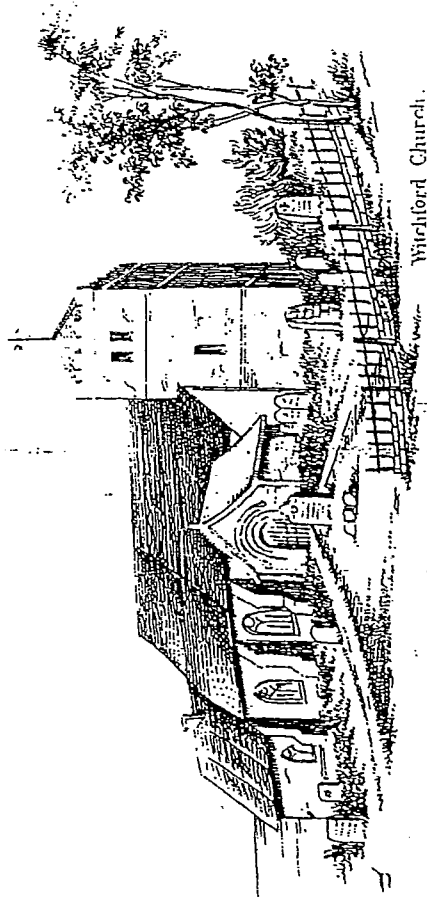


SEPTEMBER 1993

## CONTENTS

### PAGE

INTRODUCTION	1
WITCHFORD'S PAST	2
(MANORS)	3
(CHURCH)	5
(NONCONFORMITY)	9
(SCHOOLS)	11
FACT FILE	
EXTRA INFORMATION	19
ON WITCHFORD	20
COINAGE IN SMALL CHANGE	27
MAP OF THE PARISH	28 - 32
MAPS (1600 - 1993)	39 - 41
FARMS	42
PONDS	42
WATER PUMPS	42 - 43
BLACKSMITHS	46
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	46
LOCATION MAP OF PHOTOS	49



Witchford Church.

WELCOME ! Welcome to our fair !

Innocence and mirth be there !

Teachers, children, parents, all,

Charity must be your call :

Where we ply no common trade ;

For our Church we ask your aid ;

Oh ! we must not ask in vain.

Rich and poor in happy strain,

Do but help us as you may,

Blessings will attend this day,

And our thanks shall be to you,

(Zealously we'll give them too)

Aided by your liberal hand,

Again our Church shall firmly stand

Restored—best-blessing to our land.



THIS PHOTO IS OF A NEWER BUILDING WHICH WAS WHERE AN OLD THATCHED PUB ONCE STOOD CALLED 'THE QUEENS HEAD'. IT WAS TAKEN IN ABOUT 1905. (IT WAS BUILT IN 1903 - 04) THE PEOPLE FROM LEFT TO RIGHT ARE; CHARLIE SAWYER, EBENEZER ALLEN, EMILY ALLEN, MOXON ALLEN, AND ANGELINA ALLEN.

## INTRODUCTION

WITCHFORD IS LOCATED THREE MILES WEST OF ELY ON THE A142. IN AD 607 ST. AUGUSTINE BUILT A SMALL CHURCH 'WHERE THE WYCHE ELM GROWS BY THE FORD' AND CALLED IT ST. ANDREW'S AFTER HIS CHURCH IN ROME. AN RAF AERODROME WAS ESTABLISHED AT WITCHFORD DURING THE SECOND WORLD WAR. THE LANDING GROUND WAS ON THE PLATEAU EAST OF THE VILLAGE, IN ELY.

CARVED BY IAN ALGREVE OF LITTLE DOWNHAM, THE VILLAGE SIGN, WHICH WAS UNVEILED ON 10 SEPTEMBER 1983 TO COMMEMORATE THE QUEEN'S SILVER JUBILEE, IS LOCATED ON THE GRASS VERGE TOWARDS THE ELY END OF THE VILLAGE. A PLAQUE, MOUNTED WITH THE SIGN, READS: "IN COMMEMORATION OF THE SILVER JUBILEE OF QUEEN ELIZABETH II 1952-77 AND ALSO THE GALLANT AIRMEN OF SQUADRONS 115 AND 196 STATIONED IN THE VILLAGE DURING THE SECOND WORLD WAR". THE SIGN DEPICTS THE LEAVES AND FLOWERS OF THE WYTCHELM AND A FORD THROUGH A SMALL STREAM, REPRESENTING THE ORIGINS OF THE NAME WITCHFORD ( WYCHELM FORD ).



## WITCHFORD'S PAST

WITCHFORD IS A SMALL AND RATHER NARROW PARISH NEAR THE CENTRE OF THE ISLE PROPER. THE TOWN STANDS ON A PLEASANT HILL AT 3 MILES WEST OF ELY, AND THE ROAD BETWEEN THE TWO PLACES CROSSES SOME OF THE HIGHEST GROUND IN THE ISLE (ABOUT 80 FT. ABOVE SEA-LEVEL), COMMANDING FINE VIEWS OVER THE SOUTHERN EXTREMITY OF THE FENS TO THE SUFFOLK HILLS BEYOND NEW MARKET. WITCHFORD IS AT PRESENT ONE OF THE SMALLER VILLAGES IN THE COUNTY BUT WAS FORMERLY OF GREATER IMPORTANCE; DOMESDAY BOOK REFERS TO THE TWO HUNDREDS OF ELY WHICH MEET AT WICEFORD AND THE NAME 'WITCHFORD HUNDRED' IS FOUND FROM 1128. NORTH WITCHFORD IS STILL THE NAME OF ONE OF THE RURAL DISTRICTS, AND THE VILLAGE IS ONE OF THE FEW IN ELY RURAL DISTRICT WHICH HAVE INCREASED IN POPULATION SINCE 1931 (WITCHFORD, LITTLEPORT, MEPAL, AND WILBURTON HAVE INCREASED, STRETHAM, SUTTON, AND WITCHAM REMAINED STATIONARY, AND COVENEY, DOWNHAM, HADDENHAM, AND WENTWORTH DECREASED). THE SOIL AND SUBSOIL ARE BOTH CLAY, SO THAT THERE IS MORE PERMANENT PASTURE AROUND WITCHFORD THAN IN THE LOW LANDS, BUT AS AT DOWNHAM THERE ARE SOME ORCHARDS, WHICH TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE SOUTH-EASTERLY SLOPES, THE VILLAGE STRAGGLES ALONG THE MAIN ROAD (A142) FROM ELY TO CHATTERIS AND SLIVES. IT CONTAINS NO BUILDINGS OF SPECIAL ARCHITECTURAL INTEREST, THOUGH IVY HOUSE (73 MAIN STREET ON THE LEFT OF THE CHURCH) AND THE FARM AT THE EAST END OF THE VILLAGE DATE FROM THE 17th CENTURY. THE GENERAL APPEARANCE IS NEAT EVEN IF OF NO SPECIAL DISTINCTION, BUT A HUNDRED YEARS AGO WITCHFORD 'IN POINT OF FILTH WOULD BEAR COMPARISON WITH THE WORST PLACE IN ANY PART OF THE KINGDOM', WITH AN OPEN DRAIN ALL ALONG THE MAIN STREET. AT THE EASTERN END OF THE VILLAGE A BY-ROAD RUNS SOUTHWARDS ACROSS GRUNTY PEN TO THE ELY-CAMBRIDGE ROAD NEAR STRETHAM. AN R.A.F. AERODROME WAS ESTABLISHED AT WITCHFORD DURING THE SECOND WORLD WAR. THE LANDING GROUND WAS ON THE PLATEAU EAST OF THE VILLAGE, IN ELY; PART OF THE BUILDINGS, ON THE NORTH SIDE OF THE VILLAGE HAVE BEEN CONVERTED INTO A YOUTH HOSTEL. AN EXCHANGE OF TERRITORY WITH ELY UNDER THE ISLE OF ELY REVIEW ORDER, 1933, RESULTED IN A NET GAIN TO WITCHFORD OF 162 ACRES AND 3 PERSONS. THE PROPORTION OF LAND DEALT WITH BY INCLOSURE AWARDS IN WITCHFORD WAS 1,087 ACRES OR ABOUT 50 PER CENT OF THE TOTAL AREA OF THE PARISH, A PROPORTION DISTINCTLY HIGHER THAN ANYWHERE ELSE IN THE ISLE EXCEPT STRETHAM, THETFORD, WENTWORTH, AND WITCHAM. THERE WERE TWO WITCHFORD AWARDS.

THE FIRST, MADE IN 1813 UNDER AN ACT OF PARLIAMENT OF 1806, DIVIDED 460½ ACRES AMONGST 18 PROPRIETORS, THE CHIEF BENEFICIARIES BEING THOMAS MOXON (76 ACRES), CHARLES CROSS SENIOR (53 ACRES), JOHN CROPLEY (52 ACRES IN HIS OWN RIGHT AND 32 AS LESSEE UNDER THE DEAN AND CHAPTER OF ELY), CLEMENT HITCH (42 ACRES), EDWARD CROPLEY (38 ACRES), AND CLARE COLLEGE (28 ACRES). MOST OF THESE FAMILIES AND INSTITUTIONS FIGURE PROMINENTLY IN THE SECOND AWARD OF 1840, WHICH DIVIDED 626½ ACRES AMONGST 30 CLAIMANTS. THIS TIME CLARE COLLEGE RECEIVED THE LARGEST ALLOTMENT (110 ACRES), GEORGE CROPLEY (95½ ACRES IN HIS OWN RIGHT AND 74 WITH LUKE DENCH AS DEVISEE UNDER THE WILL OF CLEMENT HITCH) AND CHRISTOPHER PEMBERTON (79½ ACRES) ALSO TAKING LARGE SHARES. THE DEAN AND CHAPTER HAD BY THIS TIME PARTED WITH MOST OF THEIR LAND AND RECEIVED ONLY 14 ACRES. 8½ ACRES WERE AWARDED TO THE VICAR AS GLEBE, THE OPEN FIELDS OF WITCHFORD NUMBERED FOUR-BELHAM'S END AND MARROW WAY FIELDS NORTH AND NORTH-WEST RESPECTIVELY OF THE VILLAGE, HALE FIELD SOUTH-WEST, AND BRIERY FIELD WEST OF THIS LATTER ON THE WENTWORTH BORDER. THE 'BUILD-UP' AREA ALONG THE VILLAGE STREET ALMOST COMPLETELY SEVERS THE FARM LANDS. THURSTAN, THE LAST SAXON ABBOT OF ELY (d. 1072), WAS A NATIVE OF WITCHFORD. SAMUEL BENTHAM, FATHER OF JAMES BENTHAM, THE HISTORIAN OF ELY, WAS VICAR OF WITCHFORD AT THE TIME OF HIS SON'S BIRTH (1708).

AN AREA OF 300 ACRES IN **WITCHFORD** AND **MANORS** WOULD WAS AMONGST THE ENDOWMENTS OF

ETHELWOLD AND ABBOT BRITHNOTH WHEN THEY REVIVED ELY MONASTERY AFTER THE DANISH INVASIONS. THIS ESTATE WAS WORTH £8 WHEN RECEIVED, £12 IN 1066, AND £10 IN 1086. THE FALL IN VALUE WAS NO DOUBT DUE TO THE DEVASTATION CAUSED BY HERWARD'S EXPLOITS. IT WAS RATED AT 3 HIDE OR 7 PLOUGHLANDS. THE DEMESNE WAS RATED AT ½ HIDE AND CONSISTED OF 2 OR POSSIBLY 3 PLOUGHLANDS. THERE WERE 5 SOKEMEN WITH 4 HIDE WHO COULD NOT DEPART FROM THE LAND. 17 VILLEINS EACH WITH 7 ACRES, 7 COTTERS, AND 8 SERFS. THERE WAS MEADOW FOR 7 PLOUGHS AND PASTURE FOR ALL THE CATTLE OF THE VILL. WITCHFORD HAD ALWAYS FORMED PART OF THE DEMESNE OF THE CHURCH OF ELY. ITS POPULATION AND HIDAGE AS RECORDED IN 1086 EXCEEDED THOSE OF SOME PLACES IN THE ISLE NOW OF GREATER IMPORTANCE.

LIKE MOST OF THE MANORS IN THE IMMEDIATE NEIGHBOURHOOD OF ELY, WITCHFORD REMAINED WITH THE CONVENT WHEN THE SEE WAS FOUNDED, AND ITS SUBSEQUENT HISTORY IS UNEVENTFUL. THE PRIOR ACQUIRED THE RIGHT OF FREE WARREN IN 1252, WHICH WAS CONFIRMED AT A GENERAL DEFINITION OF THE EPISCOPAL AND MONASTIC RIGHTS IN 1418.

THE VALUATION OF THE *TAXA 170* (£52 16s 6½d) IS MUCH HIGHER THAN ANY SUBSEQUENTLY ENCOUNTERED, AND HIGHER THAN THAT OF THE MONASTIC PROPERTY IN ELY ITSELF. PERHAPS THE COMPILERS OF THE *TAXA 170* INCLUDED IN WITCHFORD THAT TRACT OF LAND WEST OF ELY, WHICH INCLUDES EMERY BARN AND KETEN'S MANORS. IN 1324-5 THE CONVENT'S RECEIPTS FROM WITCHFORD AMOUNTED TO £24 11s 5d ONLY, AND ITS EXPENDITURE TO £24 19s 10½d. THERE WAS THEN A VALUABLE MILL, FARMED AT £4 8s 11d; THE PROFITS OF THE COURT LEET CAME TO £3 2s 9d. THERE WAS A THRIVING TRADE IN WOOL AND FELS; 108 FELS WERE SOLD TO JOHN DE WHATEFELD AND 53 TO BERNARD DE BRADEFELD. TWO EAST ANGLIAN MERCHANTS WHO FREQUENTLY OCCUR IN ELY ROLLS AT THIS TIME, THE DEMESNE WAS OF 4 CARUCATES, VARIOUS SMALL GIFTS OF PROPERTY IN WITCHFORD WERE MADE TO THE PRIOR AND CONVENT DURING THE 14th CENTURY, BUT THE MANOR SELDOM BROUGHT IN MUCH MORE THAN £10 A YEAR IN THE 15th CENTURY AND THE VALUATION OF 1527-8 (£19 1s 10d) RANKED WITCHFORD AS ONE OF THE LESS VALUABLE OF THE MONASTIC MANORS. ANOTHER VALUATION OF 1541, HOWEVER, RECORDS NET PROFITS OF £36 9s 1d, EXCLUDING THE RECTORY. IN THE SAME YEAR THE MANOR, WHEREOF THE RENTS OF ASSIZE WERE APPROPRIATED TO THE *CUSTOS CAPELLAE*, WAS FORMALLY TRANSFERRED TO THE NEWLY CONSTITUTED DEAN AND CHAPTER OF ELY. THIS GRANT WAS CONFIRMED IN 1587.

IN 1650 THE MANOR WAS SEQUESTERED TO WILLIAM UNDERWOOD AND TO HENRY WHISTON OF LONDON. IT WAS THEN VALUED AT £141 9s 1½d A YEAR GROSS AND THE GRANTEES PAID £2,425 9s. 6½d FOR IT. IN A SURVEY MADE IN 1649 THE MANOR WAS SAID TO COMPRISE 245 ACRES HELD IN DEMESNE VALUED AT £18 5s. AND 224½ ACRES OF RENTED LAND VALUED AT £128 3s 8d. THE MEADOW LAND, WHICH WAS RENTED, AMOUNT TO 100 ACRES. IT HAD BEEN LET BY THE DEAN AND CHAPTER FOR £72 YEARLY AND BY THE SEQUESTERATORS FOR £100. RENTS OF ASSIZE WERE VALUED AT £13 2s 9d. AND TIMBER AT £21 3s 4d. A GOOD DEAL OF PRIVATE INCLOSURE HAD BY THIS TIME BEEN CARRIED OUT. VARIOUS CLOSES ARE MENTIONED IN THE DEED OF SALE OF 1650. SUCH ARE DEAN'S, ARCHDEACON'S (NORTH OF GRUNTY FEN), MR. BOY'S CLOSE NOW BELONGING TO ARCHDEACON WIGMORE, A CLOSE OCCUPIED BY GEORGE CONEY IN ALDERFORTH AND WEST FEN, Dr. COLLINS'S, Dr. CANNON'S, Dr. TANNER'S, Dr. CRESSENER'S, Dr. KNIGHT'S, Dr. PERKINS'S, Dr. DAVIES'S, Dr. ASHTON'S, Mr. ROGERS'S OR BEELE'S CLOSE, THISTLE CLOSE, Dr. GOODRIDGE'S, AND Mr. BUCKERIDGE'S.

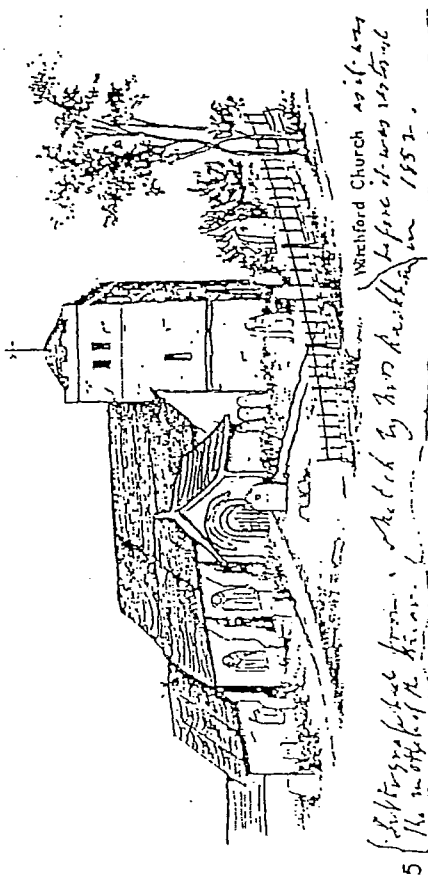
THE NAMES SUGGEST CONSIDERABLE INVESTMENT BY CATHEDRAL DIGNITARIES AND THEIR FAMILIES IN LANDED PROPERTY IN WITCHFORD DURING THE PREVIOUS CENTURY. THE DEAN AND CHAPTER, AS LORDS OF THE MANOR, HAD RECENTLY RECEIVED 40 ACRES IN ALDERFORTH IN THE VERMUYDEN DRAINING OF THE PENS, AT THE RESTORATION THE MANOR WAS RETURNED TO THE DEAN AND CHAPTER, WHO, WITH THEIR SUCCESSORS THE CHURCH COMMISSIONERS, HAVE CONTINUED TO BE LORDS. IN THE EARLY 18th CENTURY THE TENANT WAS SIR ROGER JENYNS. HE WAS SUCCEEDED IN 1725 BY SOAME JENYNS WHO PAID IN RENT £31 10s. A YEAR TOGETHER WITH A BRAWN VALUED AT £1 6s. 8d. HE WAS ALSO REQUIRED TO MEET THE EXPENSES OF AN ANNUAL COURT DINNER GIVEN TO THE DEAN AND CHAPTER AND THEIR OFFICIALS.

