

Norwich Catholic Chapels 1687-1894

by

ANTHONY ROSSI

Norwich has been described as having the best collection of medieval churches north of the Alps but from the 1530s when Henry VIII broke with Rome the Catholic religion became outlawed and its adherents persecuted, becoming fully emancipated only after 1829. Some fifty years later the 15th Duke of Norfolk built the great Gothic Revival church of St John the Baptist (now the cathedral of the Diocese of East Anglia) on the site of the former City Gaol, on the western edge of the medieval city. This article attempts to describe the frequently obscure history of Catholic places of worship in the city during penal times, up to the opening of the nave of the new church in 1894.

BACKGROUND

It is not easy, approaching five hundred years after the event and living under a free democracy, to appreciate the religious, political and social upheaval unleashed by the decision of Henry VIII to break with the papacy in order to divorce his legitimate wife, to appoint himself head of the English church, and to dissolve religious houses throughout the land and redistribute their property. In some parts of the country there was fierce resistance, although in East Anglia a strong wind from continental Europe assisted a growing Protestant ascendancy.

Apart from a brief respite in the short reign of Mary Tudor and an even shorter interlude under James II, the Catholic religion was driven underground for 250 years, suppressed by a whole raft of legislation, especially under Queen Elizabeth I, its members suffering fines, sequestration of property, and in many cases imprisonment, torture and execution. After 1570, when the queen was excommunicated by Pope Pius V, it was regarded as high treason to be, or to give shelter to, a Catholic priest in England and Wales.¹ In his *Memoirs of Missionary Priests*, Bishop Richard Challoner records 178 executions, mainly but not exclusively of priests, between 1577 and 1603, and over 100 more from the end of the reign of Elizabeth to 1691.²

Nevertheless there were two sides to this question. Sincere Protestants were condemned as heretics in the late Middle Ages³ and more specifically, during the reign of Mary Tudor; in Norwich a number were put to death, but throughout this troublesome period only one Catholic priest was executed.⁴ Under Elizabeth Catholics were regarded with suspicion, and even as agents of foreign powers, partly on account of political intrigues and plots, including those surrounding Mary, Queen of Scots (executed in 1587), and the Gunpowder Plot of the following reign. Things were still more difficult during the Civil War and Commonwealth as Catholics tended to be royalist.

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Priests were trained on the continent in colleges established not only for that purpose but also for the education of children of the more prosperous Catholic families, many of whom became priests and nuns, the clergy re-entering the country in secret, using disguises, aliases and coded messages, and being accommodated, at great risk to the owners, in safe houses which acquired secret chapels and ingeniously constructed hiding places. The Jesuits John Gerard and Edward Oldcorne landed on the north-east coast of Norfolk in October 1588, the year of the Armada, and Gerard made his way to Norwich and subsequently to west Norfolk: Father Oldcorne was later executed in the aftermath of the Gunpowder Plot.⁵

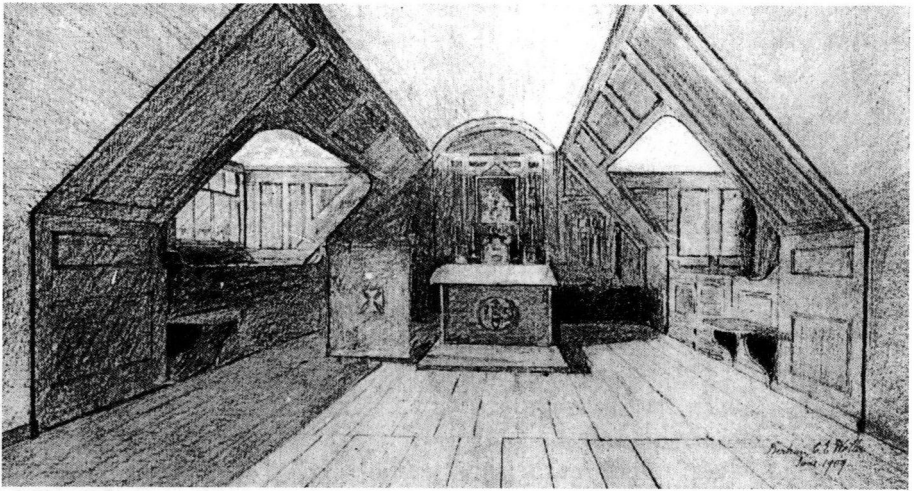


Fig. 1

Costessey Hall, near Norwich: sketch of the secret chapel of 1565.

Reproduced in A Great Gothic Fane (1913), 16



Fig. 2

Costessey Hall: engraving of the Elizabethan house, also showing on the left the chapel added in 1809.

Reproduced in A Great Gothic Fane (1913), 194

A number of safe houses existed in Norfolk at various times and two in particular were close to Norwich. At Costessey, west of the city, generations of the Catholic Jerningham family supported the Catholic cause and gave shelter to priests, and when the times became easier provided financial support towards the acquisition of property and building of public chapels, including the construction of a fine chapel attached to Costessey Hall itself, opened in 1809, and later in the 19th century a parish church in the village of Costessey. The family continued their support of the Church until 1913, when the Norfolk branch died out, the Hall being taken over by the military during the First World War and, later in the 20th century demolished in stages, including its chapel (Figs 1, 2).⁶

East of the city, close to the Yarmouth Road and on the north bank of the River Yare, and therefore a house with useful transport links, stood Thorpe Hall, a substantial part of which dated from about 1600 and was for a time the home of a recusant branch of the powerful Paston family. Here, under the attic stairs, had been a priests' hiding place which has since disappeared, but of which photographic evidence exists (Fig. 3).⁷

In Norwich itself (effectively still the walled medieval city) during these penal times two parallel missions were eventually established, one served by Jesuits whose presence is recorded from 1647 and the other by secular clergy identifiable from 1722.⁸ However, with one brief exception, described below, it is not possible to identify other than speculatively the whereabouts of the respective Mass houses or chapels before the mid-18th century when, although the penal laws were becoming less severely applied, the building of public papist chapels was still illegal. Later, in 1778, the first of three Catholic Relief Acts made it legal for priests to travel openly;⁹ this was followed by a second act of 1791 which permitted the opening of public chapels but it was not until 1829 that full emancipation was granted, and even then there remained some restrictions and much prejudice.

