

*Thought. An would like to read this & Return it -
when he has finished with it.*

DEBENHAM.

ITS MARKET, FAIR, CHURCH, HALLS,
AND OTHER ANTIQUITIES.

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I WONDER IF it ever struck you that there might be a very definite reason for our Suffolk towns and villages being where we see them to-day? One of the greatest difficulties that I have met with when trying to find out their past history is that people have always taken everything for granted. You found Debenham here as it is to-day as soon as your eyes were open. and so did your parents before you; or it was all ready built and waiting for you when you first visited the town: so you simply accepted it, and thought no more of the matter. Now, that is just what we have always done; and the result is that the historian finds no written record of those small and often slow changes that eventually utterly alter a place. But Liberal Debenham is really one of the most Conservative towns in England as regards its houses – excepting the hideous new Government houses up on the clay hill – and very few of the dwellings in which we live were not already here in Queen Elizabeth's time, over three hundred years ago. But all things must have a beginning; it seems best at the beginning of this sketch to begin with the town's first foundation, for which we must for which we must forget everything that is going on around us today.

In its place I want you to fill your mind with a dense forest of big trees, and plenty of tangled undergrowth between them. Through the middle of our forest a river runs along a valley towards the south-east, and is fed by four rivulets, All these four rivulets join within a very short distance of each other; and to make this quite plain, you will find one coming down from Aspall, called the Deben; one coming down from the direction of Kenton, just beyond the Camp; the third (Derry Brook) running along Stony Lane from Brices Farm, and the last also runs in from the west, past the Cherry Tree Inn. All these are now quite small, and except in winter-hardly broader than ditches. But at Debenham their united volume is still enough to form a veritable stream. that goes on through Winston south-easterly, till it eventually spreads out into a broad river at Woodbridge and joins the sea at Bawdsey.

I believe that the people who first built Debenham came

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from Bawdsey, because in their time the Deben river was a great deal broader and deeper than it is to-day. The density of our forest land, which occupied most of Suffolk, would cause a very much greater rainfall than we have now, and the extra water would keep the bed of the Deben well scoured, and carry away to the sea all the earth that has recently silted and blocked its bed. So up this broad river there sailed in their small boats the Angles, about three or four hundred years after Christ's death. Christ has been dead nineteen hundred years now so you see Debenham has been a going concern for about sixteen hundred years: no wonder that it has an old look about it! I do not think that it was in existence when the Romans owned England, because the Roman road runs straight north and south, three miles to the west of us, and I have never heard of any remains of their buildings being found here. Nor does it seem the kind of place that they would choose for a town.

On the other hand, it is exactly the kind of place that our Angles from Bawdsey would choose for a town. The Romans were so powerful that they built their dwellings out in the open, flat country and raised strong stone walls to protect them; but the Angles were not powerful, and they were so divided into small bands that they took all the advantage they could of the forests and the rivers to help them in defending their buildings against possible attack by both man and beast. When they had sailed up the Deben a long way, they came to a spot where the river suddenly got quite small, because it divided into four rivulets. At the junction there was a broad lake, reaching right across from the churchyard to the White House, and protecting the whole east side. West of it was an abrupt spur running straight down from Debenham Hall, and on the bottom of this spur, just, above the lake's water-mark, they set up the first temple to their pagan gods. The temple and their own timber houses they fenced in upon the west. so that it formed a village at the bottom of the valley. Naturally they talked about their home in their native Anglo Saxon as being "aet tham deopan hamme;" which meant "in the deep or low-lying enclosure";

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gradually the unnecessary "at the" dropped out and left merely deopan hamme, which has become contracted by degrees till we have nothing of it left but Debenham today. This might advantageously be spelled, as it is pronounced, with double bb, representing the Angles pb: Deptford, the London shipyard, is spelled Depeford, meaning the low-lying ford, by Chaucer.