*WOLD* WHICH IN BENTHAM'S TIME SURVIVED ONLY AS 'SOME ARABLE AND PASTURE LANDS NEAR WITCHFORD', AND IS NOW COMPLETELY LOST WAS OF SOME IMPORTANCE IN THE MIDDLE AGES. IN 1299 WILLIAM BEREWYK DE TODEHAM AND HIS DAUGHTER ALICE, ELA RELICT OF SIMON DE INSULA AND JOHN AND AGATHA (LE DESPENCER) HIS SON AND GRANDDAUGHTER WERE ACCUSED OF EJECTING JOHN DEEN AND AMMICE (DE INSULA) HIS WIFE FROM PROPERTY IN WOLD AND HADDENHAM, WHICH WAS SETTLED BY SIMON DE INSULA ON AMICE ON HER MARRIAGE TO JOHN DEEN. THE PLAINTIFFS DESCRIBED WOLD AS A 'MANOR', BUT THE PHRASE WAS NOT USED IN DOCUMENTS WHICH THEY SUBMITTED IN EVIDENCE. THE SUIT WAS DECIDED IN FAVOUR OF THE PLAINTIFFS, AND IN 1302-3 WILLIAM DE TODEHAM AND HIS COPARCENERS HELD A KNIGHT'S FEE IN WOLD, SUTTON, AND CHATTERIS OF THE BISHOP OF ELY FOR 40s. IN 1346 THIS FEE WAS SHARED BETWEEN WILLIAM DE RUSTON, THE PRIOR OF ELY, AND JOHN DE DEEN, THE PRIOR ALONE WAS IN POSSESSION IN 1428. WOLD WAS STILL A SEPARATE ESTATE IN 1649, WHEN IT COMPRISED 120 ACRES (41 IN PASTURE), ABOUT 1730 THE TENANT WAS HENRY STEVENS AT £2 YEARLY.

**CHURCH**

BETWEEN 1219 AND 1224 BISHOP DE FONTIBUS GRANTED THE CHURCH TO THE PRIOR AND CONVENT AND ORDAINED A VICARAGE OF 5 MARKS VALUE, POPE HONORIUS III CONFIRMING THE GRANT IN THE LATTER YEAR. THE VICARAGE WAS NOT ACTUALLY INSTITUTED UNTIL AFTER 1291. WHEN THE CHURCH, DESCRIBED SIMPLY AS AN *ECCLESIA*, WAS WORTH £10; EARLIER VALUATIONS HAD BEEN £10 13s. 4d. IN 1217 AND £10 IN 1254. IN 1535 THE VICARAGE WAS RATED AT £9 18s. 9d., THE RECTORY, WHICH WAS APPROPRIATED TO THE HOSTELLER,

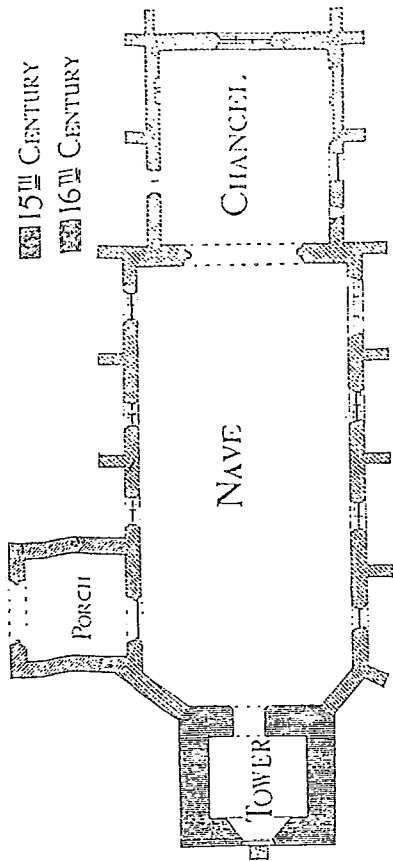
BEING RETURNED WITH THE SPIRITUALITIES OF THE CONVENT, IN 1541 THE RECTORY WAS LET TO THOMAS RAYNE FOR £3 YEARLY, IN 1562 A PENSION OF 19s. 10<sup>4</sup>d. WAS PAID TO THE BISHOP OF ELY, AS A TENTH OF THE VALUE OF THE VICARAGE, THE PRIOR AND CONVENT, AND SINCE THE REFORMATION THE DEAN AND CHAPTER, HAVE ALWAYS BEEN THE PATRONS, THOUGH THEY HAVE OCCASIONALLY MADE GRANTS OF A TURN, AS IN 1616 TO Dr. ANDREW WILLET, PREBENDARY OF ELY AND A WELLKNOWN DIVINE AND CONTROVERSIALIST. THE RECTORIAL AND VICARIAL TITHES WERE COMMUTED FOR RENT CHARGES OF £430 AND £140, WITH 24 AND 20 ACRES OF GLEBE RESPECTIVELY, IN 1839.



*Photographed from a sketch by Mrs Rackham, the mother of the vicar. Witchford Church as it was before it was restored in 1852.*

THE CHURCH OF ST. ANDREW CONSISTS OF CHANCEL, NAVE, NORTH PORCH, AND WEST TOWER. THE MATERIAL IS RUBBLE AND BRICK WITH STONE DRESSINGS, AND THE ROOFS ARE TILED.

13<sup>th</sup> CENTURY  
14<sup>th</sup> CENTURY  
15<sup>th</sup> CENTURY  
16<sup>th</sup> CENTURY



10 5 0 10 20 30 40 50  
SCALE OF FEET

PLAN OF ST. ANDREW'S CHURCH

THE TOWER DATES BACK TO 1226 AND IS THE SURVIVAL OF AN EARLIER CHURCH (ONE OF THE FIRST CHURCHES WAS BUILT IN AD 607). IN THE THIRD QUARTER OF THE 14<sup>th</sup> CENTURY THE NAVE AND CHANCEL WERE REBUILT ON AN EXTENDED SCALE. THE RECONSTRUCTED BUILDING WAS CONSECRATED ON 12<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER 1376. IN THE 15<sup>th</sup> CENTURY THE PRESENT PORCH WAS ADDED. THERE WERE CONSIDERABLE REPAIRS IN THE FIRST HALF OF THE 19<sup>th</sup> CENTURY, WHICH INCLUDED THE RECONSTRUCTION OF THE PORCH AND THE PARTIAL REBUILDING OF THE TOP STAGE OF THE TOWER. LATER IN THE CENTURY THERE WAS MUCH 'RESTORATION' OF THE INTERIOR, WITH UNHAPPY RESULTS. THE CHANCEL HAS AN EAST WINDOW OF THREE LIGHTS WITH RATHER ELABORATE TRACERY OF 14<sup>th</sup>-CENTURY DATE, THE MILLIONS OF WHICH HAVE BEEN MUCH RENEWED. THERE ARE ANGLE BUTTRESSES WITH ONE SET-OFF AND A SIMILAR BUTTRESS IN THE CENTRE OF THE NORTH AND SOUTH WALLS. IN THE NORTH WALL THERE IS A WINDOW OF TWO CINQUEFOIL-HEADED LIGHTS WITH A QUATREFOIL ABOVE. THERE ARE TWO WINDOWS OF TWO TREFOIL-HEADED LIGHTS WITH A QUATREFOIL ABOVE IN THE SOUTH WALL AND TO THE WEST OF THESE A PISCINA IN A CINQUEFOIL-HEADED RECESS IN THE USUAL POSITION AND A DOUBLE AUMBRY IN THE NORTH WALL OF THE SANCTUARY. THE CHANCEL ARCH IS TWO-CENTRED AND OF TWO ORDERS WITH MOULDED CAPS AND BASES TO THE WALL OF THE NAVE IS A CINQUEFOIL-HEADED NICHE.



8 THE PRESENT NAVE IS CONSIDERABLY WIDER THAN THE TOWER, AND THE JUNCTION OF THE LATERAL WALLS WITH THE LATTER IS EFFECTED RATHER CLUMSILY BY MEANS OF A SHORT SECTION OF SLANTING WALL ON EITHER SIDE, PROBABLY DONE WITH THE OBJECT OF ECONOMIZING IN QUOINS. THE SOUTHEAST WINDOW IS OF THREE LIGHTS WITH RATHER CLUMSY TRACERY OF 14th-CENTURY DATE. THE REMAINING TWO WINDOWS ON THIS SIDE AND THE THREE IN THE NORTH WALL ARE ALL SIMILAR AND CONSIST OF TWO TREFOIL-HEADED LIGHTS WITH A QUATREFOIL ABOVE. BENEATH THE NORTH-EAST WINDOW IS A DOUBLE AUMBRY. IN THE SLANTING CURTAIN WALLS AT THE WEST END ARE TWO LARGE AND CLUMSY LANCETS OF 19th-CENTURY DATE. THE SOUTH DOORWAY IS PLAIN 14th-CENTURY WORK WITH CONTINUOUS CHAMFERS AND HOODMOULD. THE EAST GABLE OF THE NAVE HAS BEEN REBUILT IN BRICK, AND THE SOUTH BUTTRESSES HAVE BEEN REPAIRED IN BRICK. THE LARGE PORCHES OF 15th-CENTURY ORIGIN BUT THE SIDE WALLS AND MUCH OF THE FRONT WERE REBUILT IN BRICK IN 1838, WHICH DATE APPEARS OVER THE OUTER DOORWAY. THERE IS A STONE SEAT ALONG THE EAST AND WEST WALLS. THE OUTER DOORWAY IS ORIGINAL AND IS OF TWO ORDERS WITH SEMI-OCTAGONAL RESPONDS HAVING MOULDED CAPS AND BASES. THERE IS A HOOD-MOULD TERMINATING IN HEADS. THE INNER DOORWAY IS OF THE 14th CENTURY WITH MOULDINGS DYING INTO THE CHAMFERED JAMBS. THE TOWER IS OF THREE STAGES. IT OPENS TO THE NAVE BY A LOW ARCH TURNED IN BRICK, WHICH IS OF UNCERTAIN DATE. THE WEST WINDOW OF THE GROUND STAGE CONSISTS OF COUPLED LANCETS, WHICH HAVE BEEN RENEWED. THERE IS NO WEST DOOR, BUT A SMALL BRICK BUTTRESS, PROBABLY OF THE 16th CENTURY, IS PLACED BENEATH THE WEST WINDOW.



IN THE SECOND STAGE THERE IS A PLAIN LANCET IN THE NORTH AND SOUTH WALLS. THE WEST FACE OF THE TOP STAGE HAS BEEN REBUILT IN BRICK. THE BELFRY WINDOWS CONSIST OF COUPLED LANCETS. THE EMBATTLED PARAPET IS A 19th-CENTURY RESTORATION IN BRICK. THERE IS A GABLE CROSS BUILT INTO THE EAST FACE OF THE TOWER. THE NAVE ROOF IS ANCIENT AND OF BRACED RAFTER CONSTRUCTION, AND HAS BEEN MUCH PATCHED AT VARIOUS TIMES. THE CHANCEL HAS A MODERN BRACED RAFTER ROOF AND THE PORCH A PLASTERED CEILING. THE 14th-CENTURY FONT HAS A PLAIN OCTAGONAL BOWL WITH A ROUND SHAFT AND BASE. THE REST OF THE FITTINGS ARE MODERN AND POOR. THE PLATE INCLUDES A SILVER CHALICE AND PATEN OF 1694-5. THE TOWER CONTAINS THREE BELLS BY CHRISTOPHER GRAYE, 1671, PROBABLY CAST AT HADDENHAM. THE REGISTERS OF BAPTISMS BEGIN IN 1788. MARRIAGES IN 1754, AND BURIALS IN 1788, AND ARE COMPLETE.

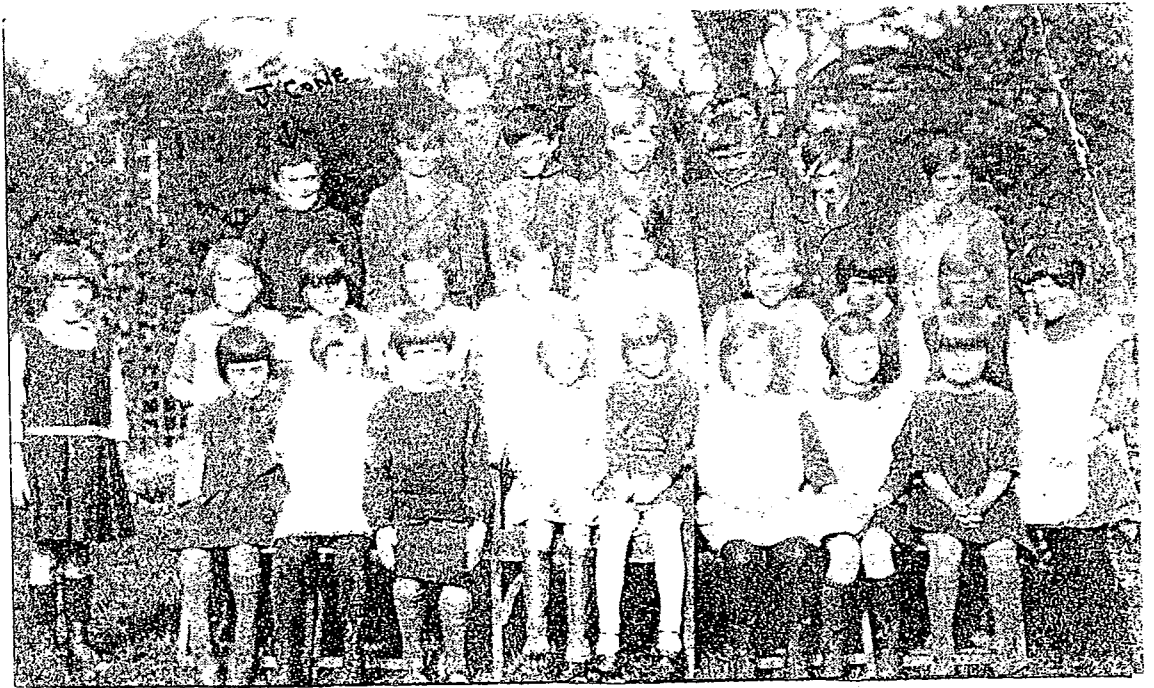
NONCONFORMITY THERE WERE NO PAPISTS OR DISSENTERS IN WITCHFORD IN 1676. A PRIMITIVE METHODIST CHAPEL WAS ESTABLISHED IN 1846 AND ONE FOR WESLEYAN METHODISTS IN 1849. THE WESLEYAN CHAPEL CEASED TO BE USED ABOUT 1880; THE PRIMITIVE METHODIST CHAPEL BEFORE THE END OF THE CENTURY (THIS WAS LOCATED NEAR NEEDHAM'S FARM). A BAPTIST CHAPEL WAS FOUNDED IN 1871; THE EXISTING BUILDING WAS ERRECTED FOUR YEARS LATER ON LAND PRESENTED BY JAMES CROPLEY.

## SCHOOLS

IN 1789 THERE WAS A SMALL DAME SCHOOL IN WITCHFORD. THE OLDER BOYS WENT TO ELY FOR THEIR SCHOOLING, IF THEY RECEIVED ANY. BY THE TIME THE NATIONAL SOCIETY MADE THEIR INQUIRY (1846-7) WITCHFORD HAD BECOME ONE OF THE BEST-PROVIDED VILLAGES IN THE ISLE. ABOUT 100 CHILDREN, IN A POPULATION OF 561, WERE SAID TO BE ATTENDING SCHOOL BOTH WEEKDAYS AND SUNDAYS. THE COST OF RUNNING THE SCHOOL AMOUNTED TO £30, OF WHICH THE MASTER RECEIVED £20 A YEAR IN SALARY. IN 1851 THE NUMBERS ATTENDING WERE STATED TO BE 74 ON WEEKDAYS AND 100 ON SUNDAYS BUT THE EXISTING ROOM COULD PROPERLY CONTAIN ONLY ABOUT HALF THAT NUMBER. THE PARENTS WERE CHARGED £1 A WEEK FOR EACH CHILD OR 1s. A QUARTER. FARMERS WERE CHARGED EXTRA. THE SCHOOL SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN CONDUCTED IN HIRED PREMISES, BUT IN 1851 A SITE FOR A NEW BUILDING WAS GIVEN BY CHRISTOPHER PEMBERTON, OF CAMBRIDGE, ONE OF THE LOCAL LANDOWNERS; THE NATIONAL SOCIETY CONTRIBUTED £30 TOWARDS THE BUILDING COSTS AND THE DEAN AND CHAPTER OF ELY, LORDS OF THE MANOR, £15. THE TOTAL COST, £164, WAS UNUSUALLY LOW, SINCE IT WAS POSSIBLE TO USE A CONVERTED COTTAGE AS MASTER'S HOUSE. THE ADDITION OF AN INFANT'S CLASSROOM IN 1869 BROUGHT THE ACCOMMODATION UP TO 129. THE FOLLOWING YEAR A NEW MASTER'S HOUSE WAS BUILT (FIRST THE POST OFFICE AND SCHOOL HOUSE NOW THE PLAYGROUP) AT A COST OF £204, OF WHICH THE NATIONAL SOCIETY CONTRIBUTED £12. IN 1910 THE RECOGNIZED ACCOMMODATION WAS REDUCED TO 116 (61 MIXED, 45 INFANTS), BUT THE AVERAGE ATTENDANCE HAS NEVER IN RECENT TIMES BEEN AS MUCH EVEN AS THE LOWER FIGURE; IT WAS 53 IN 1899, 69 IN 1919, AND 61 IN 1938. WENTWORTH SCHOOL WAS

CLOSED IN 1922 AND THE CHILDREN TRANSFERRED TO WITCHFORD. SINCE THE SECOND WORLD WAR THE SCHOOL HAS BEEN 'DECAPITATED' BY THE REMOVAL OF THE OLDER CHILDREN TO ELY, BUT BY 1951 THE NUMBERS HAD RISEN TO 73.

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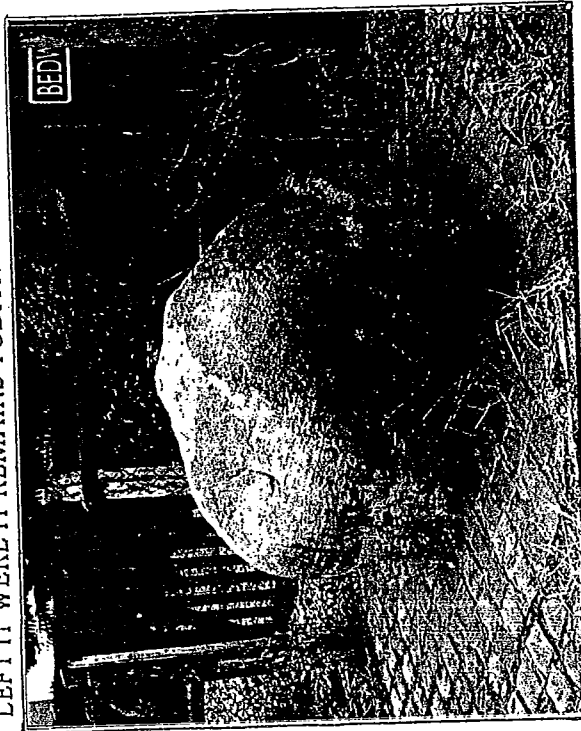


WITCHFORD CHURCH OF ENGLAND SCHOOL PUPILS POSE FOR A PICTURE. IT IS A CLASS OF THE MID 1920s, THE FIRST BOY ON THE SECOND ROW IS MR JOE CONE, HIS TWO SISTERS ARE SECOND ON THE THIRD ROW AND FORTH ON THE THIRD ROW.

## FACT FILE

THERE WERE THIRTEEN BOMBS INCLUDING TWO PARACHUTE MINES DROPPED BY THE LUFTWAFFE. (LUFT, AIR, WAFFE, WEAPON.)