Two chapels only, one from each mission, survive today, neither of which is in its original use although each is in its different way both interesting and recognisable.



Fig. 3

Thorpe Hall, east of Norwich: the access to the former priests' hiding place beneath the attic stairs.

Photograph, author

THE JESUIT MISSION

In 1687 the King suspended all *penal* laws that respected religion, and gave free *liberty* to all *Papists* and *sectaries*, to exercise their own way of worship without control; upon which the *Papists* had the *granary* granted them at the *New-hall*, over the *sealing-hall*, for their publick *chapel*, which they made very handsome; it was opened on *Sunday Dec 11*, publick mass and a sermon being performed there by Mr *Acton*.¹⁰

The foregoing description from Blomefield's *History of Norfolk* appears to be the earliest reference to a settled place of worship of the Jesuit mission, which had at least four locations between 1687 and 1881 and probably had a presence in the city from the mid-17th century. Fr Thomas Acton appears sixth in a list of Jesuit missionaries serving in Norwich after 1647,¹¹ and in 1881 the Jesuit and secular missions were combined and the Order withdrew from Norwich.

The New-hall was part of the former Dominican friary which, unlike other medieval religious houses in Norwich, had escaped destruction because the city council had purchased it at the Dissolution; it survives today as Saint Andrew's and Blackfriars Halls, and substantial remains of the domestic quarters of the friars also survive, the granary being part of the west walk of the cloister lying between the north side of the former church and the south bank of the River Wensum (Figs 4; 5,A).¹²

The glimmer of light represented by the granary chapel was, however, short lived. Only a year later, in November, William of Orange and his wife Mary landed at Torbay, and James II fled to France; they were proclaimed king and queen in London the following February. Whether or not connected with these events, there were serious anti-papist riots in Norwich early in December 1688, when

the rabble assembled in a riotous manner, pulled down and burned all the furniture of the *Popish chapel* lately opened at the *New-hall*, pillaged several houses of the *Papists* in the *city*, but were dispersed by the trained bands; but getting together again on the *Friday* and *Saturday* following, they grew so insolent as to threaten to plunder the *Bishop's palace*, and some of the *chief citizens* houses, but several being taken up on *Monday* and whipped, and others imprisoned and after punished, they ceased from such actions.¹³

In the wake of these events it is not surprising that the mission disappeared underground until things became easier; both before the granary chapel and after the riots the small congregation may have worshipped clandestinely in unidentifiable 'safe houses'. However, it is known that during the first half of the 18th century there was a secret chapel in 'Shoulder of Mutton Yard', but its location cannot be definitely established, although there are clues. A hand-written directory of the city, produced in 1811, lists no fewer than four 'Shoulder of Mutton' alehouses, respectively in St Andrew's Steps, St Augustine's Street, St Stephen's Street and Dove Lane. The author of *A Great Gothic Fane* refers to two possible sites – one near Chapelfield and the other near Blackfriars (and St Andrew's Steps?).

He quotes sources which appear to make Blackfriars more likely,¹⁴ but two pieces of evidence tend to point to Chapelfield which, although now shrunk by development, was at that time a considerable area of ground extending from St Stephen's Back Street, where there was a Shoulder of Mutton Yard which ran back from the main St Stephen's Street and is shown on the large scale Ordnance Survey map of 1883 (Fig. 5,B). The second piece