Of Debenham while it was inhabited by the Angles we have small definite record ; but there can be no doubt that they dug the moats at Ulverston Hall and Easter Barn, which seems to me likely to have been the site of the earliest Debenham Hall. They may have dug the moats at Crowes Hall, though these are not very early ones. They buried one of their principal men near Brices Farm, and raised a mound of earth over him to commemorate the spot; this tumulus is said to still exist. though I have not seen it myself. They probably also dug the defensive earthwork at Hill Farm. But the most interesting thing is White's statement that "the Kings of East Anglia occasionally held their courts here." Up to the year 870, East Anglia was entirely separated from the rest of England by the Fens, on the west and the River Stour, which divided it from Essex, along the south. And it was an independent kingdom, with its own native rulers; there can be no doubt so much of Norfolk and so much of eastern Cambridgeshire was then under water that Suffolk was by far the most important part of the kingdom. In fact, all the records go to show that Bury was the chief town; and we know that in the year 660 our King Æthelweald had a country seat — like our present King's at Sandringham — on the banks of the Deben at Rendlesham. With a palace there, It is by no means unlikely that he would sail up the river to Debenham; but if he had a palace here too, it was pretty surely near the church and not, as I have heard said, on the high ground at Crowes Hall.

For these old Angles were about as religious a people as there ever have been, though one cannot deny that they had a considerable dash of ferocity in their religion. Thus, Æthelweald's elder brother was canonised under the name Saint Anna; and his niece, Æthelthryth, was one of the most

celebrated virgins throughout all England. She founded the monastery of Ely, which later became a cathedral, and here in Suffolk we still retain her memory in the "Liberty of St. Etheldreda," the Latinised form of Æthelthryth. If we could but discover Debenham's history at that time, I believe we should find it intimately connected with Ely Minster, but unfortunately no more than two indications of this are left us. The first I venture to recognise in the name Ulverston, in Debenham, for there can be no doubt that the names of our ancient farms are as old as their moats and a great deal older than any part of the existing buildings. Ulverston is the modern form of the late Anglo-Saxon Ulfher's ton, meaning the earlier Wulfhere's farm; and it seems to me by no means impossible that it was named from King Wulfhere, who married Saint Ethelthryth's niece about the year 675. Whether his property here were given to Ely Abbey by his daughter, Eormenn[h?]^{ild}, when she was Abbess there about the year 700 we cannot tell; but we do know that, when Domesday Book was written in 1066, a very large proportion of the township already belonged to it.

Debenham has some claim to royalty right up to Domesday's compilation, for in it we find that part of Ulverston was held by "Lewin Cilt," and it is pretty certain that this Cilt represents the title "Child," which meant Prince — that is to say, one of the reigning family. This is borne out by the fact that before the Norman Conquest King Harold actually possessed a brother called Lewin (Leofwine), who was Earl of Essex, and likely to hold Suffolk lands. But the victory of Duke William at Hastings put an end to all Anglo-Saxon matters; and the sole vestige now remaining is the glorious church tower, which God preserve.

Especial attention must be drawn to this tower because nobody has hitherto done it anything approaching justice. Actually it is the very finest and most extensive example of Anglo-Saxon architecture in the whole of Suffolk — probably of East Anglia. I am not going to bore yo'u with technical details

of its features; but, when you stroll past it next time, just try if you have seen anywhere else in all your travels a church tower combining utter lack of buttresses with that peculiar pattern of stenos at each corner, first a long one and then a short one, alternately upright and across. The windows on the South side are of the same date; but what that date is, no one in England can tell you within a couple of hundred years, because the Saxons went on building churches in the same way for fully that period: it may be anywhere between 860 and 1060 — perhaps White's guess at "about the year 1000" is correct. Think of it, nine hundred and twenty years old!

We must not say a word against William the Conqueror, for, though he put an end to the interesting Saxon times, he gave us the above Domesday Book, which contains the first complete account of our town. I have worked out all the details most carefully; but there is, of course, far more than I have space to tell you here. So I will give the totals only. The whole place was held of the King by four great barons who were the Abbot of Ely (from Saxon times); Robert Malet, Lord of Eye Castle, and about the largest landholder in Suffolk; Bishop Odo of Bayeux, the Conqueror's half-brother, and a most unpleasant personage; and Ralph Peverel, who is said to have been another of William's relations, Robert had 315 acres, Ralph 280, Odo 312, and the Abbot only the odd five or six of the whole 9233 acres that were under the plough; but, for all that, the Abbot of Ely was the most powerful man here, because he held overlordship between the King and other barons. So you see that, if only about 1,000 acres were plough land, with perhaps another 50 meadow, what a large majority of our present 3,322 total acres must still have been forest at that time. We should be correct in supposing the meadows on either side of the water-courses, the arable land just outside the meadows, and all the rest forest, stretching away to both east and west till we come to the clearings around the conterminous villages. Another interesting point is that Debenham then had a Fair — the only one mentioned in the whole county — and, because the village of

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Aspall shared in the fair, I expect it was held somewhere to the north of the town, beside the main river.