SOME OF YOU MAY HAVE NOTICED A LARGE STONE SITTING AT THE TOP OF THE HILL ON THE CORNER OF BEDWELL HEY LANE JUNCTION. IN 1902 WHEN THE FOUNDATIONS WERE DUG FOR THE TWO DWELLINGS NEXT TO IT THEY CAME ACROSS A HARD VOLCANIC ROCK, THEY WRAPPED CHAINS AROUND IT AND PULLED IT OUT WITH A NUMBER OF HORSES, AND LEFT IT WHERE IT REMAINS TODAY.

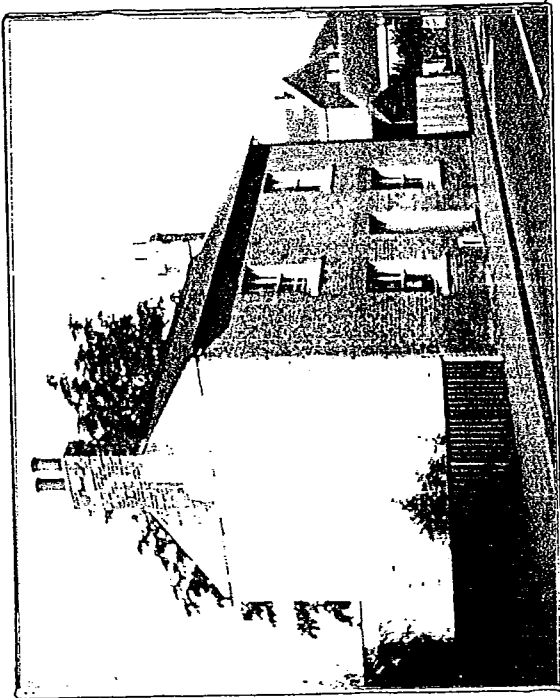


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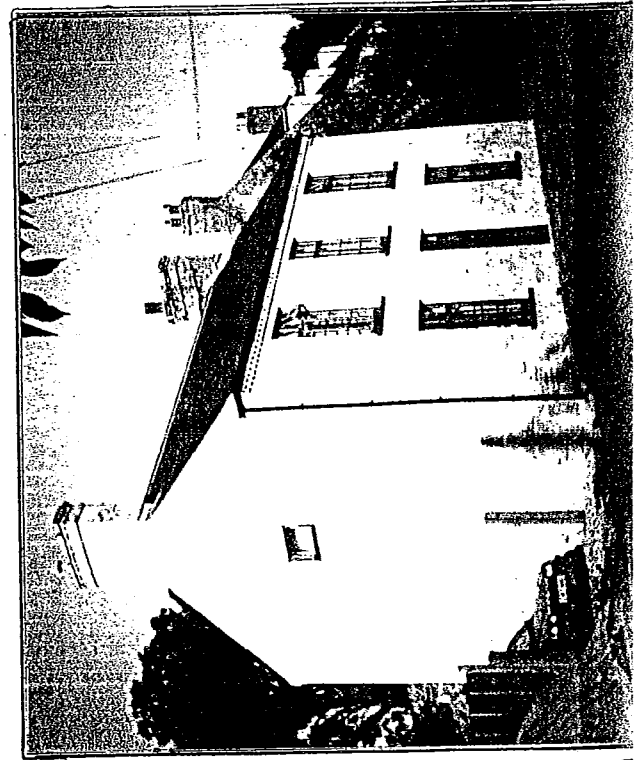
THE FIRST POST OFFICE IN WITCHFORD WAS IN THE SAME BUILDING WHERE THE PLAYGROUP (83 MAIN STREET) IS NOW WHICH WAS BUILT IN 1870 AT THE COST OF £204, IT WAS ALSO THE SCHOOL HOUSE THEN. THE POSTMASTER WAS THOMAS COLE WHO MOVED HIS BUSINESS DOWN THE ROAD TO THE HOUSE NEXT DOOR - BUT ONE ON THE LEFT TO THE CHURCH (No. 71 MAIN STREET) IT WAS BUILT FOR HIM IN 1889 AND RESTORED IN ABOUT 1989. THE BUSINESS STAYED THERE UNTIL 1970. WHEN IT MOVED INTO A SHOP (BUILT IN 1935) AT 114 MAIN STREET WHERE IT REMAINS TODAY.

12 (CONTINUED FROM THE PREVIOUS PAGE)

FIRST

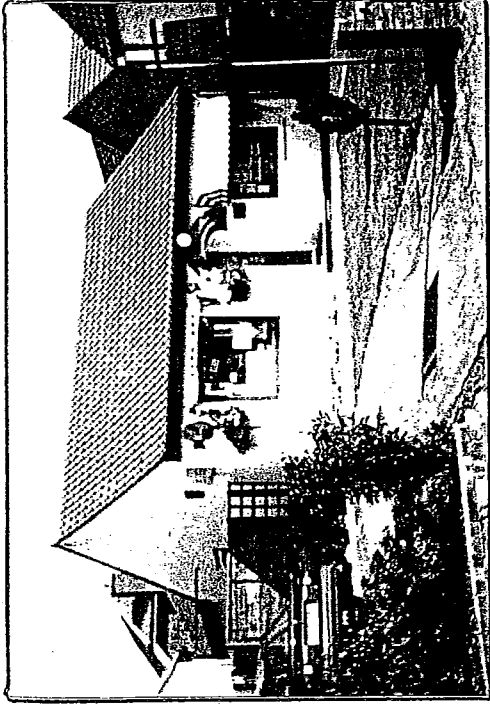


9



SECOND

10



11

THE COMMON LAND IN COMMON ROAD ONCE HAD A POND BUT WHEN THE COLLEGE WAS BEING ESTABLISHED IN 1951 IT WAS FILLED UP WITH EXCESS EARTH FROM THE SCHOOL.

HISTORY ON THE NAME; DOMESDAY BOOK HAS WICEFORD WITH CE-CHE, THE RAMSEY CHARTULARY HAS WICHEFORD; AND THE FORMS WICHFORDA, WICHEFORDA OCCUR IN INQUISITIO COMITATUS CANTABRIGIENSIS. OR IT MAY MEAN "FORD NEAR THE WYTCHE-ELM"; THIS IS SIMILAR TO ASHFORD, OAKFORD, AND THORNFORD.

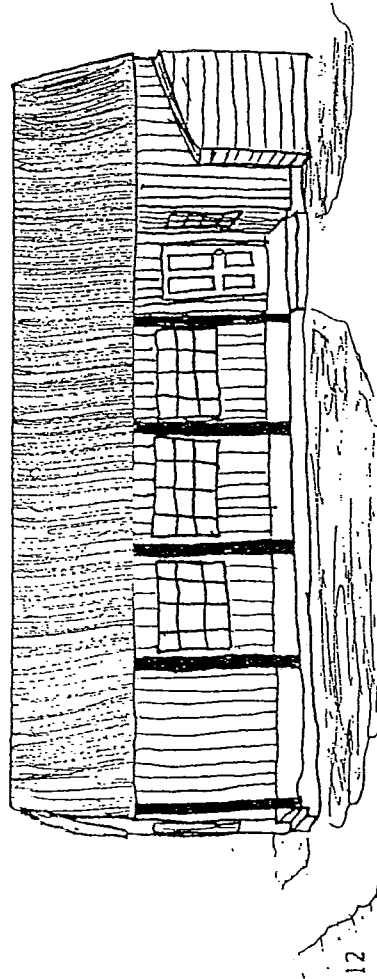
ST. ANDREWS HALL WAS BUILT IN 1903 BY DONATIONS FROM THE VILLAGERS. THE VILLAGE ANIMAL POUND WAS SITUATED THERE BEFORE THE HALL WAS BUILT.

ON THE SITE OF 165 MAIN STREET WAS A THATCHED COTTAGE WHICH HAD THE BEDROOM CEILING HELD UP BY A FREE STANDING WARDROBE.

IN THE FIELD TO THE WEST OF WITCHFORD HOUSE IS WHERE THE VILLAGE CRICKET TEAM ONCE PLAYED. MRS BAXTER REMEMBERS TAKING ICECREAM TO SELL ON A BIKE TO THE SPECTATORS FROM HER SHOP WHICH STOOD IN THE MIDDLE ROW OF COTTAGES OPPOSITE THE POST OFFICE. (NOW DEMOLISHED). THE SHOP WAS RUN BY HER PARENTS FROM 1923 - 37. HER FATHER WAS ALSO A CHAUFFEUR FOR MISS BELDAM, A LOCAL COBBLER, AND A LOCAL BARBER.

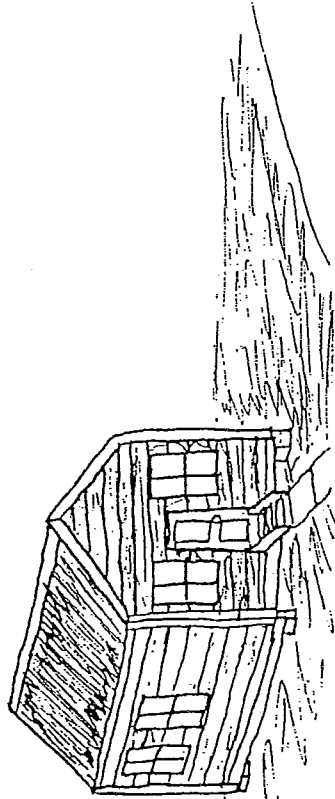
14

THE OLD PAVILION WAS AN EX-ARMY HUT FROM WEST FEN ROAD, ELY.



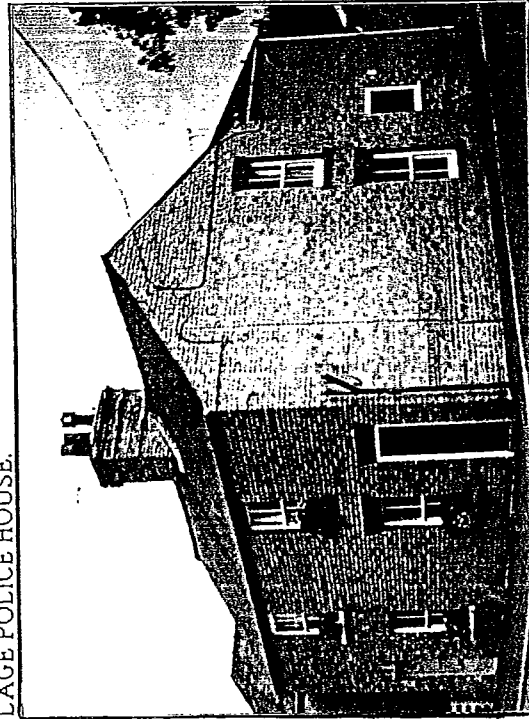
12

ON THE SITE OF 145 MAIN STREET WAS A CLUB HOUSE WHICH WAS USED BY THE WOMENS INSTITUTE, THE BRITISH LEGION, AND A MEETING PLACE FOR OTHER SOCIETIES.



13

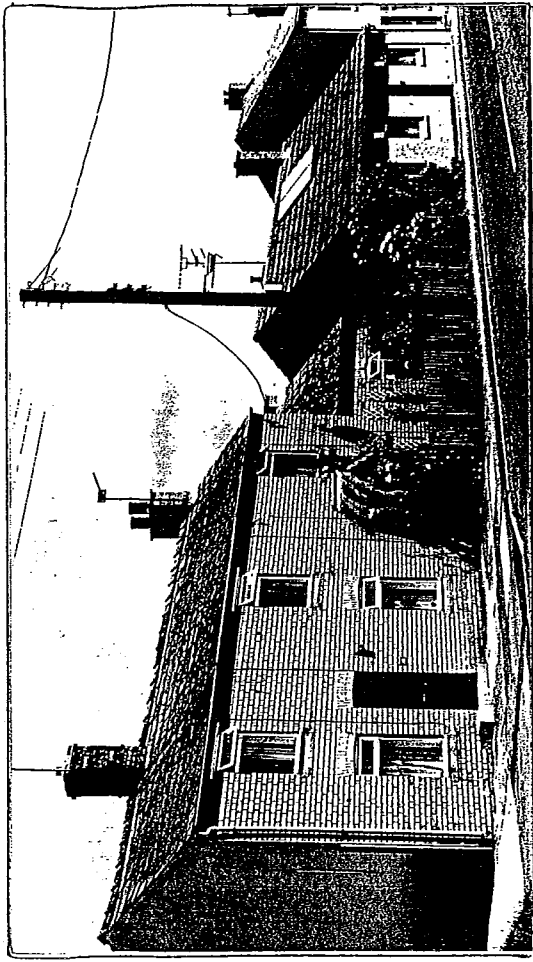
NUMBER 168 MAIN STREET (CORNER OF MARROWAY LANE) WAS THE VILLAGE POLICE HOUSE.



14

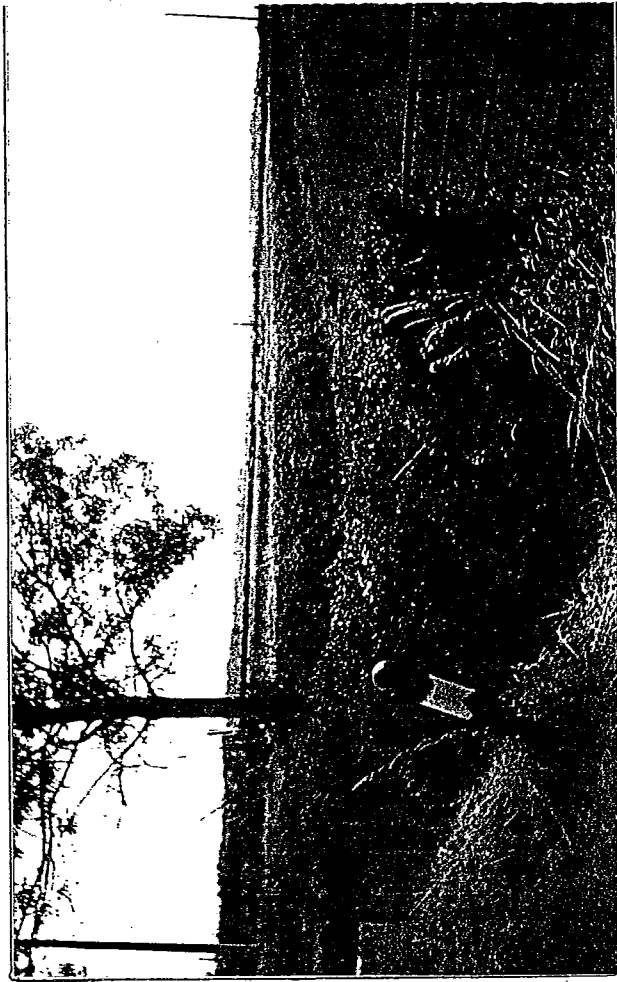
15

THE DWELLING ON THE FAR LEFT WAS ONCE A BUTCHERS SHOP RUN BY THE COLE FAMILY, THE BUSINESS WAS IN THE BOTTOM LEFT ROOM. IT OPENED IN ABOUT 1900 AND CLOSED UP IN ABOUT 1925 - 6. THE PIGS WERE KILLED AND CHOPPED-UP IN THE BACK YARD, AND THEN SOLD ON THE PREMISES.



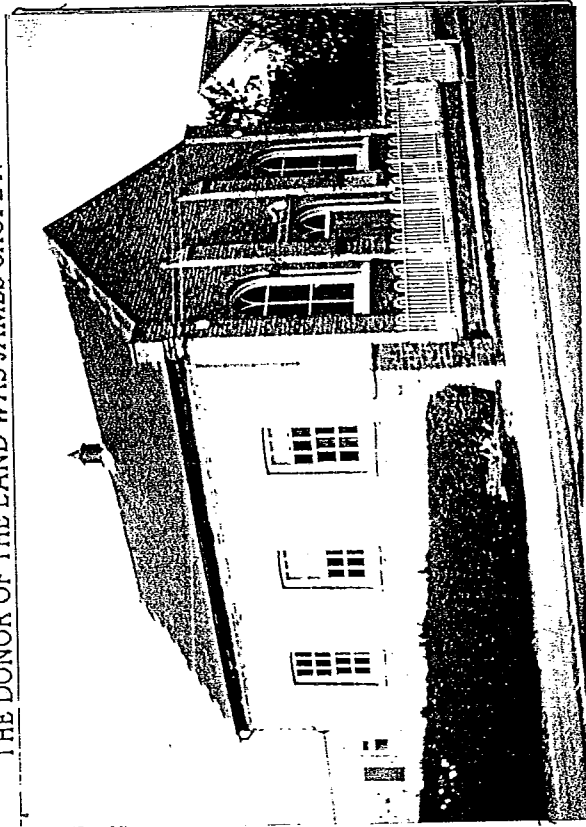
15

THIS PHOTO WAS TAKEN AT GRUNTY FEN BRIDGE LOOKING SOUTH-WEST TOWARDS HADDENHAM THE FIELD ON THE RIGHT WAS THE VILLAGE RECREATION GROUND. THE FIELD JUST ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE DRAIN RUNNING FROM WEST TO EAST WAS THE OLD ALLOTMENTS WITH GRUNTY FEN ROAD AND POOLS ROAD BORDERING IT. THESE WERE BOTH DISCONTINUED IN ABOUT 1940.

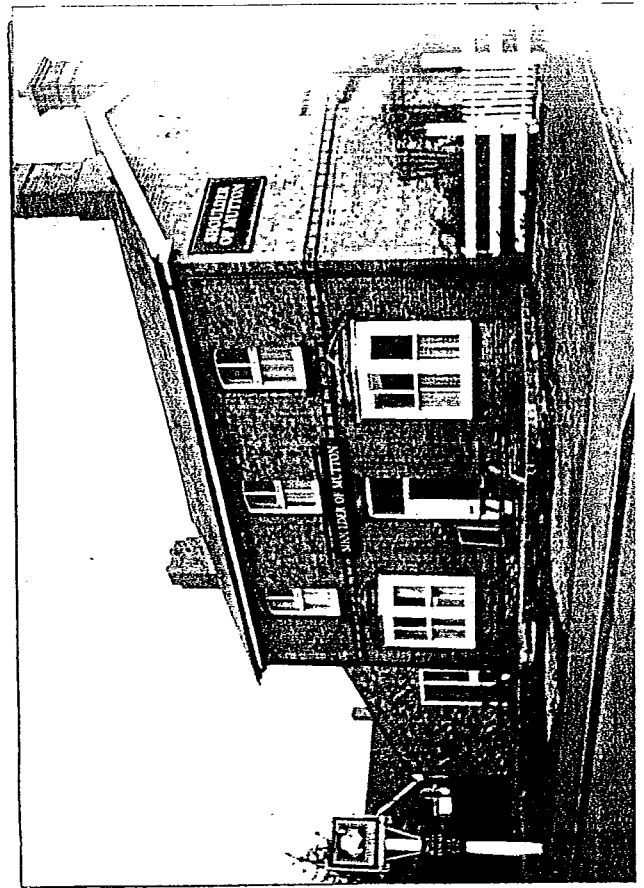


16

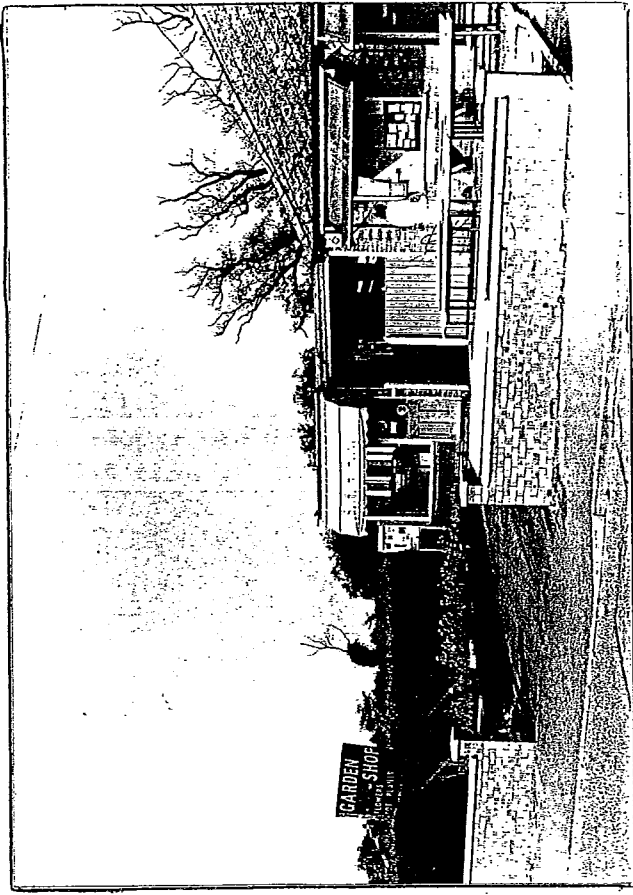
THE VILLAGE BAPTIST CHAPEL WAS BUILT IN 1875.  
THE DONOR OF THE LAND WAS JAMES CROPLY.