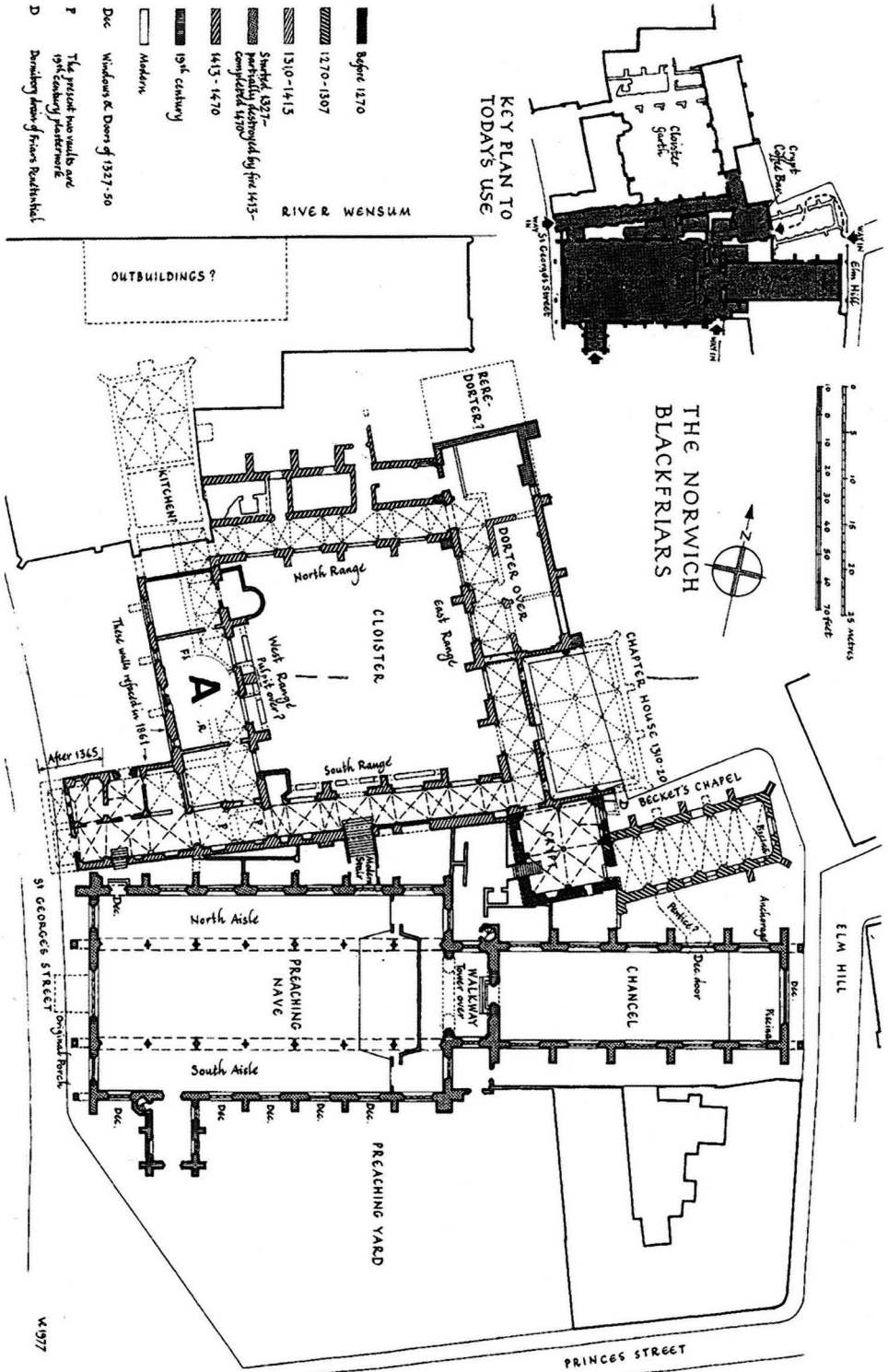
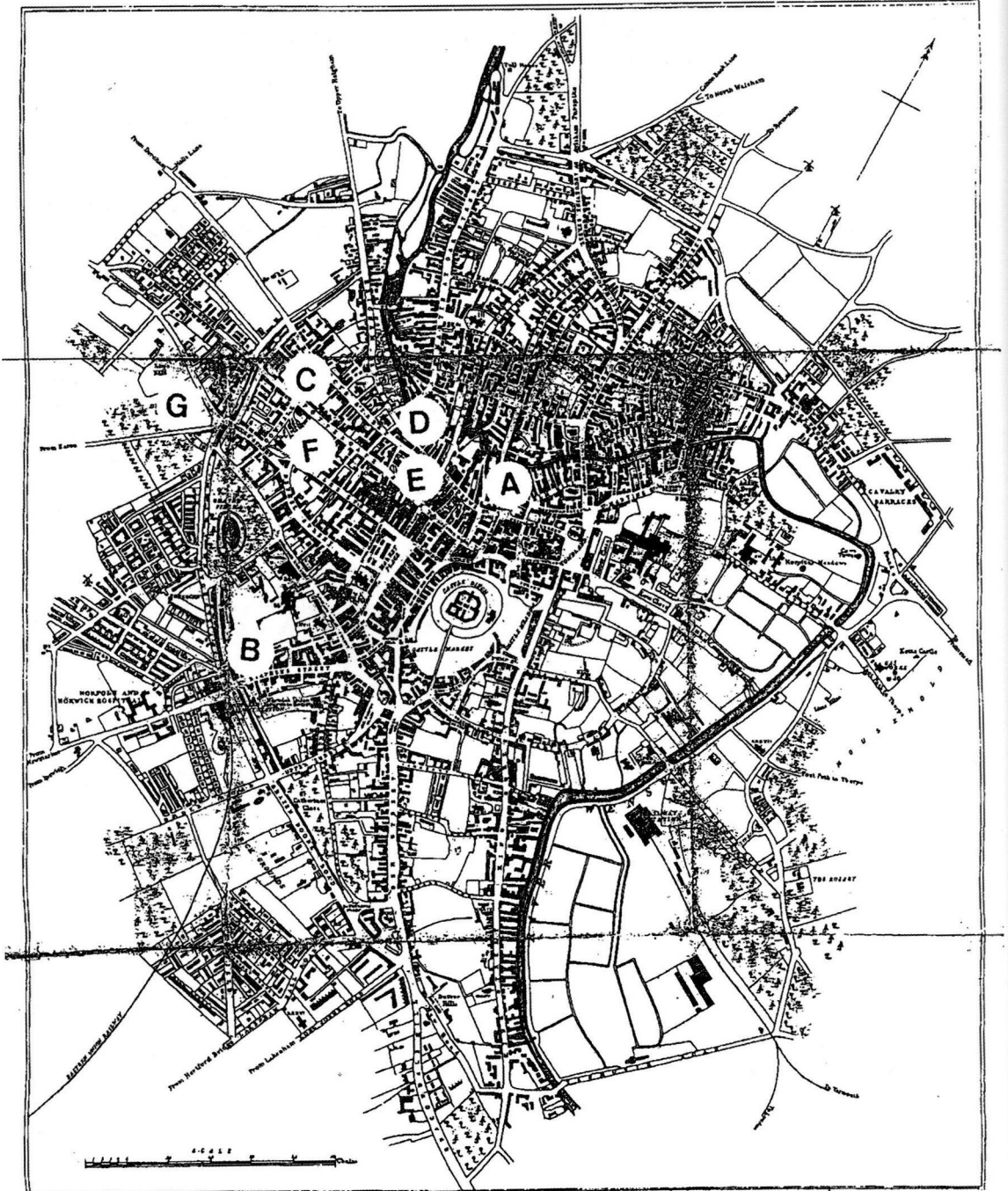


Fig. 4

Plan of the Norwich Blackfriars: the early short-lived Jesuit chapel was in the west cloister range (A). The cloisters were, unusually, on the north side of the church, because of the relationship of the site to the River Wensum.
 Drawing by V. Reading in H. Sutermeister, *The Norwich Blackfriars* (Norwich, 1977)

PLAN OF THE CITY OF NORWICH.



of evidence pointing to this location is the existence in the Jesuit Archives of reference to a will made by Henry Machet of the City of Norwich, collar maker, giving and devising a message (etc.) 'in the parish of St Stephen' to Thomas and Robert Suffield 'of the City of Norwich wine merchants'. The name of Henry Matchett (sic), cordwainer, aged forty-six, appears in the presentation of papists to the House of Lords in 1767 under St Stephen's parish. In the same document under the parish of St Giles appear the names of Thomas and Robert Suffield, merchants, aged thirty and twenty-eight respectively, along with their seventy-year old mother and Robert's twenty-one-year old wife.¹⁵