Realty I believe that our town was then at the height of its prosperity. The Saxons traded mainly with what we call Holland and Germany, from the —ports of Dunwich, Frostenden, and Ipswich; and Debenham would not be too far inland to get the profits of the carriage from the coast to Bury, which was a great town itself, and also on the road to Newmarket, whence the Icenhild Way was the trade route to all England. Hence, if Debenham had ceased to have a palace, it yet retained as many as three churches, a fact which has hitherto been overlooked. St Mary's of to-day was certainly its earliest and finest church, on account of its site upon the hill-spur; two-thirds of the advowson, with 20 acres of glebe, were vested in Robert Malet, and the odd third, with 10 acres, in Ralph Pevel. The second church was St Mary the Virgin, and this must have, stood near Tower Mill and my original Hall at the top of Grace Church Street, which was named named from it; but the, exact site seems lost. Its patronage is not quite clear; but apparently Odo and Ely each held a quarter share, carrying 10 acres of glebe apiece: and we find the other half-share in Mickfield, where doubtless the — supposititious 20 acres — of glebe lay, held by Pevel. The name "Easter" Barn must be connected with this church.

The third of the Debenham churches was to the north of the present town. The assertion is my own, and is based upon the two facts that the association of our unique Fair with Aspall shows that the town used to extend further in its direction, and that parts of the allotments, now on the rising ground to the east of the modern cemetery, are colloquially called the Upper Priory and the Lower Priory. Since there never was a Priory in Debenham, the presence of the name here, can be explained only by the fact that on or near this site stood the church-named St. Andrew's in Domesday though it has recently been erroneously called St Edmund's — that William de Fresna, Nigel de Ulverston, Gilbert Colvill and (unnamed) others gave

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to Butley Priory in the fourteenth century. In 1086 three-quarters of it, with 1 1/2 acres of glebe, were vested in . Ely Abbey, and the odd quarter with one-half acre in Robert Malet of Eye. Either this or Grace Church seems to have had a circular tower, like that at Thorp in Ashfield to-day. Further evidence of the town's extension in this direction, but not earlier than 1500, is found in the brick foundations, which have been unearthed upon these allotments. The Induction Mandate Bock would show when these two churches ceased to serve their cures; but I can say no more than that there was a composition concerning the right of tithes between Ely and Butley on June 4th, 1361, and that they have both been long forgotten.

Of course, the above great Barons were too exalted to have had any personal connection with Debenham themselves; they were merely lords of the soil, and let it to lesser Normans, of whom the farmers held it. These Norman knight were Sir William Gulafra, Sir Ralph de Savigny and a Saxon called Werngaer of Baylham, who was put in to manage Bishop Ode's lands by the sheriff of Suffolk. the first of the "stormy Bigots" of Framlingham Castle. The farmers themselves were the men who had owned the farms before the Conquest; but now, instead of having the profits for their own pockets, they were only too thankful to hand them over to the Conquerors in return for mere safety in life and limb.

Debenham Market continued to be a famous institution, and doubtless much of the local farm produce was shipped to the coast down the Deben River, for old anchors of vessels have been found embedded in the gravel both above the town at Gull — which is the Suffolk word for a valley-bottom, hollowed out by water — Farm and alongside Hoskess Lane, which runs from Cross Green to the Wash at Tollgate Road bridge. This lane lies very low, upon the western edge of the erstwhile lake, and I should like to derive its name (Hoskess) from some such origin as Horse Quays, the place where the waggons and pack-horses from the surrounding country laded the outgoing barges for the coast, There certainly is a local tradition to the latter effect, but

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no definite record remains: another Instance of gradual changes passing unnoticed.

People were no less contentious in those days than they are now; and we find that our barons, Bishop Odo, the Malets and the Bigots were all in turn deprived of their property here for rebelling against the King. So it fell into the hands of the Sussex Sackville family, probably by their marriage with Ermentrude, who was one of the heiresses of the doughty Robert Aguillon, the Constable of Orford Castle. At all events we know that this Constable held the manor of Debenham, and that in 1222 the King granted him the Fair annually held here on the 23rd and 24th of June, "the Eve and Feast of the nativity of St. John. the Baptist," as they termed it in those old Romanish times; as well as a weekly market every Friday. Kirby tells us that both the Friday market and the 24th June Fair were still going concerns in the year 1764, though the former had then become "rneau" and may have been affected by the great fire here in 1744. The market seems to have quite pettered out soon :afterwards, because it had "long been disused" when it was revived as a weekly event during only the six winter months in 1851, and continued till after 1885, shortly before which year the old cattle fair on 24th June, and a lamb show on 1st September had been discontinued.