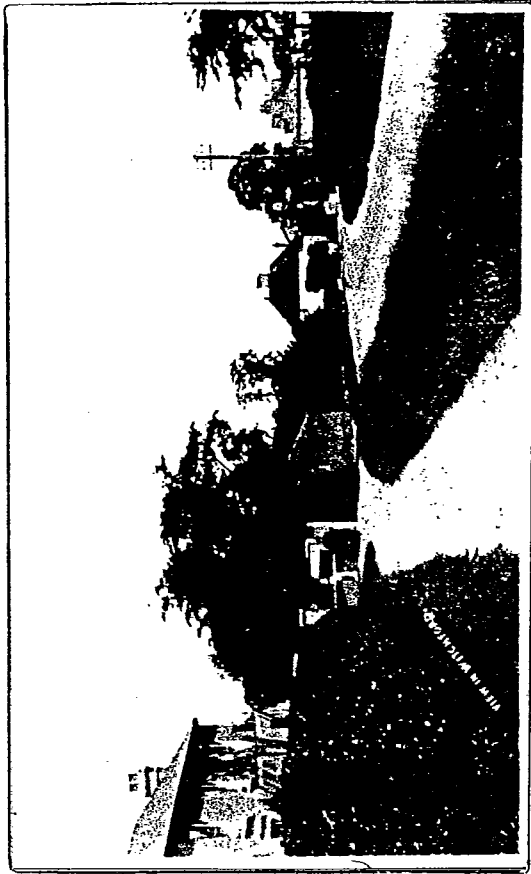
THE SHOULDER OF MUTTON PUBLIC HOUSE  
WHICH IS STILL IN USE TODAY WAS BUILT IN THE  
LATTER PART OF THE LAST CENTURY.

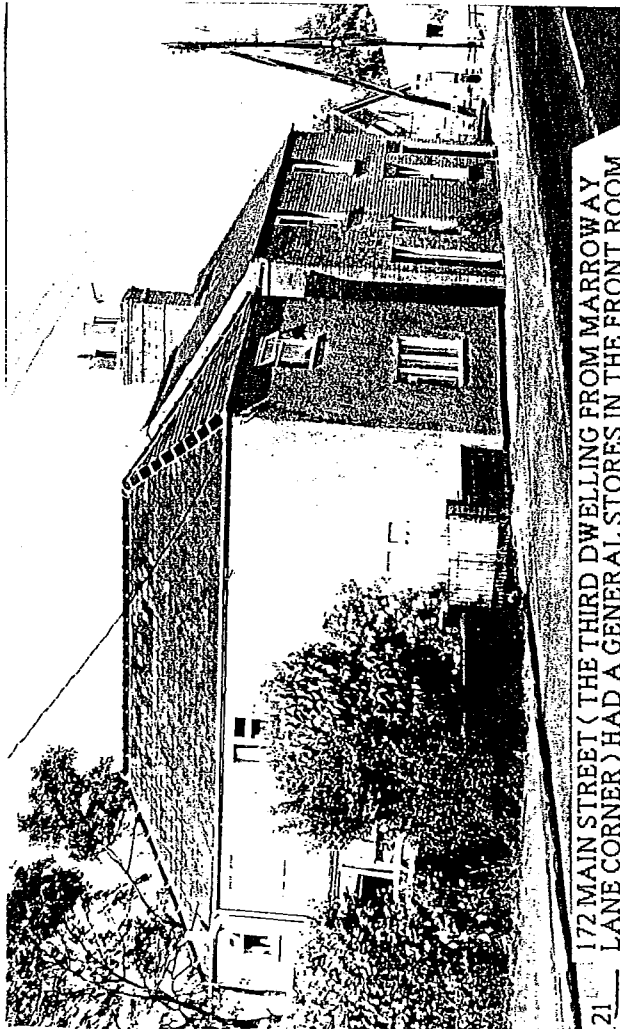


THE POST OFFICE IN ABOUT 1989 ALSO HAD A PLANT SHOP.

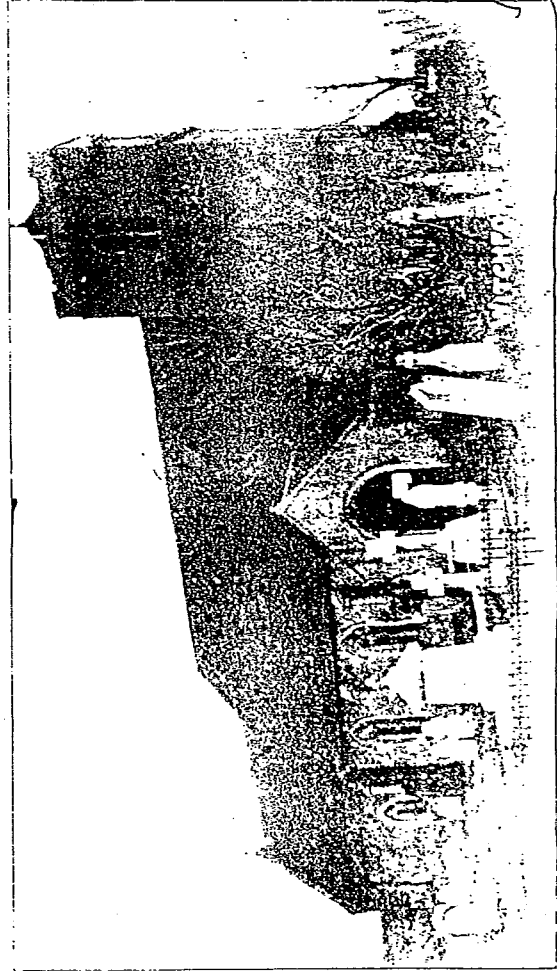


THIS PICTURE WAS TAKEN IN ABOUT 1928 AND LOOKING EAST  
SHOWING 104 MAIN STREET ON THE LEFT, AND CLARE HOUSE  
IN THE BACKGROUND. NOTICE THE HOUSE IN FRONT OF  
WITCHFORD HOUSE WHICH IS NOW DEMOLISHED. THE MAN IN  
THE WHEELCHAIR OUTSIDE THE HOUSE ON THE LEFT IS  
FLANDERS WASHINGTON.





172 MAIN STREET ( THE THIRD DWELLING FROM MARROWAY LANE CORNER ) HAD A GENERAL STORES IN THE FRONT ROOM WHICH OPENED IN ABOUT 1900 BY MR WOODS, WHO LEFT IN 1925. MR TRICKER TOOK IT OVER WHO LEFT IN ABOUT 1930. MR CHRISTOPHER THEN TOOK OVER. IN THE 1950s A SUGAR BEET LORRY DROVE OFF THE ROAD AND PLOUGED INTO THE SHOP AND NEARLY INTO THE TWO HOUSES NEXT TO IT. HE THEN BUILT A NEW SHOP ON THE SIDE WHERE 174 MAIN STREET IS NOW. WHEN MR CHRISTOPHER LEFT IN ABOUT 1973 MR HEAL TOOK OVER BUT ONLY STAYED A FEW YEARS BECAUSE HE SWORE AT HIS CUSTOMERS.



ST. ANDREWS CHURCH IN 1907.

# WITCHFORD

WHEN THE FENMEN ROSE IN REVOLT AGAINST WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR, THURSTAN ABBOT OF ELY OPENED THE GATES TO THEM. FOR THAT THE ABBEY WAS FINED 1000 MARKS. AND ITS ESTATES, INCLUDING WITCHFORD WHERE THURSTAN WAS BORN, WERE FORFEIT FOR SEVERAL YEARS. HE HOWEVER, THE LAST SAXON TO BE ABBOT, STILL RETAINED HIS OFFICE. NEARLY SEVEN CENTURIES LATER, WITH ELY STILL HOLDING THE MANOR, SOANE JENYMS WAS PAYING AN ANNUAL RENT OF £38 10s. 0d. PLUS A BRAWN VALUED AT £1 6s. 8d. AND THE COSTS OF THE YEARLY DINNER GIVEN TO THE DEAN AND CHAPTER OF ELY.

MOVING ON IN TIME, AND UP TO ABOUT 60 YEARS AGO WITCHFORD WAS ONE OF THE LARGEST HORSE- TRADING CENTRES IN THE COUNTY. THEN, THE ANIMALS USED TO COME OFF THE NIGHT MAIL TRAIN AT ELY AND BE WALKED ALONG THE THREE MILES OF ROAD-THREE INCHES IN DUST, OR MUD, ACCORDING TO THE SEASON-AND NEXT DAY PARADED ROUND THE VILLAGE FOR VIEWING. AFTER THAT, THE HACKNEY AND LIGHT VAN ANIMALS WERE TRADED IN THE LARGER PLASTER AND TIMBER STABLES AT THE WEST END OF WITCHFORD. WHILST THE FARM ANIMALS- A GOOD SHIRE HORSE WOULD FETCH ABOUT £70-WERE HAGGLED OVER IN THE YARDS OF THE GABLES AND IVY HOUSE. THIS LAST, DATING BACK TO THE 17th CENTURY, WITH HEAVY OAK TIMBERING, BRICK FLOORING AND ONE BRICK AND TWO WOODEN STAIRWAYS, IS THE OLDEST HOUSE IN THE VILLAGE. APART FROM THIS THERE IS ALDERFORTH AND THE GABLES WHICH, BACK IN 1904 OR 1905, WAS BADLY BURNED. THEN, BECAUSE THERE WAS NO TELEPHONE, THE ELY FIRE-BRIGADE WERE CALLED BY TELEGRAPH. FIFTY YEARS AFTER THAT, ON 20 APRIL 1956, THOUGH THE BRIGADES WERE QUICKLY ENOUGH ON THE SPOT. SOME TWO CATTLESHEDS AND ABOUT 36 TONS OF HAY, STRAW, CHAFF, LOOSE HAY, NITRATE CHALK AND BEET PULP STILL WENT UP IN AN INFERNO OF SMOKE AND FLAME. A COUPLE OR THREE SUFFERED SOME BURNS, WHILST ANOTHER WAS PINNED TO THE EARTH BY A FALLEN 11,000 VOLT OVERHEAD CABLE. BUT HE, AMAZINGLY ENOUGH, THOUGH HE LAPPED UNCONSCIOUS SEVERAL TIMES, SURVIVED AND RECOVERED. THE FIRE, ITSELF, SEEMS TO HAVE STARTED WITH THE BURNING OF DEAD GRASS AND RUBBLE AT THE REAR OF THE YOUTH HOSTEL, A NISSAN-HUTTED PLACE THAT WAS AN R.A.F. HOSPITAL DURING THE WAR. IT WAS SITUATED TO THE NORTH SIDE OF THE VILLAGE. NOW WITH THE BY-PASS RUNNING THROUGH. THOUGH THE FIRE PASSED THE YOUTH HOSTEL BY, DETERIORATION THROUGH DAMP HAS NOT, AND SO IT HAS BEEN CLOSED DOWN. AFTER 30 YEARS DURING WHICH TIME OVER 100,000 VISITORS FROM BRITAIN AND, INDEED, ALL OVER THE WORLD HAVE STAYED THERE.

THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, BUILT IN 1851 AT A COST OF £164 - THE SECONDARY SCHOOL BUILT IN 1951 AT A COST OF £95,000 - IT IS A SUCCESSOR TO THE THREE DAME SCHOOLS OF THE 18th CENTURY AND THE ONE ROOM WHICH, AS A SUNDAY SCHOOL, ACCOMMODATED BETWEEN 70 AND 100 CHILDREN.

CONSIDERABLY ENLARGED AND MODERNISED, THE SCHOOL HAS RECENTLY BEEN NAMED AFTER MR. HANWORTH E. RACKHAM, VICAR HERE FOR 40 YEARS UNTIL HE DIED IN 1884. IN ADDITION TO THAT COMMEMORATION HE HAS A PLAQUE ON THE SOUTH SIDE OF THE CHANCEL OF THE PARISH CHURCH AND A STAINED GLASS WINDOW DEDICATED EASTER DAY 1900. WITH ITS LONG, LOW, MOSSY ROOFS, STUBBY 13th CENTURY TOWER - 20 INCHES OUT OF TRUE - BUTTRESSED WALLS, AND VERY BROAD NORTH PORCH, ST. ANDREW OR ST. NICHOLAS'S, AS THE CHURCH NOTES SAY, HAS A SQUASHED DOWN LOOK WHICH IS STRANGELY ATTRACTIVE.



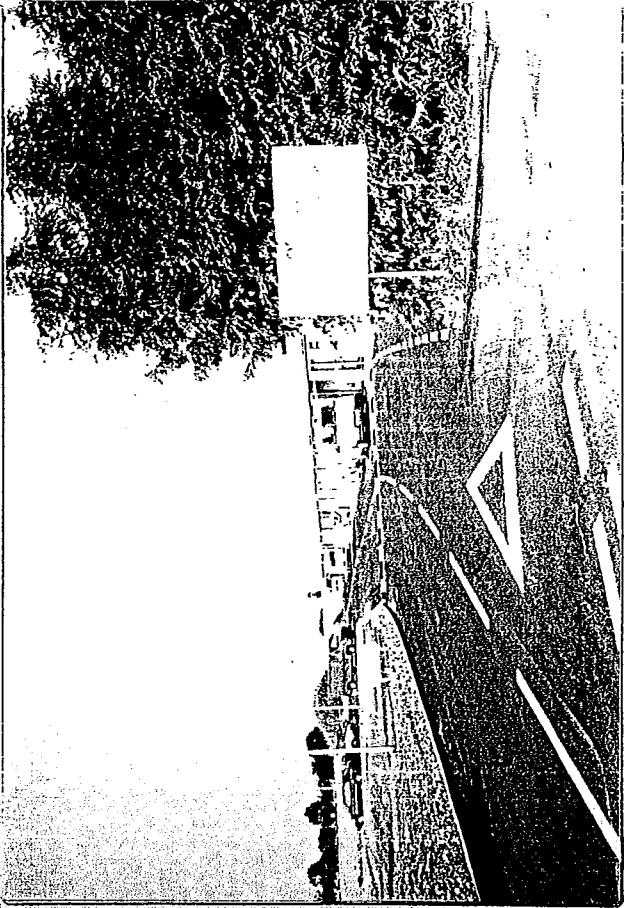
SHOWN HERE ARE THE STABLES IN WHICH THE HACKNEY PONIES WERE KEPT. THEY ARE SITUATED IN WITCHFORD HOUSE YARD.

#### COINAGE IN SMALL CHANGE

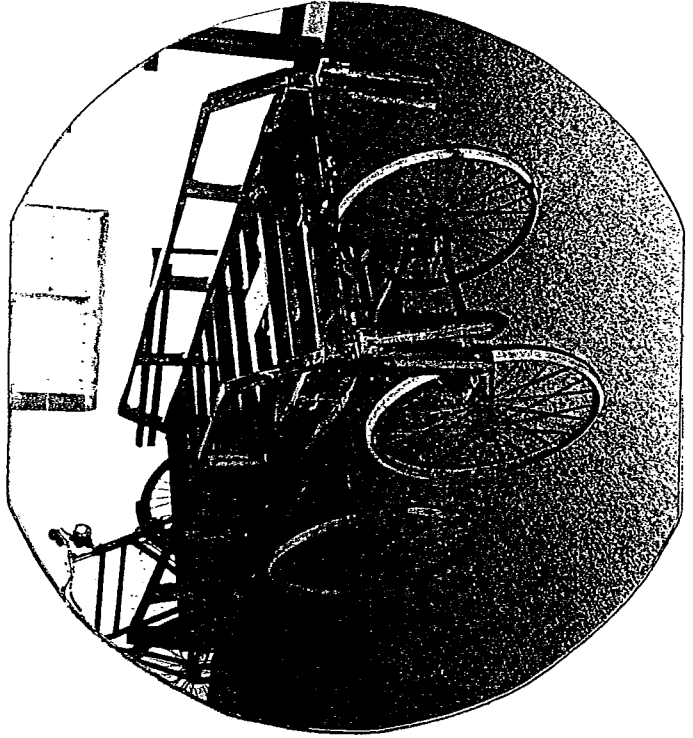
DURING THE 16th AND 17th CENTURIES ENGLAND'S COINAGE WAS GOLD AND SILVER. FOR SMALL CHANGE THE LOCAL TRADER WAS AT LOSS TO ACCOMMODATE HIS CUSTOMERS. THEY WERE FORCED TO PROVIDE THEIR OWN SMALL CHANGE (FARTHINGS, HALFPENNIES ETC) TRADESMEN ALL OVER THE COUNTRY WERE GIVING OUT SMALL COPPERS IN THEIR CHANGE, THESE COINS ARE AN INCREDIBLE SOURCE OF LOCAL HISTORY. THERE IS ONLY ONE TYPE OF WITCHFORD TOKEN KNOWN, AND THAT IS OF JOHN GAYER WHO WAS A FISHMONGER. HERE IS A DRAWING OF THE COIN BELOW;



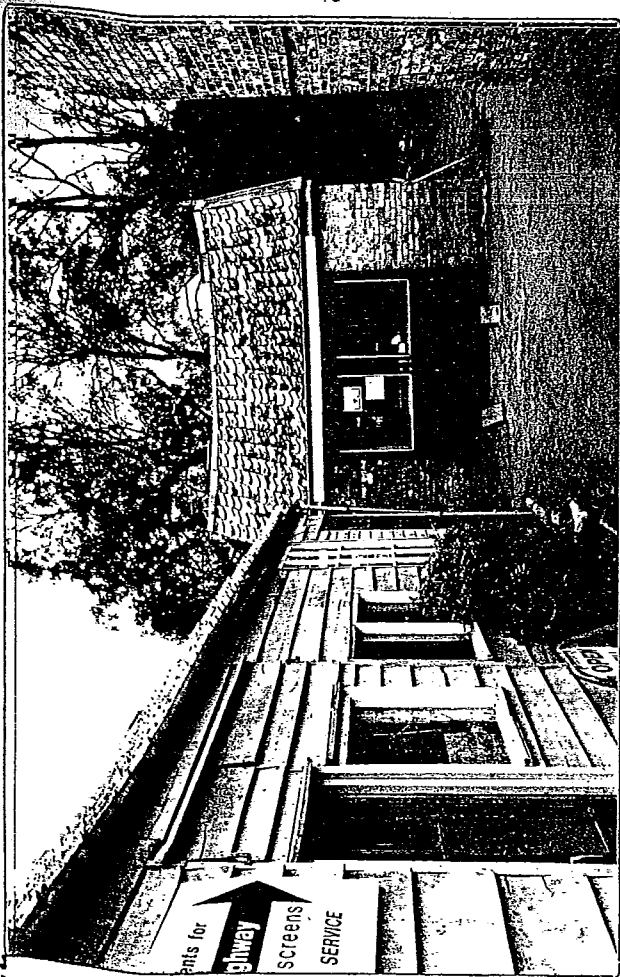
ACTUAL SIZE



SEDGEWAY BUSINESS PARK, COMMON ROAD NORTH OF THE BY-PASS WAS ONCE A PIG FARM.