The same House of Lords list, under the parish of St Swithin, lists Mr Galloway, priest, aged sixty-three and having been resident for seven years, and it also has a note stating, 'In this parish a Mass house was built about 7 years ago'. Apart from its brief tenure in Blackfriars cloister this appears to be the earliest precise evidence as to the place and date of the mission. The chapel was on the west side of St Swithin's Lane (now Ten Bell Lane) (Fig. 5,C) and must have been built about the time Fr Galloway, who was the Jesuit missionary from 1759-74, arrived in Norwich. This makes it close in date to the Jesuit house and chapel at Bury St Edmunds, built in 1762, and the arrangement was apparently similar, with a domestic frontage and the chapel behind (as was to be the case with the Duke of Norfolk's chapel in Norwich a few years later, described below) at a period when, although times were more settled, the building of Catholic chapels for public worship was still illegal. A description of the St Swithin's chapel appears in Browne's *History of Norwich* in 1814:

A small neat building of brick, the inside of which is adorned in the manner of the church of Rome. The altar is at the west end [i.e. furthest from the street], the carved work of which is very elegant, and it has a good old painting of the crucifixion and six candlesticks of silver gilt; at the east end is a gallery supported by pillars ... Between the east end of the chapel and the lane is a good dwelling house for the residence of the priest.¹⁶

Another directory of 1811 refers to this chapel as 'of longer standing and much smaller than the late 18th-century chapel in St John Maddermarket parish' (the secular chapel, described below).

It is possible to gain a fairly detailed picture of the house since Fr James Lane, priest from 1788-1821, died there and a room-by-room inventory of his possessions was then compiled.¹⁷ On the ground floor were a hall, a parlour, a larger parlour and a smaller parlour; above was a landing, a library, a sleeping room and a best sleeping room, and on the second floor an attic landing, right- and left-hand attic rooms and a lumber attic.

Fig. 5 (p.92, opposite)

Charles Muskett's 1849 map of Norwich, with the Castle at centre and the River Wensum winding through from top to bottom. The known locations of Catholic chapels between 1687 and 1894 are superimposed – A, the Jesuit chapel in the cloister of the former Blackfriars, 1687-8; B, the probable location of the Jesuit chapel in 'Shoulder of Mutton Yard', c.1688-1759; C, the Jesuit chapel in St Swithin's (later Ten Bell) Lane, 1759-1829; D, the Duke of Norfolk's chapel built for the secular mission, 1764-85; E, the secular chapel in the parish of St John Maddermarket, opened in the 1790's and sold in 1896; F, the Holy Apostles Jesuit chapel in Willow Lane, 1829-94 (secular from 1881); G, the Gothic Revival church designed by G.G. Scott junior, built on the site of the city gaol, completed in 1910, consecrated in 1957 and raised to cathedral status in 1976.

There is no mention of domestic offices, which must have existed, probably because these contained none of Fr Lane's personal possessions. *A Great Gothic Fane* says that the chapel was approached by an alley from St Benedict's Street to the north, which was guarded, and that there were three houses on the frontage, but these statements are not substantiated and the reference to three houses seems, from directory evidence, to be incorrect.¹⁸

In 1829, the year of Catholic emancipation, a new and larger chapel was opened, and the evidence becomes much more certain in the light of contemporary press reports and the fact that the building still exists, although it has a somewhat chequered later history. A site in Willow Lane was purchased (Fig. 5,F) and a subscription list opened in the mid-1820s; the site consisted of a large garden on the north-east side of the lane belonging to a house just round the corner from St Giles Broad Street. The house, which still stands, was subsequently re-sold to James Cuddon, the local attorney who had acted for the Jesuits in the purchase. The house and garden cost £3,300 and a surveyor's plan of the property, dated May 1827, shows a wall and stable block along the frontage, which were soon demolished, ledger sheets showing payments to local contractors Darkins and Blake.¹⁹

Payments of fees to the architect, Mr Patience, also soon appear and the first stone was laid on 10 August. John Thomas Patience (c.1770-1843)²⁰ lived just round the corner on Cow Hill and was for a time City Surveyor. He was responsible for a number of Norwich buildings including, in the newly constructed Exchange Street, a corn exchange (which was to be replaced later in the century by a larger building), the new Subscription Library on Guildhall Hill, with its rather heavy Greek Doric portico which survives,²¹ and places of worship for the Quakers (Upper Goat Lane, 1825-6, still standing) and the Methodists (Lady Lane, 1824, destroyed) as well as the Jesuit chapel in Willow Lane.

All the foregoing buildings were chastely classical, with the Willow Lane chapel the most ornate. Its facade was an elegant composition and had a projecting porch with an entablature supported by paired Ionic columns, and above the porch, on the upper part of the facade, paired Corinthian pilasters and a further entablature surmounted by a pediment and cross (Fig. 6). The first-floor facade was in three bays, each with a blind arch, and the entablature was extended across the facade and along the sides of the building, with single returned pilasters at the corners. Internally the wall surfaces were adorned with Corinthian pilasters standing above a continuous dado, with short lengths of architrave and frieze beneath a continuous bracketed cornice. At the west end was a gallery with an organ and at the east a shallow curved apse flanked by paired pilasters beneath a continuous entablature. The ceiling was gently coved and divided into fifteen panels by shallow beams, with three ornate ceiling roses down the centre. Iron railings and gates were installed along the street frontage.

The chapel, dedicated to The Holy Apostles, was opened for worship on 2 September 1829 with a solemn pontifical High Mass celebrated by Bishop Thomas Weld. On 25 July the *Norwich Mercury*, which was sympathetic, had published an enthusiastic and detailed description of the building and its internal arrangements (which its reporter had been allowed to view), and expressed

the belief that the public, when the Chapel is free to general inspection, will consider it as alike ornamental to the city and honorable to the taste and skill of the architect and his employers...The interior of the chapel perfectly corresponds with its external appearance



ROMAN CATHOLIC CHAPEL, in WILLOW LANE.

Erected 1828.

Fig. 6

The Jesuit chapel of the Holy Apostles in Willow Lane, as originally designed by J.T. Patience, opened 1829. The artist was James Sillett (1764-1840), a member of the Norwich School of artists, whose work included a number of monochrome views of prominent Norwich buildings, subsequently published as engravings.