Upon the death of the above Constable Aguillon, the various manors of Debenham, along with the profits of its fairs and markets, were divided among the Sackville, Cockfield, Aspall, and Kenton families; and bickerings constantly arose between them as to the quarter-rights, which, in one instance led to Ivo de Kenton being handed into the Marshal's custody for appropriating to his own use the whole of the market tolls. In Edward the Second's reign these quarter-profits amounted to 6s. and 8d. a year, which is the same as exactly five pound- of our current money; 20 pounds a year does not seem much for a weekly market, but in those days it compares favourably with similar markets.

The history of the various manors that exist, or once existed

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in Debenham, is extremely complex, and needs a good deal more elucidation than has yet been bestowed upon it. So we will do no more now than glance at one or two of those very old houses that still stand as the outward and visible signs of the inward and somewhat nebulous thing termed a manor. I have said above that Debenham Hall seems to have been moved from its early site: so we may regard Ulverston Hall as the oldest remaining to us. Here I am inclined to believe we have one of the first settlements of our Angles, because it lies low, and but slighting above the probable level of the Derry Brook, that had Stony Laine for its bed in those days. The quadrangular moat is about 15 feet in breadth, but a good deal of it on the west and north has been filled in; nor do I fancy there remains anything about the present farmhouse much older than the sixteenth century, though some of the beams and the newel staircase, in the centre of the longer arm of the L, in which shape it is built, are interesting. This place gave name to the Ulverston family; and it is a curious fact that, whereas before the Conquest men gave name to places — just as we talk about a farm being Cole's or Gyford's nowadays — after the Conquest the case was reversed, and the landless Norman adventurers— among whom was the progenitor of the great Bedingfields — tagged on the title of their new possessions by way of surname. Thus the first Hugh appears as "de Ulverston" about the year 1200, and we hear of his son William a generation later.

Then comes a gap, hut partly filled by Robert :FitzMichael and Fulk FitzReginald. who had adopted their father's Christian as their own surnames. But in 1325 we find, John de Ulverston, whose son Thomas married Clementia and had a son John, who was a feudatory of Ely minster. Then in 1373 there is a William le Ulverston of Heveningland; and, five years later, a Sir John de Ulverston seems distinct from Thomas Ulverston's son John, in whom Mickfield Manor was vested in 1439. Perhaps the last married Elizabeth, since Richard, the last Ulverston I can find, had a mother of that name in 1477. I am not sure that all these people lived at our old Hall, which was

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owned along with its manor by Henry Tooley, who held his first Court here in 1551; and in 1574 willed the whole 305 acres to the Corporation of Ipswich, who still hold it. And there, in St. Mary Quay Church, Tooley is eulogised :—

"This man in Deaths by Will reportes whereto his Lyfe was bent,

That, Yearlie gave to Wayfs and Pore his Lan.s and Annual Rent,

In Ipswich aye to their Behoufe and his immortal Fame

A Glass to showe the use of Welthe, a patterne how to frame."

I have a very lively but rather ill-founded theory that all the Suffolk moats upon the top of hills were dug by the Danes of Knut's eleventh century invasion, that is to say between 1014 and 1066. Hence the square one surrounding Crowes Hall, overlooking the valley of the Deben, would be first excavated at that period. This site I am inclined to believe inhabited by the great Lord Seaxa before the Normans came; and we find evidence of his prowess in the fact that Ely Abbey granted him the whole of a place called "Tusmere" by Domesday, though that name is now lost, and its locality cannot be traced. We know little of him beyond the fact that he is gone in 1086, and that a Prior of Bury Abbey, bearing the Paine name (Seaxa), was buried in the monks' chapter-house there in 1094. To his lands and part-interest in the Debenham churches succeeded Ralph Peverel, who married Baron Engelric's daughter Maud, and was followed by his son Matthew and grandson William, from whom the whole Honour of Peverel passed to King Henry I. But the place was certainly not termed Crowes Hall until about 1300, when we meet the Crowe family, who seem to have been originally called "de Crowfield" from that village; and after them our Hall was occupied by the Talbots, who seem to have inherited it from the Crows. At all events we find John Crow and his wife Maria in Debenham at the end of the twelfth

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century. Fifty years later Roger Crowe and Julia his wife appear; and there was a Thomas Crowe in 1366. William Crowe's will was proved five-and-twenty years later; and they seem to have continued here till William Crowe joined the Company of Spanish Merchants and made a fortune in Yarmouth.