PICTURED HERE IS A FUNERAL BIER USED DURING THE LAST CENTURY IN WITCHFORD.



PICTURED HERE IS THE BLACKSMITHS SHOP ( HILLCREST / 39 MAIN STREET YARD) WHICH WAS BUILT IN 1850, ALSO BUILT AT THIS TIME WAS THE WHEELWRIGHT'S SHOP TO THE LEFT OF THE PICTURE, THE WHEELWRIGHT'S SHOP EVENTUALLY CLOSED AND LATER WAS TURNED INTO A WEAVING SHOP CALLED 'FEN WEAVE'.

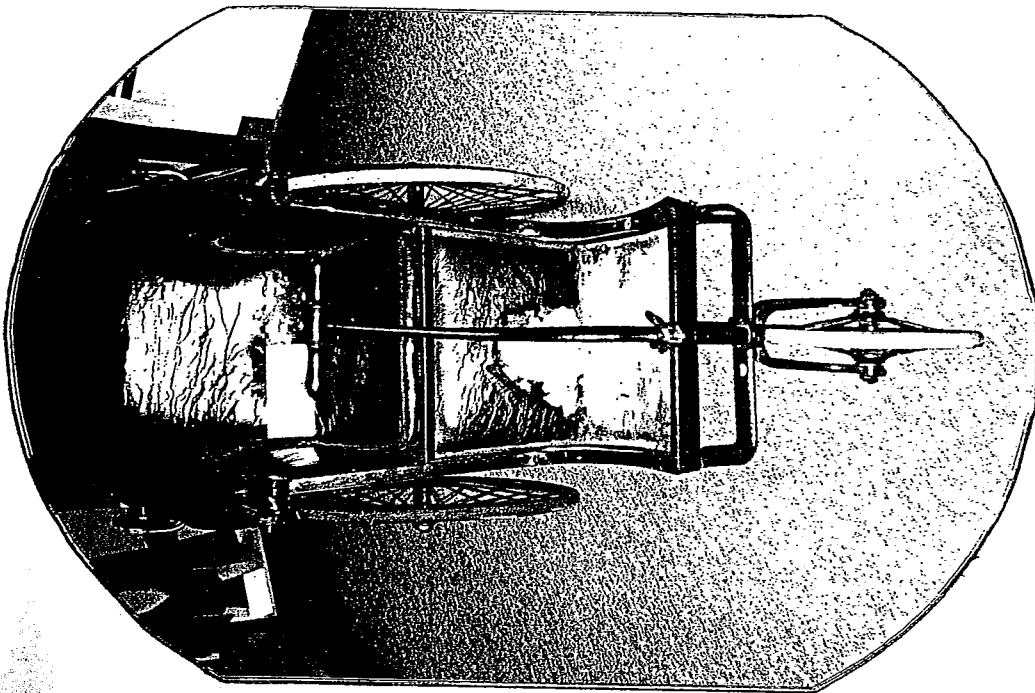
THE FIRST PERSON TO OWN A CAR IN THE VILLAGE WAS ( 1920 ) ALF THOMSON WHO LIVED IN MANOR FARM, THEN IT WAS WILLIAM F. WARD WHO LIVED IN NEEDHAMS FARM, AND THEN IT WAS JESSIE GILES WHO LIVED AT ALDERFORTH FARM.

JUST OUTSIDE THE FARRIERS SHOP OPPOSITE THE ALLOTMENTS WAS A PETROL PUMP WHICH WAS PUT THERE IN ABOUT 1927, AND TAKEN AWAY IN ABOUT 1980. IT WAS RUN BY FRANK ALLENS MOTHER.

JUST OUTSIDE WEST END FARM WAS ANOTHER PETROL PUMP WHICH WAS PUT THERE IN ABOUT 1934, AND WAS PULLED UP IN ABOUT 1939, IT WAS RUN BY WILLIAM FREDRICK WARD.

AFTER THE SECOND WORLD WAR THERE WAS A CINEMA IN ONE OF THE NISSAN HUTS, BUT IT WASN'T VERY SUCCESSFUL.

HOSPITAL SUNDAY PARADES WERE ON THE SECOND SUNDAY IN JUNE.



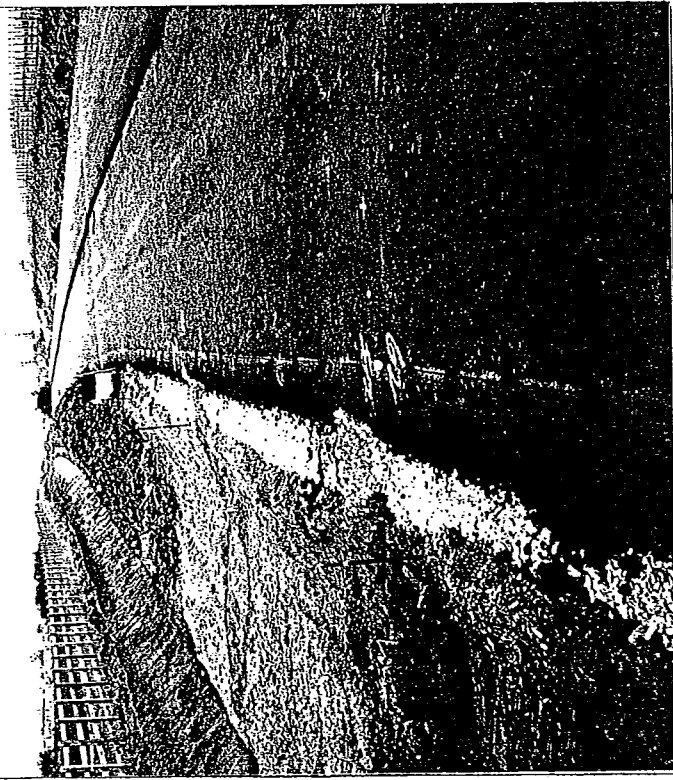
HERE IS A PICTURE OF A COMMUNAL BATH CHAIR, IT WAS BOUGHT BY REV. RACKHAM FOR A RELATIVE, AFTER HIS DEATH IT WAS TURNED OVER TO THE PARISHIONERS OF THE VILLAGE FOR THEIR USE. THE CHAIR WAS KEPT IN A STABLE AT WITCHFORD HOUSE BY MISS BELDAM. ONCE A YEAR IT WAS CLEANED, SCRUBBED AND THE ARMS GIVEN A FRESH COAT OF PAINT BY LOCAL PAINTER HARRY COLE.

THERE WAS ONCE A STRAWBERRY FIELD / FARM OPPOSITE F-C BODYWORKS WHICH OPENED IN ABOUT 1970, AND CLOSED IN ABOUT 1985. IT WAS FIRST OWNED BY MRS MORBY.

THERE WAS ONCE AN UNDERTAKING BUSINESS IN THE VILLAGE WHICH WAS RUN BY THE ALLENS.



DEVELOPMENT OF THE BY-PASS. (1989).

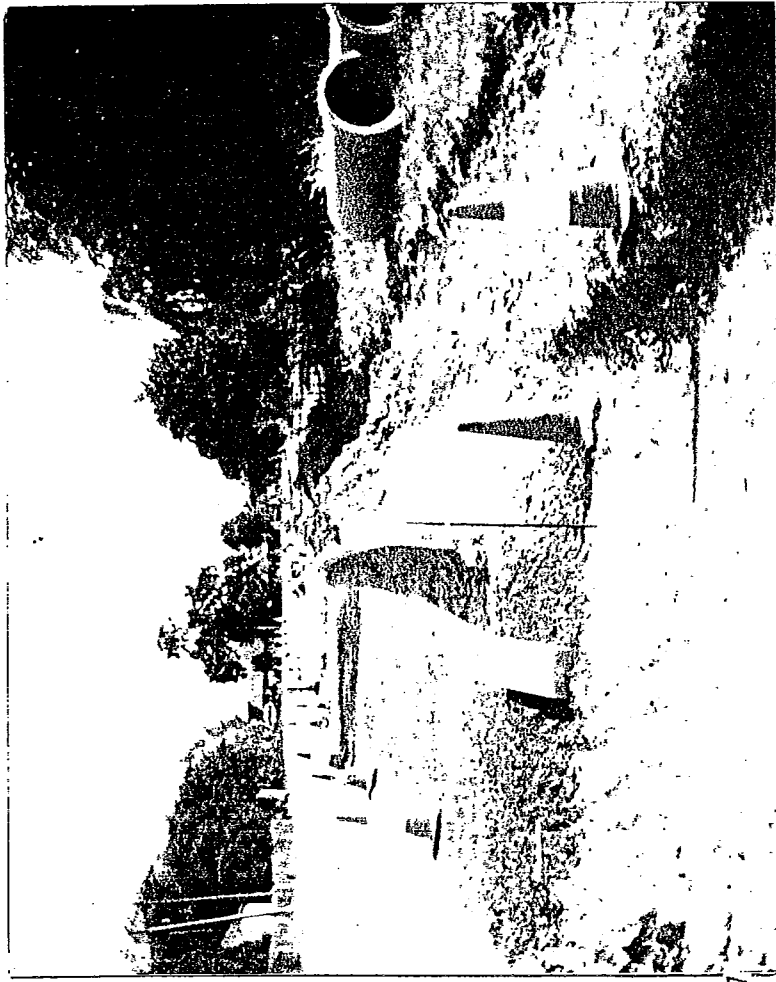


FRESH APPROACH THE HAIRDRESSERS WAS ONCE A GARDEN CENTRE SHOP, THE PLANTS WERE KEPT AROUND THE SIDE WHERE A NEW HOUSE HAS BEEN BUILT. IT OPENED IN ABOUT 1979, AND CLOSED IN ABOUT 1984.

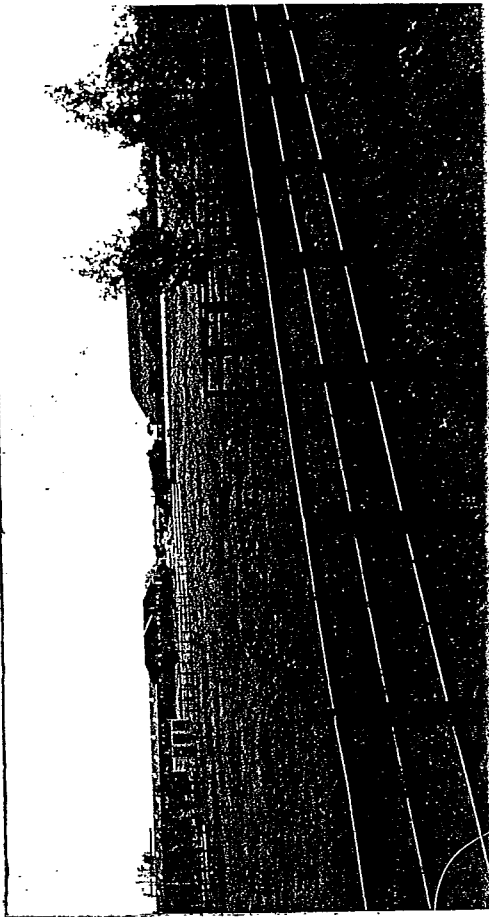
THE VILLAGE HAD AN ANNUAL FAIR WHICH HAD COCONUT SHYS, SHOOTING GALLERY ETC. IT WAS HELD ON THE GRASS FIELD NOW OCCUPIED BY MIDWAY GARAGE.

IN 1989 WHEN THE BY-PASS WAS BEING ESTABLISHED A TUNNEL HAD BEEN DISCOVERED. IT COULD HAVE COME FROM ELY CATHEDRAL TO WITCHFORD CHURCH. IT WOULD HAVE BEEN USED BY A PRIEST TO ESCAPE FROM NON BELIEVERS OF THE CHURCH

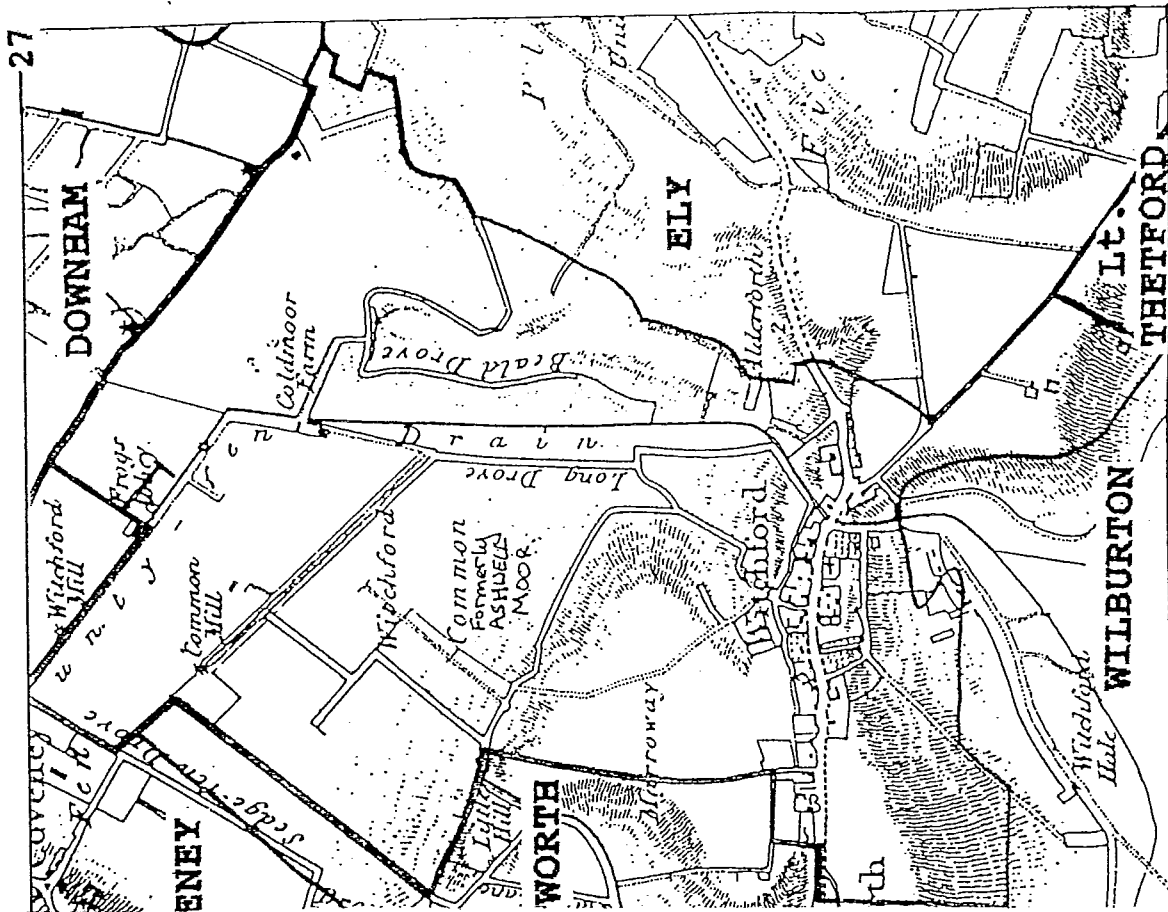
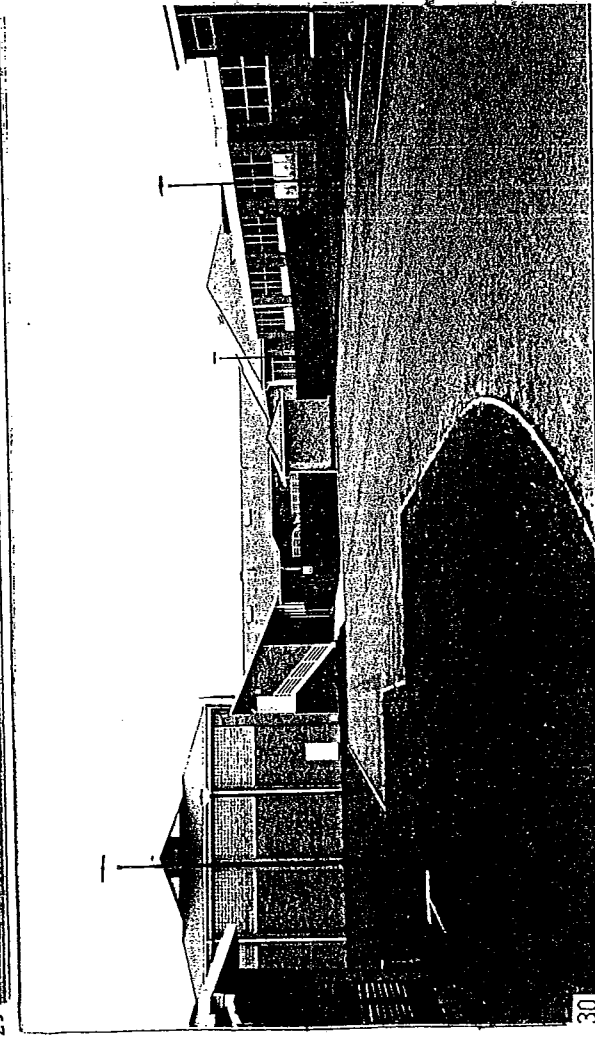
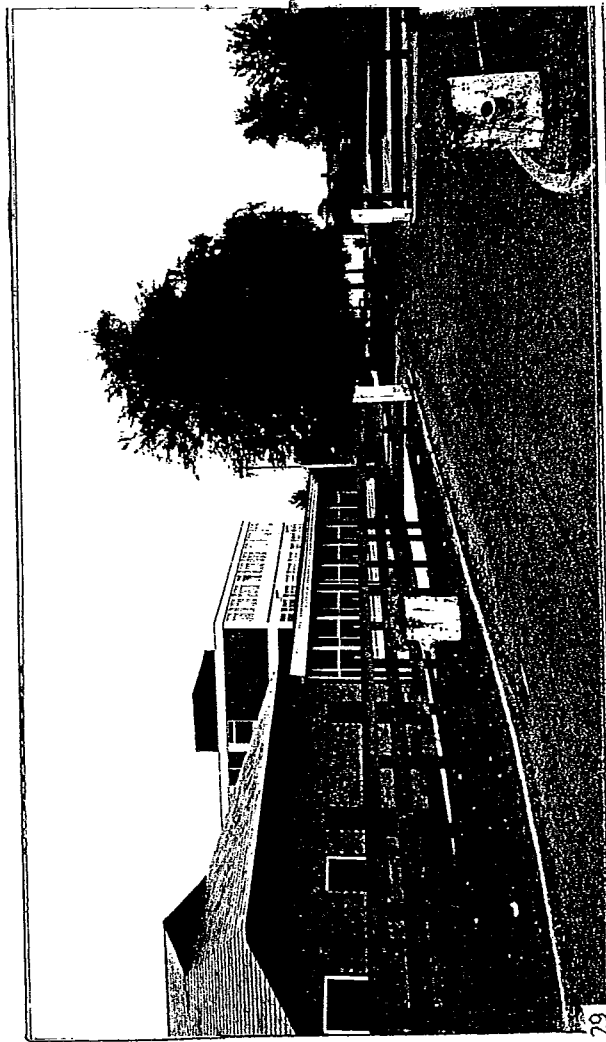
THE WIDENING OF COMMON ROAD.