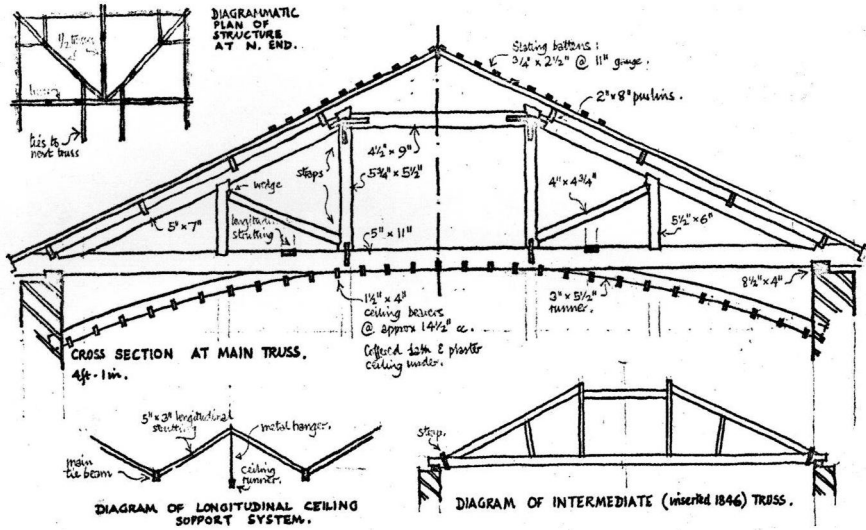
Engraving after James Sillett, Norfolk Museums Service

and presents, on entering, a coup d'oeil, rarely to be met with amongst the false taste & overcharged decoration of modern architecture ... [It was all] highly creditable to our provincial artisans and would reflect no dishonour even on those of the metropolis ...

Describing the sanctuary the lengthy article continues:

... the altar, elevated by a flight of five steps, is in the shape of a sarcophagus, in imitation of prophecy; behind which the basement assumes the appearance of Siena marble; the whole of which is separated from the congregation by a very elegant bronzed railing, terminated by a massive bar of polished brass. The curved rear wall of the sanctuary allowed a house for the clergy to be built against it, and the fall of the ground also permitted an extra storey at a lower level than the floor of the chapel.²²

Not many years were to pass before it was decided to 'improve' the interior, probably giving it the 'overcharged' look to which the *Norwich Mercury* had referred, and shortly afterwards the structure began to give some cause for concern. Mr Patience was called



WILLOW LANE CHAPEL
APPROXIMATE SURVEY OF ROOF STRUCTURE. (Imperial).

A.P.R. Mens (July '77)
et Dol. (Jan '78).

Fig. 7

The Holy Apostles chapel: sketch of the roof structure showing the original main truss design and the detail of the intermediate strengthening trusses added in 1846.

Drawing, author, July 1977



Fig. 8

The Holy Apostles chapel: interior in the later 19th century, following renovation.

Authorship and date unknown

in to advise and on 10 March 1836 submitted a brief report in which he stated:

from an experience of nearly Fifty years I trust reliance may be placed in the opinion – numberless times I have viewed the Building inside and out until the period it underwent what is termed beautifying – and always felt highly satisfied at the sound and perfect state I found it in.

He went on to identify a crack beneath the west window running towards the angle of the building ‘though a defect to some minds still of no consequence whatever to the safety of the whole’. He attributed the crack to ‘surface water making its way to the foundations’, adding,

‘I am convinced if the cause is prevented in future, it will not extend itself, nor can it ever endanger the further safety of the building’.²³ A few weeks later the then Jesuit priest, Fr Tate, wrote that he considered the opinion of Mr Patience ‘must be the best that can be had on the subject’.²⁴ Other opinions were sought but the conclusion was that the building was ‘perfectly secure’.

We do not know what was involved in the ‘beautifying’ of which Patience disapproved, but in 1846, by which time Patience was dead, the roof structure had to be strengthened, involving the closure of the chapel; this had followed the realisation that the principal queen post trusses were too far apart, and intermediate trusses were added, with diagonal bracing from the new tie-beams to the original principals (Fig. 7). When the chapel reopened towards the end of 1847,²⁵ the interior had been completely refurbished:

gorgeously decorated in the Byzantine style, under the superintendence of T. Bulmer Esq. In the windows, ten in number, richly stained glass has been placed, throwing a sombre and subdued light into the chapel. The entire ceiling and the walls of the edifice, the pilasters, the window splays and organ pipes, have been tastefully decorated, and all the furniture of the chapel is of a most splendid description ...

This extract is from a report in the *Norfolk Chronicle* of 6 November 1847 but, unlike the *Norwich Mercury*, the *Chronicle* was Tory and anti-Catholic, and the report concluded, ‘We only regret that so much art has been lavished to render what we believe to be superstitious observances attractive’.²⁶

Another description of the ‘beautifying’ appeared in *Andrew’s Weekly Orthodox Journal*, referring to its earlier high praise for the ‘simple elegance’ of the chapel ‘as it came from the hands of the architect Mr Patience’, and adding that ‘it is on this very account that we are desirous of saying as little as possible upon the alterations ... The efforts of the gilder and grainer have not been restrained and every variety of marble from lapis lazuli to Aberdeen granite is exhibited ...’ (Fig. 8).²⁷ Early in 1875 a report by Fr R. Vaughan confirmed:

though the walls are cracked and disfigured in several places and both the side walls are crooked, twisted and slightly out of the perpendicular, yet I believe them to be quite safe. The timbers of the roof have been carefully examined by a competent tradesman (Feb. 19th 1875) & he reports the whole roof to be perfectly sound.²⁸

Fr Vaughan did, however, observe that the interior of the church was much in need of renovation and he was concerned that the priests’ house was inconvenient and inadequate, and had settled away from the church, though ‘not to a dangerous extent’.