An Elizabethan scribe has told us that this place "stondeth on a praty Hille and a wood about it, a little without Debenham Market Towne. and is called Crowis Haulle, for one Crow a gentilman was owner of it, or ever Jenkin Framlingham bought it." It seems to me that our "Jenkin" or John must have been quite an old man when he acquired this property, because I can find nothing local concerning the family till 1484; though his brass half-effigy, lying upon the chancel floor (that of his wife Margaret is in the church-chest) is engraved with the armour of 1425. It is regrettable that this tomb has lost a shield with helmet and crest and mantling, four other shields, its inscription and three groups of children; but you can easily see the hollow places where they were. Probably two of these children were Henry Framlingham of Crowes Hall and his sister Margaret, who married William Bordewell of Tostock Hall. We find Sir James Framlingham in 1529; and he it is who is generally supposed to have built the yet existing Tudor red-brick house. But he does not seem to have been a particularly loveable man, as the following true story well illustrates:—

He married Anne, the daughter of Robert Fomesse, and with them lived Dame Margaret Mortimer, whom they tried to inveigle into leaving them her fortune. This, in consequence of their continued "unkindness," she refused to do, declaring that "she would never be bound to her cradle." But, for all that, they borrowed and spent all her money. Then they turned her out of doors several times. Finally they relieved her of eight pounds, appropriated all her plate and apparel, and shut the door upon her one Christmas Eve. So Dame Margaret signed in the "chapel at Croweshall" on August 6th, 1520, "an obligation that she would make over a hundred marks to them six years after

her will was proved. But in 1523 she married Robert Downes, to whose house there later came our friend Anne Framlingham with a man called Brown; and there, in the presence of poor Margaret, they stabbed her husband with a dagger. Margaret swooned, so that they might easily have slain her: but they were so frightened at their own misdoings that they sold or gave the Manor of Somerton in south Suffolk to her instead!

Then came the Dissolution that turned all religious matters upside down everywhere, and furnished such splendid pickings to all the friends of Bluff King Hal. James seems to have been succeeded by "Francis Framlingham, King's Servant"; and to him was granted in March, 1543, all the property of the dissolved Priory at Butley that lay in Debenham, Kenton, Ashfield-Thorpe, Winston, Aspall (the impropriation of which Sir Charles Gaudy of Crowes Han subsequently settled upon its parson for ever). Bedingfield, Thorndon and Monks' Soham. It is doubtless in right of this grant that we find Sir Charles Framlingham at these Manor Courts during 1562 and up to his death on July 28th, 1595: he was a knight, and in 1584 Sheriff of Suffolk: a real old English gentleman, as you can still see from his effigy on the sumptuous alabaster altar-tomb to the south of the chancel. On either side there are the additional effigies of his two wives: the second, Elizabeth Barnardiston, survived him and had no children; but by the first, Dorothy Heigham, he had! at least two, Clement, who died young, and Anne, who married Sir Bassingbourn Gawdy, and so carried Crowes Hall to that family.

A very great deal is known about the Gawdys of Crowes Hall. but it is much too long to recite here. They were knights, sheriffs, M.P.'s, and eventually created baronets; but lost a great deal of their property for espousing the Royalist faction in the Great Rebellion, and on August 18th, 1646, "Chas. Gawdye, Knt." begs to compound with the rebels, whom he had fought because he had the meek distinction that he "was the King's menial servant and commanded to attend his person and so adhered to him." On the 6th of the following October he had

to pay £1,789, which fine was reduced to £529 upon his settling £150 a year upon the Church; and he died on 10th November, 1650. You can read a good deal about him on the coffin-shaped brass plate fixed to the south chancel wall, with shield and mantling and crest. His widow must have been a grand dame of the old school; she was Veare, younger daughter of Sir Edward Cooke of Guidy-hall in Essex; and, when she had been a widow eleven years she got the new King Charlie to remit the above £150, so we see the Gawdys were still favourites at Court. In 1674 she paid tax on no less than seventeen hearths at Crowes Hall— it has hardly a dozen to-day: fully half has since been pulled down — and the next largest house in all Debenham then possessed but nine hearths. I expect her age must have been very advanced when they buried "Dame Vere Lady Gaudy," as the parish register calls her on 15th July, 1685: when James II was King.