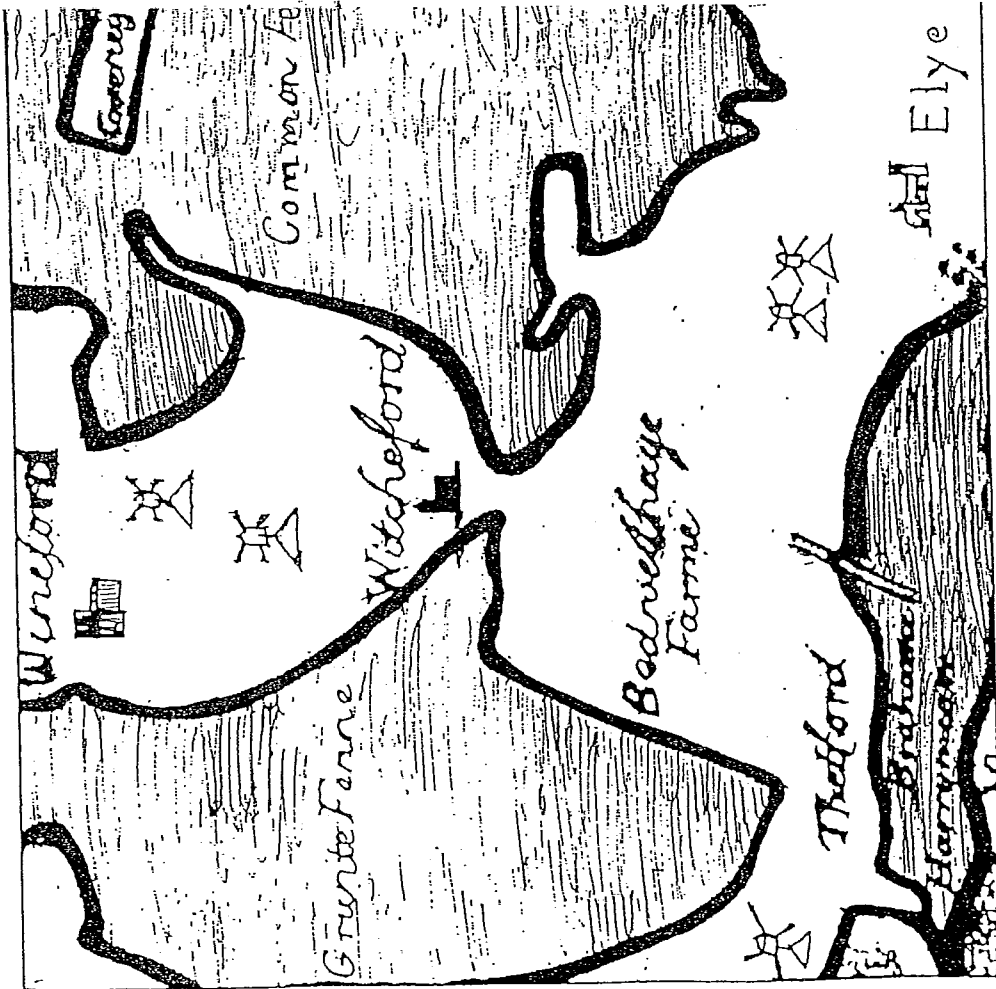
HERE IS A PICTURE OF WITCHFORD AIRFIELD / LANCASTER WAY WHICH WAS BUILT BY THE R.A.F. IN 1940 (IT IS ACTUALLY IN THE ELY PARISH).



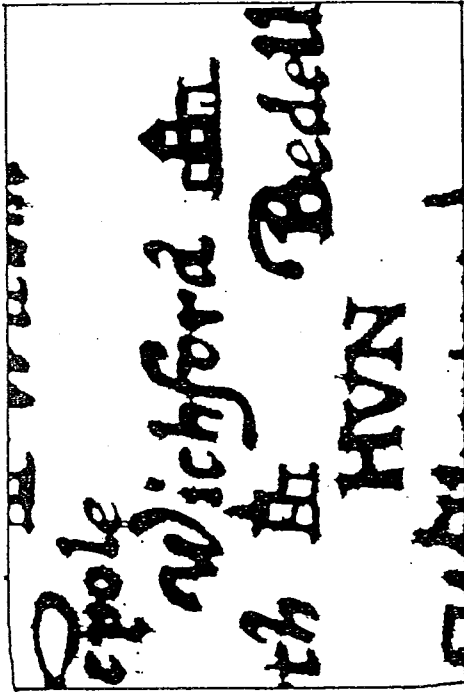
PICTURED HERE IS WITCHFORD VILLAGE COLLEGE WHICH WAS ESTABLISHED IN 1951 FROM AN OFFICERS MESS.



THIS IS A PLAN OF THE WITCHFORD PARISH ON 1st APRIL 1934, THE MAP IS 64 YEARS OLDER) WITH THE SURROUNDING PARISHES OF ELY, LITTLE THETFORD, WILBURTON, WENTWORTH, OVENEY, AND DOWNHAM.  
 NOTICE: FROGS ABBEY (NOW DESTROYED), WITCHFORD MILL, COMMON MILL (BOTH DESTROYED), THERE IS NO BROAD WAY ENTRANCE (NOT UNTIL 1910) AND THE SMALL TRACK RUNNING PARALLEL WITH MAIN STREET, NOW ONLY 28% IS STILL SURVIVING.  
 THE PARISH OF WITCHFORD CONTAINS 2,580 ACRES, THE POPULATION IN 1868 WAS ABOUT 580. THE AMOUNT OF ASSESSED VALUE AT THE TIME WAS £3,500.



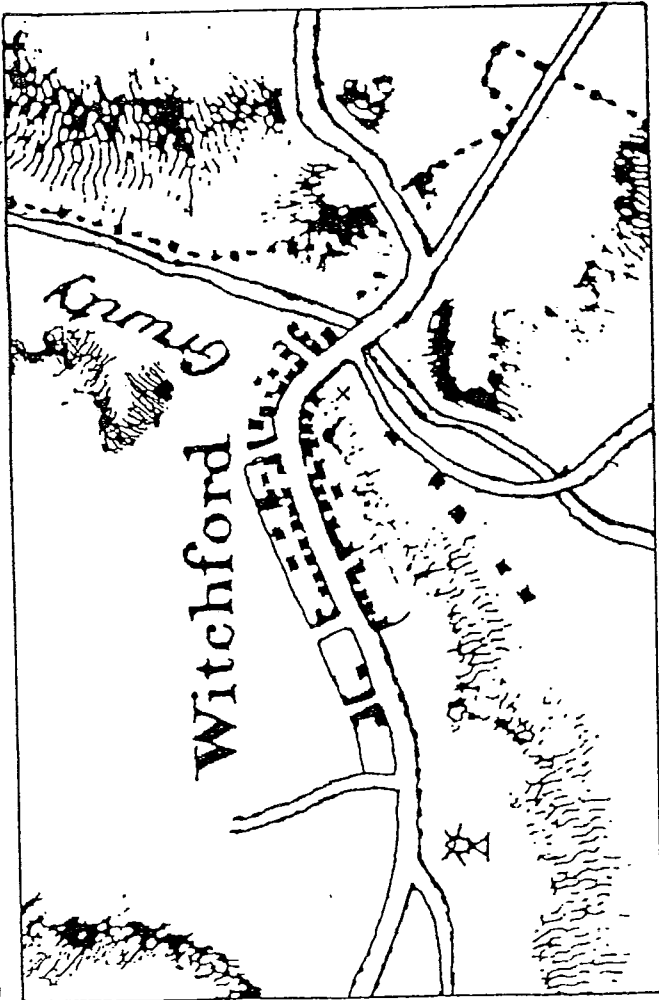
THIS IS A MAP OF WITCHFORD IN ABOUT 1600, NOTICE THE MAP WAS DRAWN AT THE WRONG ANGLE.



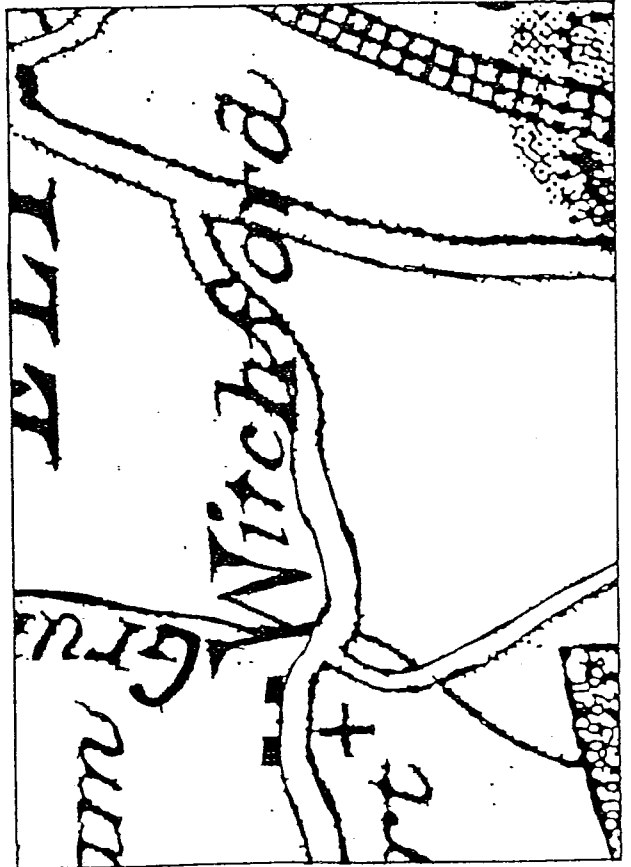
THIS MAP DATES BACK TO 1610. IN THOSE DAYS THERE WASN'T REALLY A CORRECT WAY OF SPELLING 'WITCHFORD'. HERE IS A LIST OF OTHER WAYS IT WAS SPELT: WYTCHFORD, WICEFORD, WICHFORD, WICHEFORD, WICHFORDA, AND WICHEFORDA.



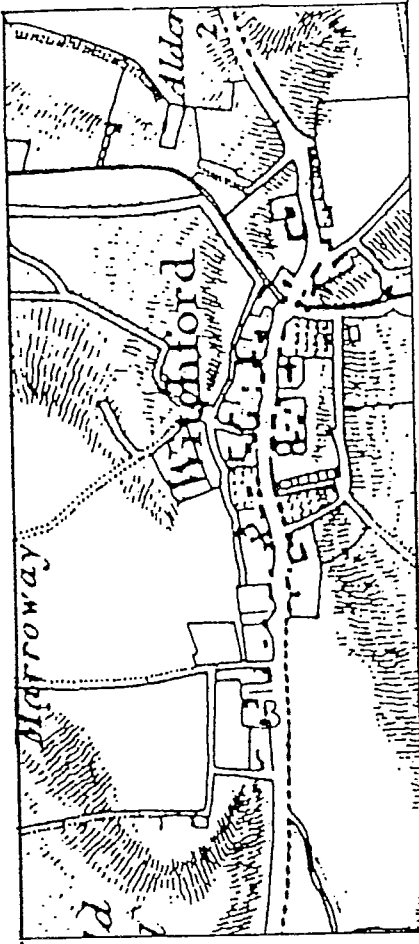
THIS MAP DATES BACK TO 1768. IT DOESN'T SHOW GRUNTY FEN DRAIN AS IT HAD NOT BEEN DUG OUT AT THAT TIME.



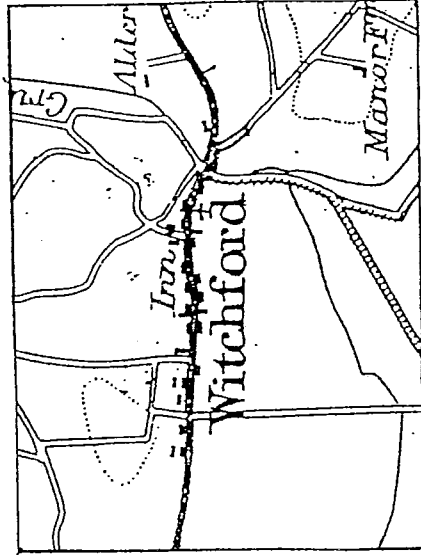
THIS MAP DATES BACK TO 1820. NOTICE THE WINDMILL SOUTH-WEST OF THE VILLAGE.



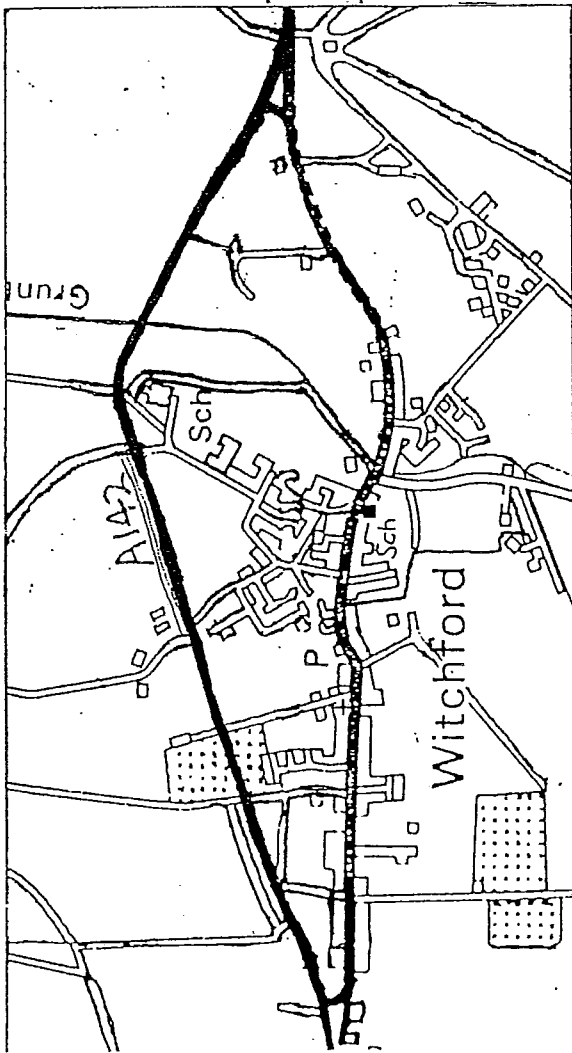
THIS MAP DATES BACK TO 1847. THE CAMBRIDGE TO ELY RAILWAY LINE IS TO THE RIGHT OF THE PICTURE.



THIS MAP DATES BACK TO 1878. NOTICE THERE IS NO NEW ROAD / SIX ROW LANE.



THIS MAP OF WITCHFORD IN 1946 SHOWS A CROSS ROADS AT COMMON ROAD AND THE INN SHOWN COULD BE THE SHOULDER OF MUTTON PUBLIC HOUSE.



THIS MAP IS OF THE PRESENT DAY WITCHFORD SHOWING THE NEW BY-PASS WHICH WAS CONSTRUCTED IN DECEMBER 1989.

THE POPULATION OF WITCHFORD IN:

1801	294	1871	594
1811	346	1881	442
1821	401	1891	452
1831	461	1901	378
1841	561	1911	402
1851	620	1921	421
1861	559	1931	449

THIS PICTURE SHOWS FRANK ALLENS SHOP SIGN WHERE HE AND HIS WIFE SOLD SEWING EQUIPMENT. IT CLOSED DOWN ABOUT NINE YEARS AGO.



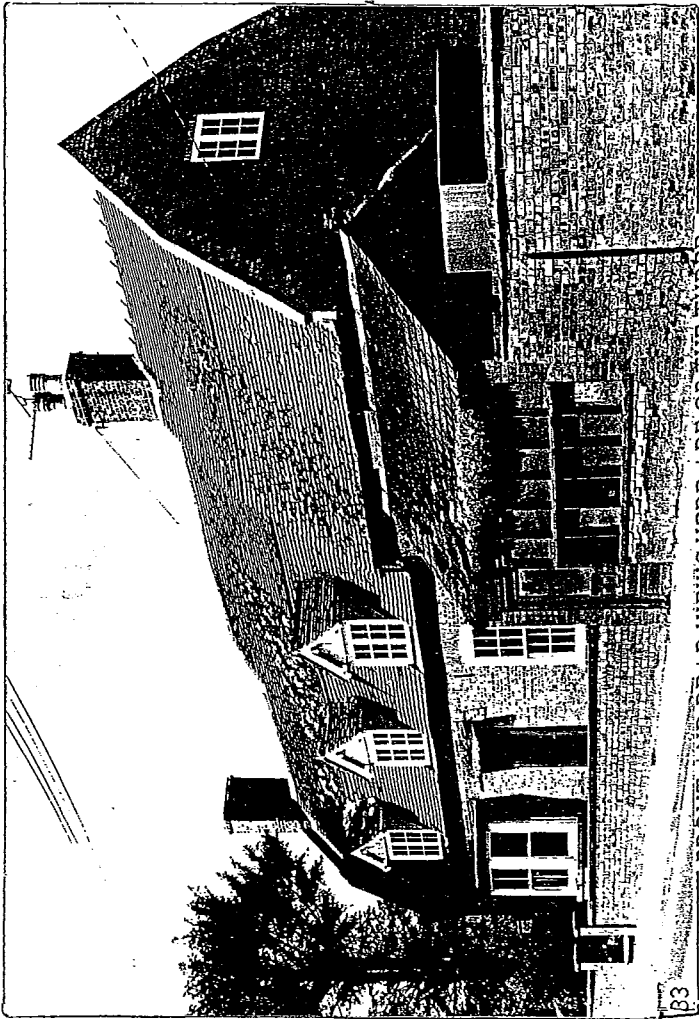
31

THIS PICTURE WAS TAKEN INSIDE St. ANDREWS CHURCH LOOKING AT THE EAST WINDOW.