He concluded that 'the only way of securing a reasonably comfortable & commodious dwelling for two Fathers would be ... to pull down & rebuild in a somewhat larger and more liberal plan'. Sketches of floor plans and sections, both existing and suggested, were included with this report and illustrate the original relationship of the chapel to the house (Fig. 9). However, in 1881, as already mentioned, it was agreed between the Jesuit Order and the Bishop of Northampton that, in view of the forthcoming replacement of both existing chapels by one larger and grander church, the Jesuits would give up their Norwich mission, and the property was sold to the diocese.²⁹

Following the opening of the nave of the new church in 1894 it was decided to convert the Willow Lane building to a school, which opened in 1896. The local architect, Charles John Brown, was entrusted with the alterations, although these took place in stages.³⁰ The west end of the church was subdivided to provide a first floor with classrooms and the blind arches of the facade were pierced to form windows; later the central bay was given a pair of windows which involved the removal of the inner pilasters of the original pairs (Figs 10,11). The house and curved blind apse were demolished and the apse rebuilt with a straight rear wall containing windows. Two extensions were constructed to provide more classrooms, in each case bridging the ground beneath. These consisted respectively of a single classroom almost flush with and to the left of the original facade, and a pair projecting laterally on the opposite side of the building towards its far end. The school toilets were condemned in the 1930s, new ones provided and other alterations made,³¹ but with one short break the school remained in use until 1967 when a new infants school was provided elsewhere.

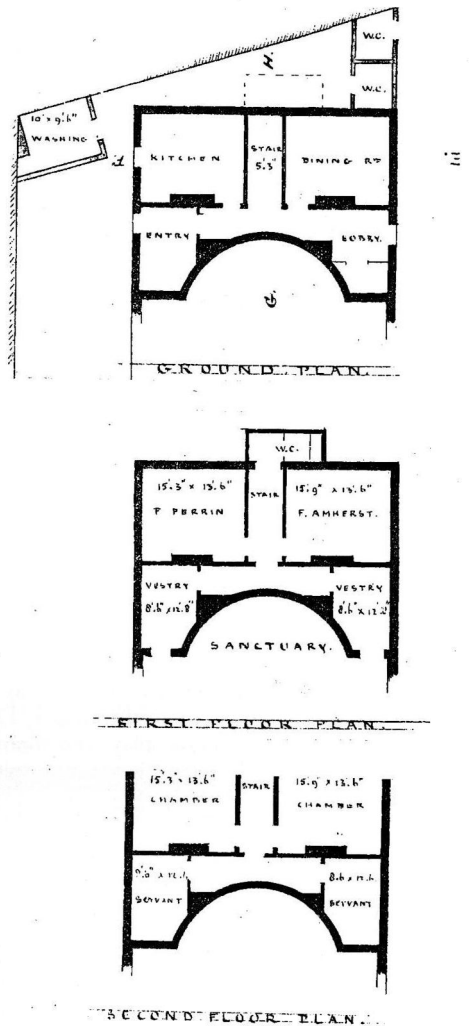


Fig. 9

The Jesuit Willow Lane property. Plans showing the existing house and the original curved and unwindowed apse; note also that the fall of the site resulted in the first floor of the house being at the level of the chapel, with the ground floor under it.

Extract from a report on the state of the property by Fr R. Vaughan, (February 1875), Jesuit Archives

After it ceased to be a school the building fell upon a period of neglect and an uncertain future. It was in due course purchased by the Post Office who proposed to demolish all but a skin-deep street frontage and, since the building had by then been listed, it seemed that the outcome would be a public inquiry. An unsympathetic report by a local firm of structural engineers pronounced the structure dangerous, apparently failing to realise that virtually all the defects listed had been present for a century or more. The history of the building was researched and a report commissioned from a SPAB appointed engineer. The Norwich Preservation Trust then intervened and appointed a local architect, Michael Gooch, to repair the building as a shell which could be marketed.³²

In 1977 the chapel was described as unable to 'hide its flaking plasterwork or its shattered windows. If it has a future it deserves better treatment. It is disturbing to see Patience's fine building fading away, as it were, in gentle melancholy'.³³ The writer of those words was probably unaware of the plans already in hand to rescue it, but the saga was not yet over. Before the Preservation Trust could implement its restoration a Norwich auctioneer, John Watson, acquired the building to convert it to a fine art auction house, again engaging Michael Gooch. The centre bay of the facade was reinstated with its paired pilasters and blind arch and the left hand excrescence was taken down, though the inserted windows in the outer bays were retained.

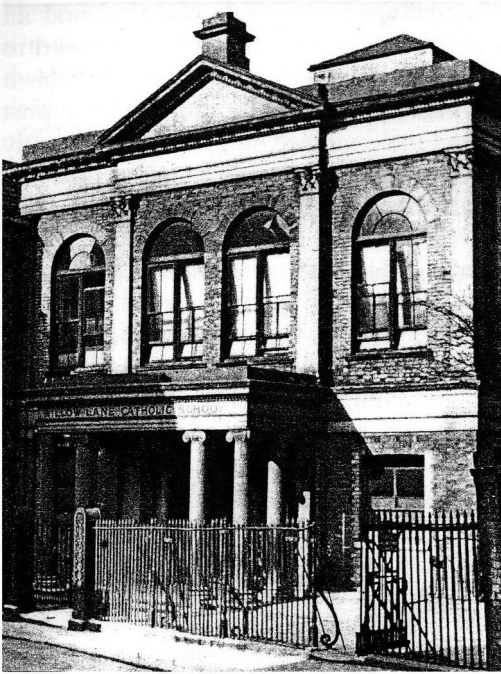
Nonetheless, there was yet another twist in the story. The auction house project failed – but finally a firm of local builders (Riley) acquired the property and undertook a sensitive conversion to offices under the direction of another local architect, Michael Innes. Today the chapel, while not fully reinstated to Patience's original design, is occupied by a firm of



Fig. 10

The Willow Lane chapel: an early 20th-century view following its conversion to a school. The three blind arches have been pierced for windows and a first floor extension added to the left.

Authorship and date unknown



solicitors and is again an ornament to the street with a secure future, while it still retains, through all the foregoing vicissitudes, its original frontage railings and gates, although the cross on the pediment is no longer there (Figs 12, 13).

There is one other footnote to the story of the Jesuit mission. After the opening of the Willow Lane chapel the house in St Swithin's Lane was let and the chapel became a school. Later in the century both were demolished and a new school built on the site, but when the Willow Lane building became a school this too

Fig. 11

The Willow Lane chapel: a second phase of alteration. A pair of windows has replaced the single central opening, resulting in the removal of the inner pilasters of the original pairs.

Photograph by Arnold Kent, late 1940s, in A. Stephenson and A. Kent, Norwich Inheritance (Norwich, n.d., c.1949)



Fig. 12

The former Holy Apostles Chapel: the facade today, converted to offices, with its central bay restored and the left hand extension removed.