There can have been no paltry pride about the fine old lady, because she and her family were so popular that, when her son brought home his bride (in 1657, the time of the Roundheads, mind you). "all the country sent her in presents: she had four brace of bucks, and fish, and fruits and all good things. And when the bridal pair returned to Crowes Hall, they were met three miles from it by a hundred and twenty gentlemen and yeomen on horseback, and at Debenham all the women came to welcome them with garlands and flowers and strewed them on the road to the house, where my Lady and her guests and servants awaited them, and music followed them." Do we love anyone, (except ourselves) to this extent to-day!

I don't know just when the Gawdys left Crowes Hall, but James or George Bridges, Esquire, had 'bought it of John Pitt's heirs. and resided here in 1764; Sir John Major acquired the property in 1776, and it still belongs to Lord Henniker. It is now said to be no more than "a nine-horse farm," from which I supposed there to be a little over a couple of hundred acres. Mr. Arthur Moore tells me there are 260 acres, and were till quite recently three hundred.

We cannot doubt that the various owners of Crowes Hall built most of the present Debenham church: except the Saxon tower, of course. But just who they were may only be guessed by comparing these people with the different dates of the styles exhibited by Its architecture. In this way we can tell that the chancel, which was restored in 1883, was built about 1260; and the nave with its clerestory and aisles about 1450, at the same time as the porch. This porch is interesting because it is the finest of the only three, in all the 500-odd churches in the County, which face westward from the tower; they are called Galilees because they are furthest from the altar. A similar one at Mutford, near Beccles, is in ruins; but our is peculiarly handsome, and, in the upper chamber, where the celibate priest used to live in Romanist times, there was until recently a school. In the nave, the foliated tops of the pillars were much mutilated by Puritans during the Great Rebellion; in fact, they seem to have been unusually bitter here, and this was probably the long-past time, when it used to be said that Debenham had.--

"High Church. Low Steeple. Drunken Parson. Wicked People."

And some foundation of this unenviable reputation is found in the British Museum, where is a very rare book, printed in 1645, and called "Christ Exalted: in 'a sermon begun to be preached at Debenham in Suffolk, upon the 14 day of Febr, last, by Hanserd Knollys, who was stoned out of the Pulpit (as he was Preaching) by a Company of rude fellowes, and poor women of that Town. who were sent for, called together, and set on by a malignant High-Constable who lives in the same town," but this Constable's name does not appear. In 1654 John Cole was appointed to be preacher here, "the late incumbent being sequestrated and the place void."

There is a great deal more of interest about this grand old church, but so there is about the whole township ; and I really don't think I can cram any more into such random jottings at

present. For instance, the actual street names are full of suggestions to any antiquary; in the very middle of the place is Market Hill, reminiscent of the thousand-year old but now defunct market; on one side is a house called Giles Hole, which can surely be nothing' but a corrupt form of the medieval Guild Hall; on the south is the Tudor "Institute," which possesses pages of history of Its own that I have no time to, mention, and alongside are the Stocks. To the north stretches away the Tollgate (Road), though the oldest Inhabitant cannot remember when the gate itself hung there, to delay all travellers; and west of it Stony Lane led to Henry VIII's Butts, where everybody was obliged to practice archery, with Rumble Green beyond. Near the church there stood till 1904, doubtless among many others since forgotten, the Bucks Head Inn, now partly occupied by Copping, I have already mentioned Hoskess Lane leading from The Wash to Cross Green, where doubtless-, the Town Cross stood; and probably the stone still lying by the chemist's shop is a fragment of this old cross: at least, it has been sculptured by hand, Beyond the Green is Cuckul Ditch across the now dry lake, which has recently been also spanned by the causeway towards Crowes Hall. I have heard the name Cucksev here, and this should also be connected with the "sea" or lake, as in the village Camp "sea" Ash. But the most interesting and doubtless oldest of all our names is Chancery Lane, because the word means a High Court of Justice, and it must have been the judicial headquarters of the district, of Thredling Hundred in all likelihood. So no matter where you turn — to history, to the earth works, to the houses, to the churches, or the very street names — vestiges of Debenham's great past meet you on every side. Let us hope motor traffic will restore some of the damage railways did it.

C.M., iv., 1922

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