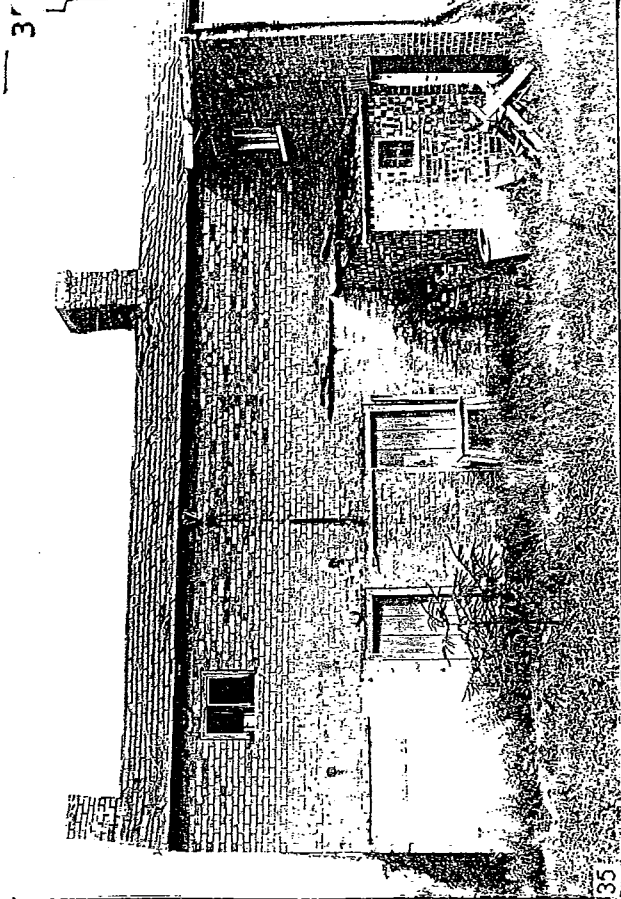
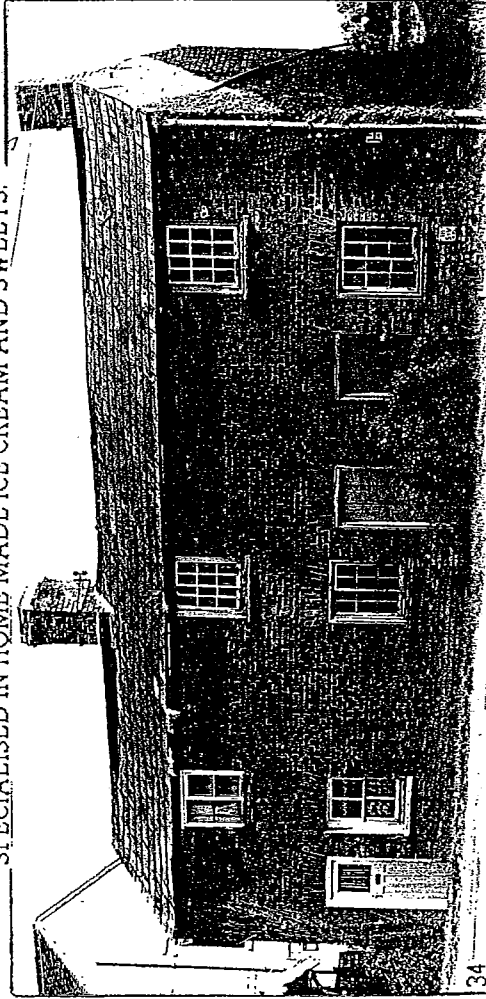


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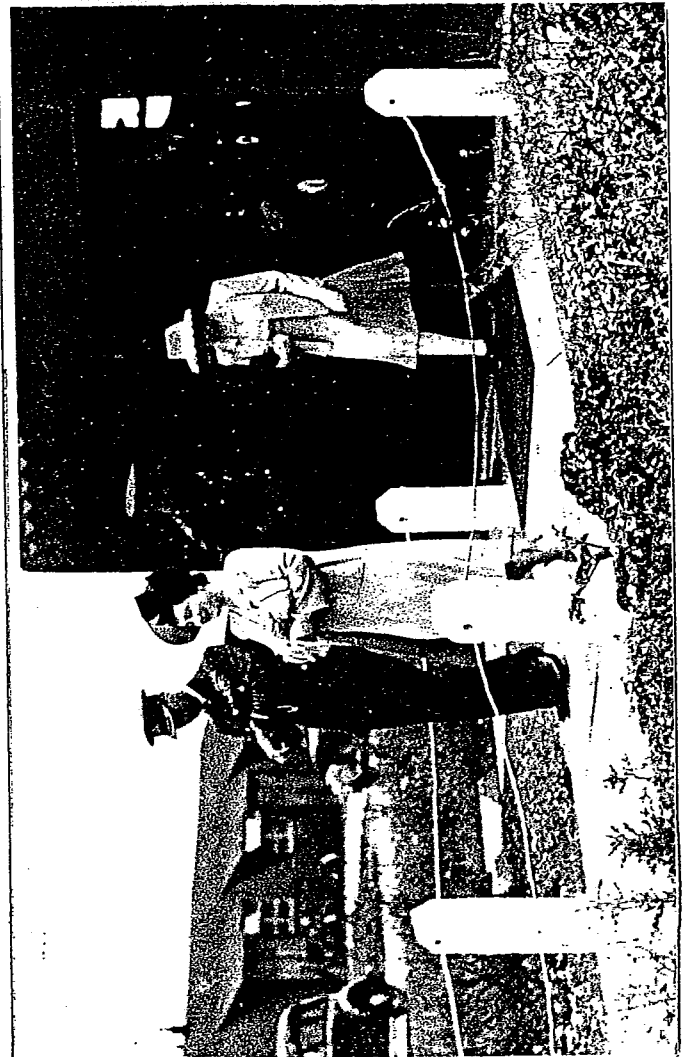
HERE IS A PICTURE OF THE GABLES IN ABOUT 1990. THE SMALL BUILDING IN FRONT OF THE HOUSE WAS ONCE A GENERAL STORES AND ALSO A BARBERS SHOP WHICH CLOSED DOWN IN 1935, IT WAS OWNED BY A HUNCHED-BACK MAN. THE GABLES DATES BACK TO THE EARLY 18th CENTURY.



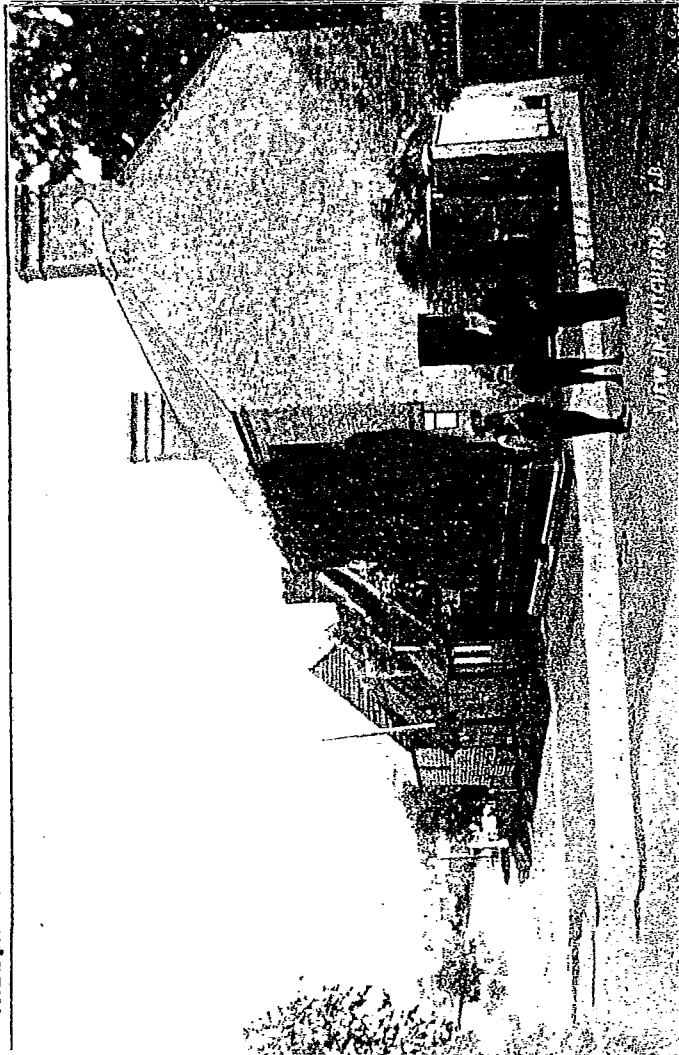
FRONT AND REAR VIEWS HERE ARE OF THE THREE COTTAGES WHICH STOOD OPPOSITE THE POST OFFICE. THEY WERE DEMOLISHED ABOUT 1991. MR & MRS LEONARD LIVED IN THE RIGHT, MRS P. GREY LIVED IN THE MIDDLE, MR & MRS DOULBY IN THE LEFT FACING THE LEONARDS. ONCE RAN A SHOP IN THE CENTRE COTTAGE BETWEEN 1923 - 1937. (THE RENT WAS 6 SHILLINGS PER WEEK) THEY SPECIALISED IN HOME MADE ICE CREAM AND SWEETS.



THIS PICTURE BELOW SHOWS GEORGE VI AND QUEEN ELIZABETH (THE QUEEN MOTHER) AND PRINCESS ELIZABETH (THE QUEEN) WHEN THEY VISITED THE AERODROME AT LANCASTER WAY IN 1943-44. BEFORE THEY CAME THE ARMY WASHED THE ROADS WITH PETROL.



LOOKING EAST TOWARDS ELY AND GRUNTY FEN CORNER, THIS IS A PICTURE OF THE OLD POST OFFICE WHICH WAS BUILT IN 1889 FOR THOMAS COLE THE POST MASTER WHO STANDS ON THE RIGHT OF THIS GROUP. ON THE LEFT OF THE GROUP IS BRAND RICHARDSON A ROAD SWEEPER AND LOCAL PREACHER, ALTHOUGH HE ONCE WALKED TO BRANDON CREEK TO TAKE A SERVICE. THE BOY IS UNKNOWN. NEW BUILDINGS NOW REPLACE THE OLD COTTAGES, BARNs AND ORCHARD BEYOND THE POST OFFICE, IT CLOSED DOWN IN ABOUT 1970. THIS PICTURE WAS TAKEN BY TOM BOLTON (WHO HAD A SHOP ON FORE HILL.ELY) IN ABOUT 1905. IT WAS BUILT BY EBENEZER ALLEN



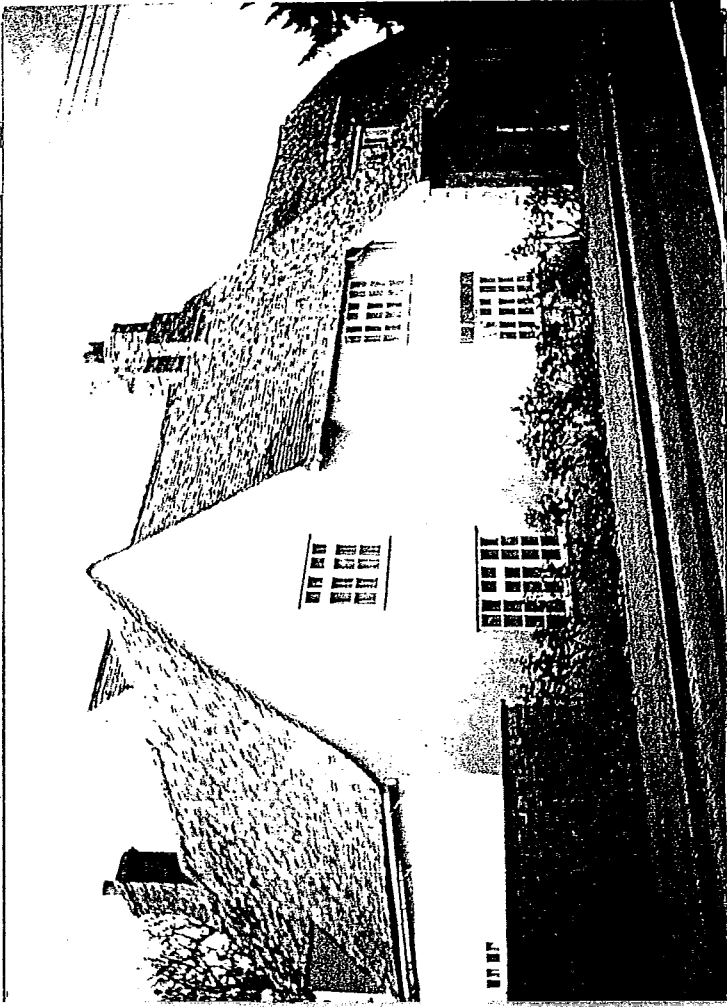
THE PICTURE HERE TAKEN BY TOM BOLTON IN ABOUT 1905 IS SHOWING THREE PUBLIC HOUSES. IN THE BACKGROUND NEXT TO THE TALL TREE IS THE SHOULDER OF MUTTON WHICH IS STILL IN USE TODAY. TO THE LEFT OF ST. ANDREWS HALL IS THE THREE HORSE SHOES WHICH CLOSED DOWN ABOUT 1945 AND WAS DEMOLISHED IN THE EARLY 1970s. JUST SHOWING ON THE EXTREME RIGHT EDGE OF THE PICTURE IS THE BOOT AND SLIPPER WHICH CLOSED DOWN IN ABOUT 1924, THE BUILDING STILL STANDS TODAY. ON THE SITE OF THE PRESENT ST. ANDREWS HALL WAS AN ANIMAL POUND WHICH WAS DEMOLISHED IN 1902, THESE TWO PUBS OBVIOUSLY SOLD BEER "BY THE POUND!"



SITED ON THE PRESENT DAY 'WARD WAY', THIS PHOTO SHOWS A GENERAL STORES TO THE LEFT, AND TO THE RIGHT THE 'HAMMER & ANVIL' PUBLIC HOUSE. THE COLE FAMILY IS ALSO PICTURED. FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: MISS COLE, MRS COLE, WILLIAM HENRY COLE AND TOM COLE WHO INVENTED THE FIRST IRON-BACK PLOUGH AND HIS FARRIERS SHOP WAS IN A YARD BEHIND THESE BUILDINGS. THIS WAS TAKEN IN 1896.

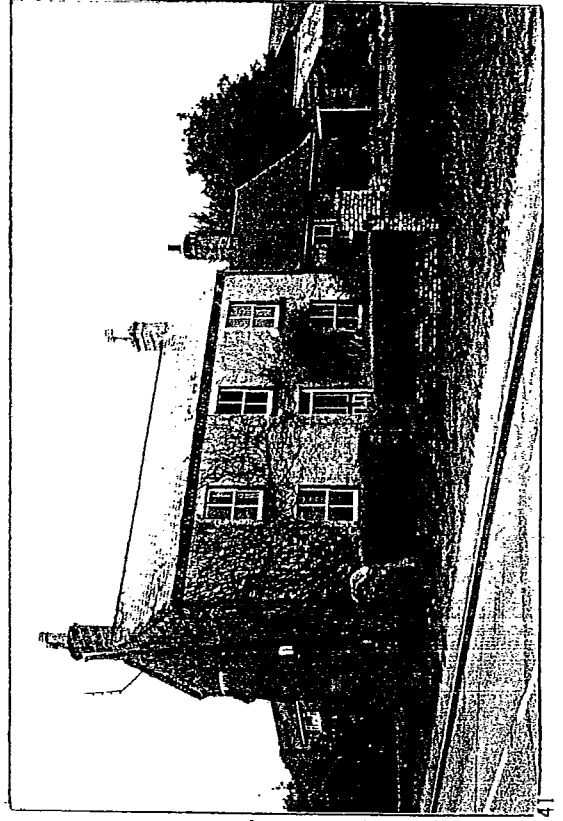


HERE IS A LIST OF OLD FARMS ALONG MAIN STREET;  
16 MAIN STREET (STILL IN USE), OR ALDERFORTH FARM.



40

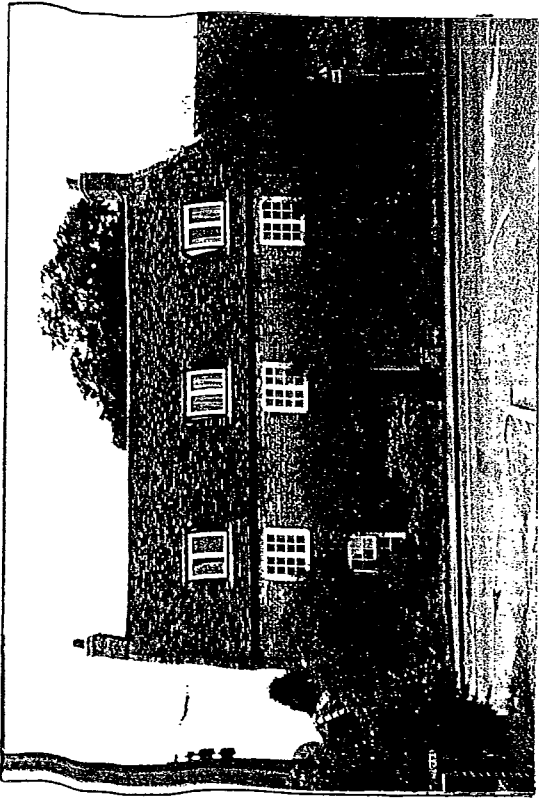
MANOR FARM OPPOSITE GRUNTY FEN CORNER (STILL IN USE), WHICH WAS BUILT IN 1607, AND RENOVATED BY EBENEZER ALLEN IN 1897.



41

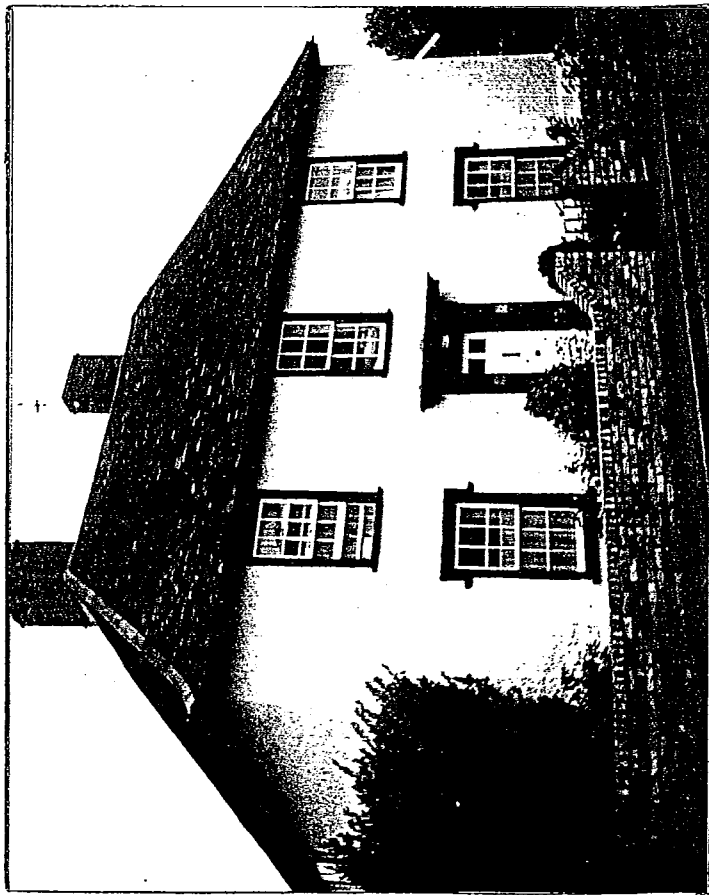


IVY HOUSE 73 MAIN STREET ON THE LEFT OF CHURCH (NOT IN USE AS A FARM).