Photograph courtesy of Rogers and Norton Solicitors



Fig. 13

The former Holy Apostles chapel: the interior today following its conversion to offices. The squared-off apse with windows dates from the earlier conversion to a school in 1896.

Photograph courtesy of Rogers and Norton Solicitors

was sold. The new school, which was within the memory of the present writer a pretty flint and stone Gothic building (Fig. 14),³⁴ became a printing works, but in the 1970s was demolished and became part of a site for a new residential development by a local housing association.

A report dated 17 December 1880, commissioned in connection with the handing over of the Jesuit properties to the diocese, refers to 'a range of Schoolrooms comprising separate rooms for Boys, Girls and Infants with the Outhouses, boundary fences and internal fittings'.³⁵ When the property was sold in July 1896 the sale particulars referred to a frontage about 82ft 9in. long, a depth of about 53ft 8in. and a site area of about 4,400sq.ft: the title deeds were dated August 1859, doubtless the date of construction. It is somewhat difficult to reconcile the size and shape of the site with a western orientation for the chapel, with a house in front of it, but since the description of the property in Browne's *History* appears to be the work of an eye-witness one must assume its accuracy.

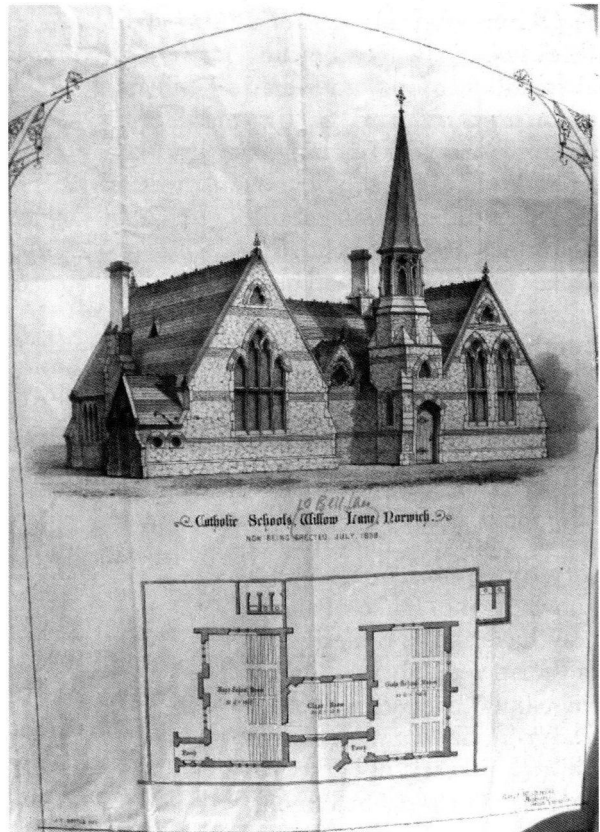


Fig. 14

The school in Ten Bell (formerly St Swithin's) Lane, which replaced the earlier Jesuit chapel and house in 1859. It was sold with other property in 1896 and became a printing works but was demolished for housing in the early 1970s. The caption places the building incorrectly in Willow Lane.

Mid-19th century drawing by Alfred Morant, Jesuit Archives

THE SECULAR MISSION

The secular mission, in addition to the possibility of links with Costessey, doubtless benefited from the patronage of the Catholic dukes of Norfolk, although by 1722 the presence of the Howard family in Norwich and Norfolk enjoyed less influence than formerly. The 4th Duke (1538-72) had been born in Norfolk, at Kenninghall, but had a Calvinist background following the imprisonment of his father and the execution of his grandfather, and he himself was beheaded by Elizabeth, after something of a show trial, on suspicion of plotting to marry Mary, Queen of Scots. In 1559 he had established a colony of Flemish weavers ('the Strangers') in Norwich and he embarked on the significant enlargement of the ducal palace between the north side of Charing Cross and the south bank of the River Wensum, amongst other features with a bowling alley 180 feet long, a covered tennis court and a long gallery occupying one side of a quadrangle.³⁶

The palace was rebuilt again in 1672 by the 6th Duke (1628-84) who had been created Earl of Norwich. This building was demolished in 1711 but a range was left which, from its position on maps, seems likely to have been a wing of the 4th Duke's earlier enlargement. This became a workhouse, and another survivor, a public house always known as the 'Duke's Palace', may have incorporated parts of the ancient fabric.³⁷ One of these buildings seems likely to have contained an apartment for the priest and a secret chapel. Fr Edward Beaumont, who was to be in Norwich for sixty-two years, from 1758 to 1820, evidently lived at the Duke's Palace when he first arrived. Prior to his arrival he

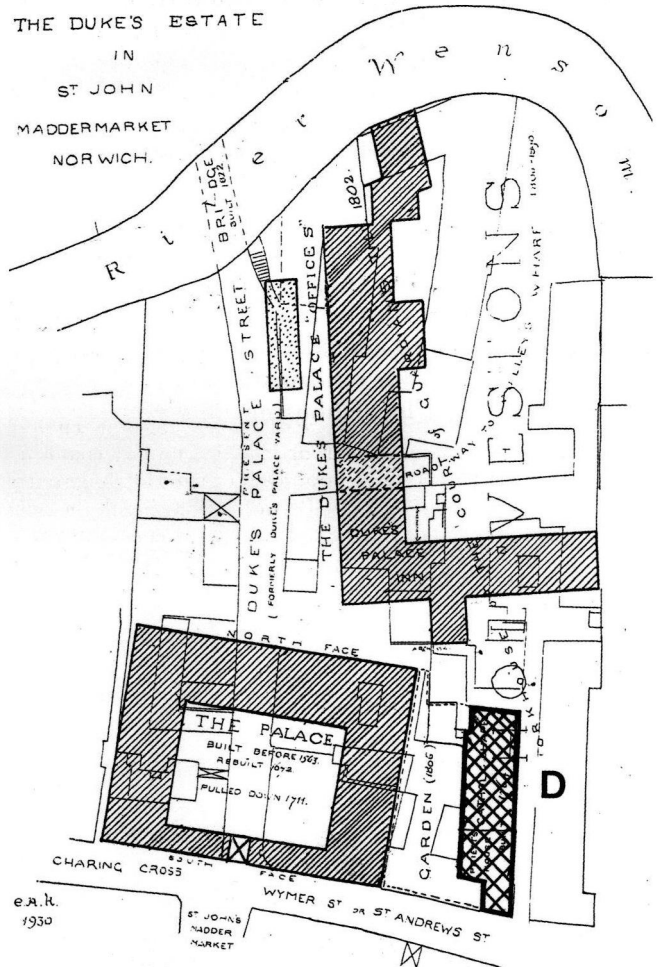


Fig. 15

Plan of the Duke of Norfolk's estate in Norwich, showing the chapel of 1764 and its adjoining house, cross hatched (D). The palace, twice rebuilt, was demolished in 1711 and the road and river crossing constructed in 1822; the other buildings survived until the 1960s.