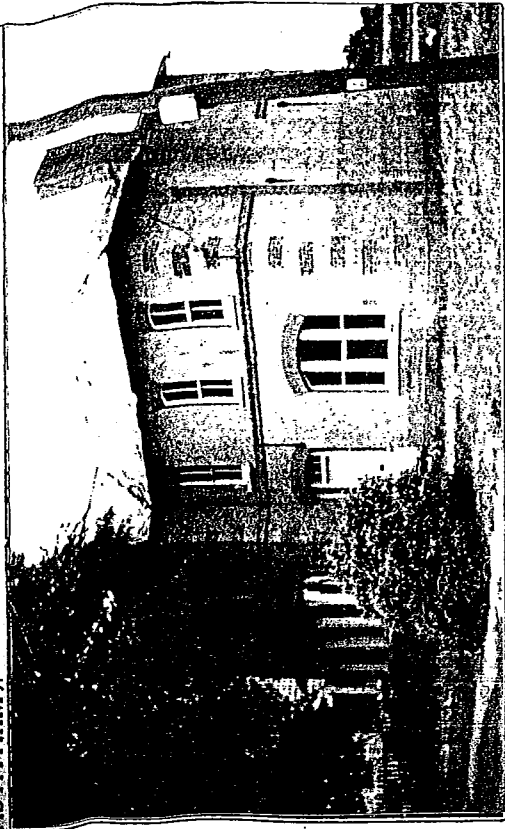


ROSSENDALE FARM OPPOSITE F-C BODYWORKS (ONLY PARTLY IN USE AS FARM)

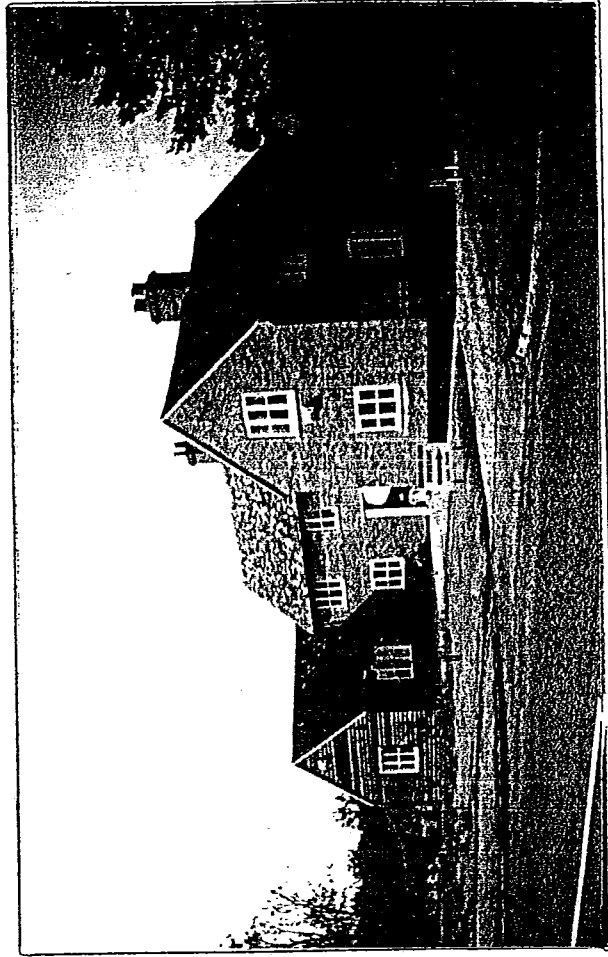
FARM WHERE CHURCH VIEW NOW IS (NOW DEMOLISHED).  
THE GABLES OPPOSITE THE CHURCH (NOT IN USE AS A FARM).  
WITCHFORD HOUSE (BARN S OFTEN IN USE).  
CLARE FARM (NOW CLARE HOUSE, NOT IN USE AS A FARM).



104 MAIN STREET ON THE LEFT OF BRIERY FIELDS (NOT IN USE AS A FARM).  
132 MAIN STREET ON RIGHT OF BAPTIST CHAPEL BUILT IN 1820 (NOT IN USE AS A FARM).



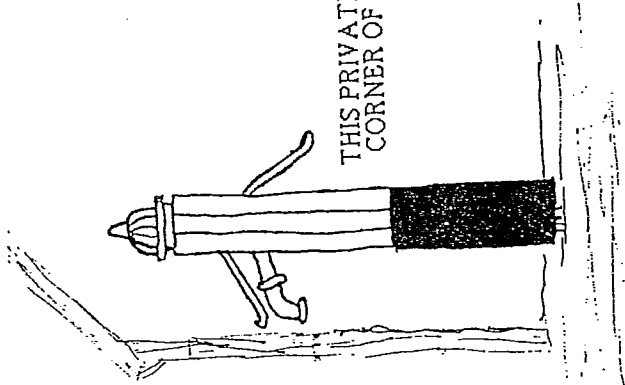
THERE WAS ALSO ONE OPPOSITE ON THE SITE OF 149 MAIN STREET KNOWN AS 'THE WHITE HOUSE' (NOW DEMOLISHED).  
ONE ON THE SITE OF GRANT A CLOSE / MARROWAY LANE CORNER (NOW DEMOLISHED).  
ONE ON SITE OF 161 MAIN STREET (NOW DEMOLISHED).  
WEST END FARM OPPOSITE MARROWAY CORNER (STILL IN USE).  
NEEDHAMS FARM NOW RENOVATED AS A RESTAURANT.



- HERE IS A LIST OF PONDS IN THE VILLAGE:
- ONE AT THE TOP OF MILLS LANE OPPOSITE THE POST OFFICE.
  - ONE NEXT TO THE BLACKSMITHS / FARRIERS SHOP, NOW OCCUPIED BY 'MINOR REPAIRS'.
  - ONE OUTSIDE NEEDHAMS FARM.
  - ONE AT SANDPIT LANE / BROAD WAY ( THIS WAS A SPRING ) CALLED GREEN SAND WATER ( THE LANE WAS CALLED THIS BECAUSE SAND HAD BEEN TAKEN FROM THERE TO SURFACE THE ROADS IN ABOUT 1910 WHICH WAS WHEN THE ENTRANCE TO BROAD WAY WAS BUILT ).
  - ONE AT THE COMMON, COMMON ROAD WHICH WAS FILLED UP IN 1951.

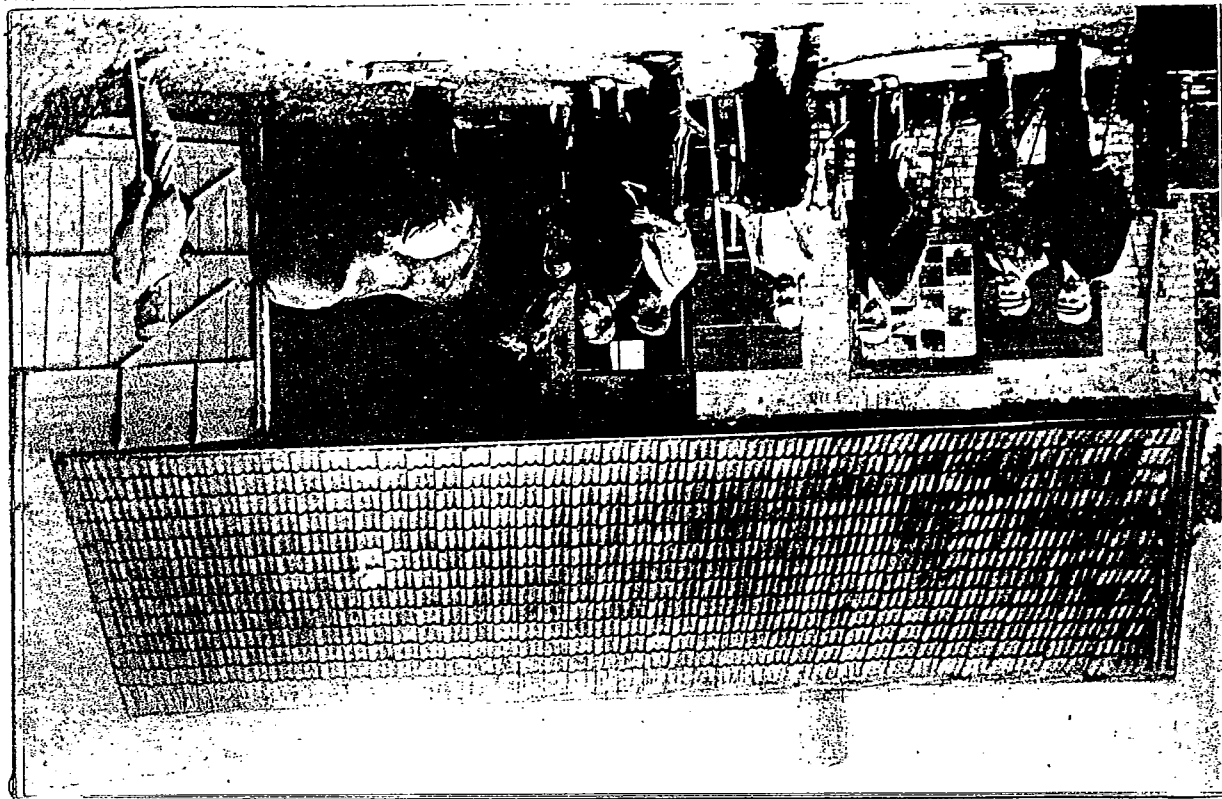
HERE IS A LIST OF WATER PUMPS IN THE VILLAGE:

- GRUNTY FEN CORNER. ( ONLY FIT FOR CATTLE AND HORSES )
- SHOULDER OF MUTTON CORNER.
- COMMON LAND, COMMON ROAD.
- NEEDHAMS FARM.
- POND AT SANDPIT LANE.



THIS PRIVATE PUMP IS SITUATED ON THE CORNER OF MANOR COURT ROAD.

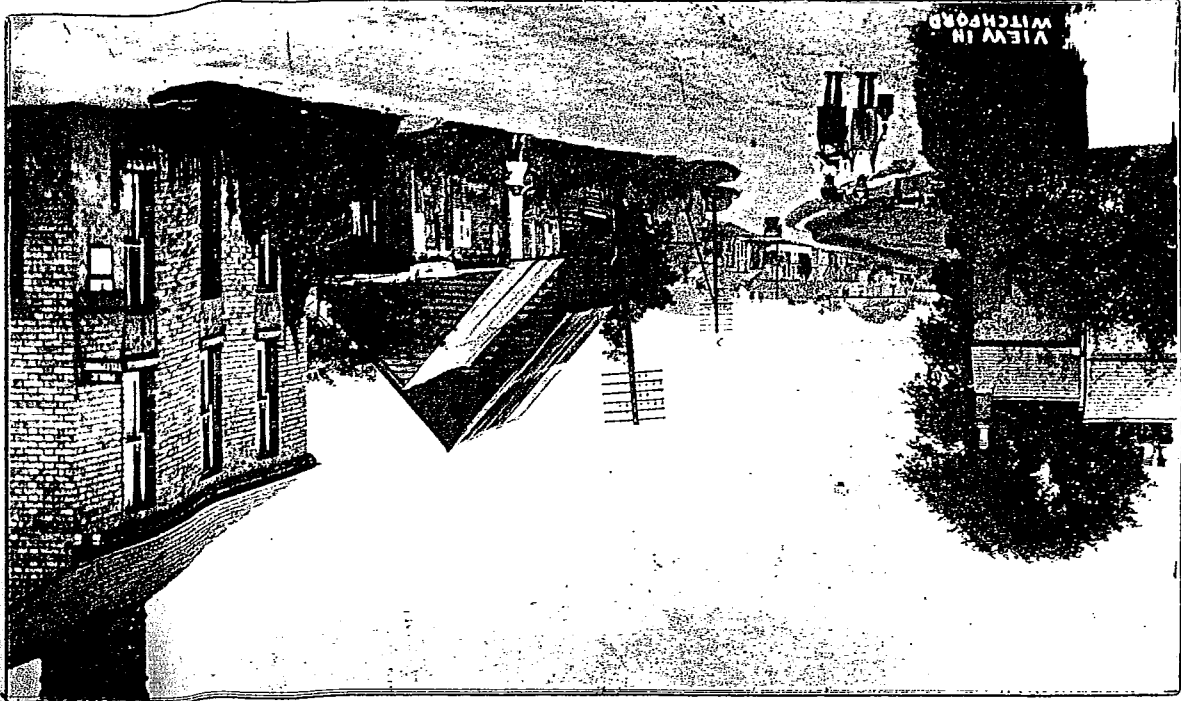
- HERE IS A LIST OF BLACKSMITHS WHICH WERE IN THE VILLAGE;
- ONE IN THE HAMMER & ANVIL BACK YARD ( NOW WARD WAY ).
  - ONE BETWEEN 37 AND 39 MAIN STREET THEN IT MOVED BETWEEN 55 AND 57 MAIN STREET.
  - AND ONE WHERE GRANT A CLOSE IS ( NOW DEMOLISHED ).



THIS PHOTO WAS TAKEN IN 1896, IT IS A FARRIERS SHOP. THE BUILDING IS STILL STANDING, IT IS SITED BETWEEN 55 & 57 MAIN STREET AND IS CURRENTLY USED BY IAN ALLEN. IT WAS BUILT IN 1860.

THE MEN IN THE PHOTO ARE, LEFT TO RIGHT: W. JUGG, MR WALLIS, JIM TAYLOR, HARRY MYERS, WILLIAM JOHN ALLEN, MR BELDAM (JUNIOR), JACK THE BLACKSMITH, AND RICHARD BELDAM (SENIOR).

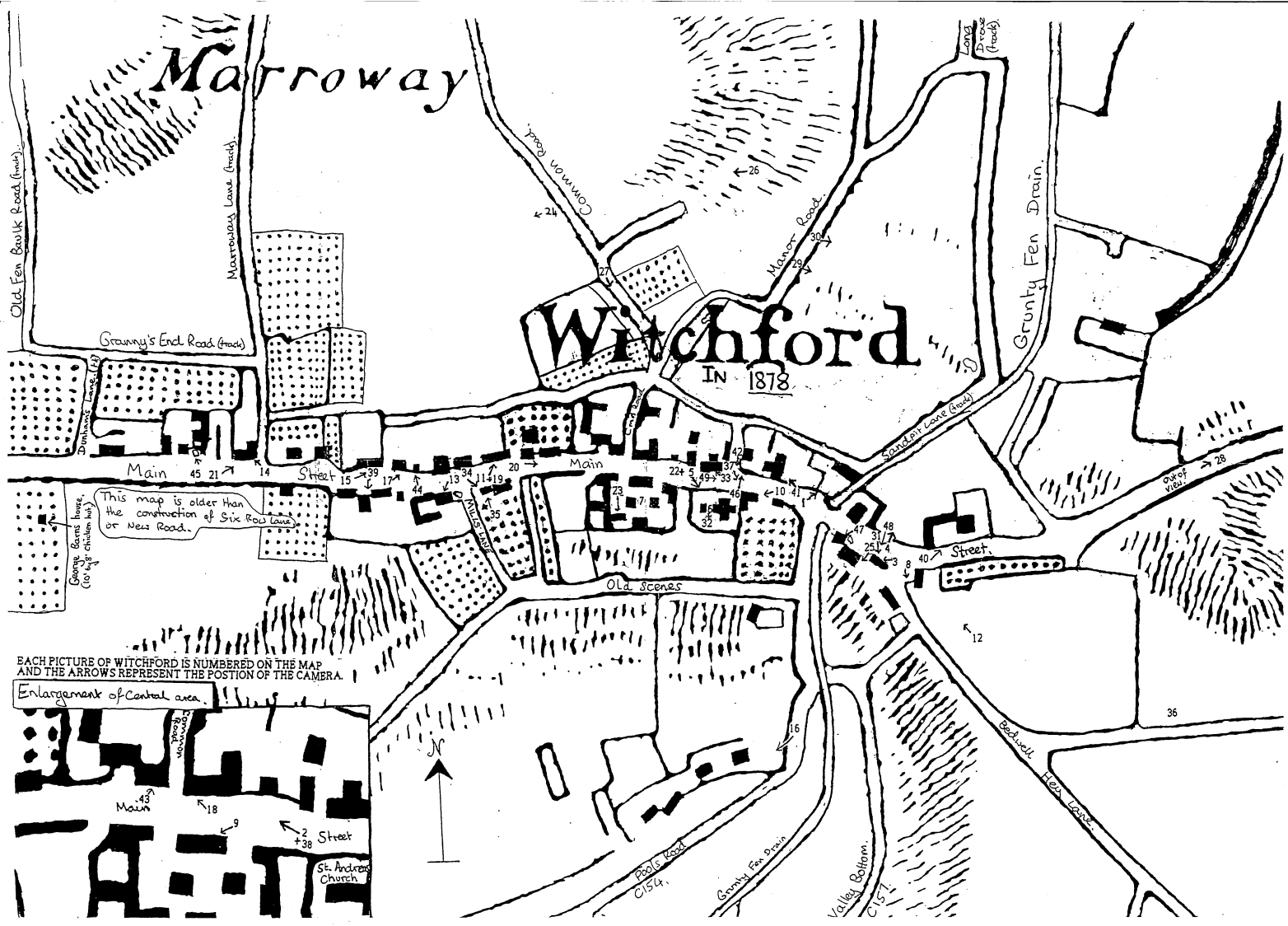
THIS PICTURE LOOKING EAST TOWARDS GRUNTY PEN CORNER IS SHOWING THE OLD POST OFFICE WHICH IS ON THE RIGHT, THE HOUSE ON THE LEFT WITH THE TALL TREE BEHIND IT IS MANOR FARM, THE THREE CHILDREN ARE UNKNOWN, THIS PHOTO WAS TAKEN IN ABOUT 1937.



THIS PHOTO DATES BACK TO 1892. THE BUILDING ON THE FAR LEFT IS NOW MR F. ALLENS HOUSE THE NEXT IS A SMALL SHOP WHICH WAS OPEN UNTIL ABOUT TEN YEARS AGO, THE THATCHED COTTAGE ON THE RIGHT WAS ONCE A PUB CALLED 'THE QUEENS HEAD' IT CLOSED DOWN IN CIRCA 1860. (THIS BUILDING IS NOW DEMOLISHED) THE NAMES OF THE PEOPLE LEFT TO RIGHT ARE: CHARLIE WILLIAM WARTH, JACK THE WHEELWRIGHT, SCOTT THE DOG, EBENEZER ALLEN, MRS MOXON ALLEN (SENIOR), FRANK DOUWEY (AN APPRENTICE), MOXON ALLEN (SENIOR), CHARLIE SOWYER, EMILY ALLEN, AND MOXON ALLEN (JUNIOR).

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

F. ALLEN  
M. BAXTER  
K. BONE  
B.&D. BRADSHAW  
M. COLLINS  
J. CONE  
B. COOPER  
B.&G. FAIRCHILD  
T. FIELDING  
A. GREY  
R. HALLMARK  
E. JOHNSON  
ELY MUSEUM  
A. RICHARDSON  
W. SEYMOUR  
J. WARD  
THE WITCHFORDIAN  
J. WRIGHT



Marroway

Witchford  
IN 1878

Granny's End Road (road)

Marroway Lane (track)

Common Road

Master Road

Sandpit Lane (road)

Gronty Fen Drain

Main

Street

Main

Old Scenes

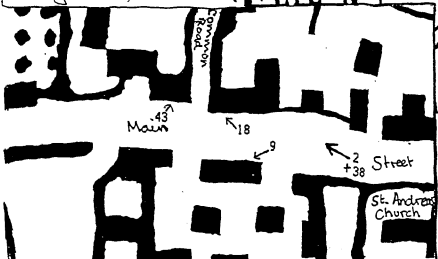
Street

This map is older than the construction of Six Row Lane or New Road.

George's farm house (10 1/2 of children's)

EACH PICTURE OF WITCHFORD IS NUMBERED ON THE MAP AND THE ARROWS REPRESENT THE POSITION OF THE CAMERA.

Enlargement of Central area



Pole Road  
C154

Gronty Fen Drain

Valley Bottom  
C157

Baldwell  
Tea Lane

36