From Norfolk Archaeology, XXIV, (1930), 73-87

received a letter from one of his predecessors, Fr Alban Butler, who was in Norwich from 1753 or 1754 until 1756, saying that 'the Duke's Place as it is called is a building which his Grace keeps in his own hands and which you have all to yourself'.³⁸

However, in 1764 a significant development occurred when the 9th Duke (1686-1777) built Fr Beaumont a new house and chapel (Fig. 5,D). As befitted the times the house faced the street, with the chapel sited discreetly behind it, with an entrance from a side yard. The new building was almost certainly designed by the prolific 18th-century architect, James Paine (1717-89), who was at the time working for the duke at Worksop Manor (Notts.), Norfolk House in London and Arundel Castle. He also worked for Catholic clients elsewhere, at Wardour in Wiltshire and Thorndon in Essex. However, the eleventh duke, who succeeded in 1786, had conformed to the established church in 1780 in order to become eligible to fight a parliamentary election and subsequently to retain a seat in the House of Lords. He maintained some Catholic sympathies, but nevertheless ejected Fr Beaumont and his congregation from their relatively newly built chapel.

The workhouse, the 'Duke's Palace' inn and the priest's house and chapel (Fig. 15) all remained until after the Second World War, but were then sacrificed by the city council to road widening and redevelopment. The chapel had by this time become a billiards saloon, having earlier served as an office for the Board of Guardians, in connection with the workhouse behind (see note 37), and as a library and museum.³⁹ Within its plain exterior the chapel housed an interior of some distinction with a gallery at one end (Fig. 16). The late George Plunkett wrote:

The interior well repaid a visit. It was lighted by ten upper windows (five east and five west); the ceiling was thus divided up into four complete bays and two half bays, each containing an ornate central rose bordered by embossed designs whose chief motif was a ducal crown [i.e. coronet]. Between each window the ceiling curved down to the level of the springing of the arches of the semi-circular window heads, and raised in the plaster and forming a frieze was a series of medallions each of which was surmounted by winged cherubim.⁴⁰

The only evidence of Paine's involvement seems to consist of entries in the accounts at Arundel Castle which refer to work in London, Arundel, Worksop and Norwich. In 1762 there appears a list of building works referring to 'Sundry works belonging to his Grace's Palace at Norwich' which amount to £1681.18s.1½d, against which Paine charged a fee of 5% plus four journeys and 'a packing case to send drawings in':

To Designing and Carrying into Execution a House &c. At his Grace's Palace at Norwich the whole expenses exclusive of the Deduction amounts to the sum of £1681.8.0 at 5% per centum.⁴¹

A further account of 1767 includes the item 'for Businefs at his Grace's Palace at Norwich'. At these dates the palace had been demolished and it seems the reference can only be to the priest's house and chapel, and that the omission of specific references is to avoid attracting notice should the papers fall into the wrong hands.

On being ejected from their chapel Fr Beaumont and his congregation were faced with the task of finding another home. A letter from him to the then Vicar Apostolic, Bishop Thomas Talbot, dated 7 May 1788, acknowledges receiving a copy of a letter from Talbot to the Duke of Norfolk concerning the deprivation of the house and chapel.

Fr Beaumont refers to the difficulty of purchasing another site.⁴² In fact another site was found in the early 1790s and it appears that in the interval the small congregation worshipped in a three-room garret in Willow Lane, although they may also have 'borrowed' the Jesuit chapel in St Swithin's Lane for a short time. The south-west side of Willow Lane was developed in the 1820s but the north-east has several older properties, some of three storeys, including the house at the upper end which, with its large garden, was later to be purchased by the Jesuits as the site for their new chapel. Could this property in the late 18th century have already been in Catholic ownership?

The site for a new secular chapel that became available was known as 'the Dancing Master's Estate' and was behind some cottages in St John's Alley, in St John Maddermarket parish, backing on to the medieval Strangers' Hall. On this relatively small and inconspicuous plot a new chapel was built, still discreetly hidden despite the recent Relief Act of 1791 which allowed the building of Catholic chapels (Fig. 5, E). Later the Strangers' Hall itself became available and was purchased, and subsequently served as the house of the clergy until 1880 when an alternative house across the river was purchased by the then parish priest, Canon Richard Duckett.⁴³ Some sources hold that Fr Beaumont continued to live in Willow Lane after the new chapel was opened and then moved into the Strangers' Hall following its acquisition in 1797, but Chase's Directory of 1811 has him living at 29 Wymer Street, which is further east (now St Andrew's Street). Also in the early 19th century, a French émigré priest, Fr Thomas D'Eterville, was helping in the parish and is said to have lived for a time in Lockett's Court on the north side of Wymer Street, and so the date and circumstances of either or both priests taking up residence in the Strangers' Hall is somewhat uncertain.⁴⁴ Fr Beaumont, however, was seemingly the first to keep accurate records of the Mission, which in times of severe persecution had deliberately not been kept. His Mission book includes valuable lists of baptisms along with other statistics, sermon notes and even a list of expenditure on domestic items for his new house.

Authorities also disagree about the precise date of the opening of the chapel, but it is generally taken to have been in use by 1794. A number of descriptions appear in directories and there is photographic evidence of its interior arrangement from later in its life. Browne's *History*, already quoted, describes it as:

a large handsome building of brick, erected in the year 1794. The inside is very commodiously fitted up; the pulpit is extremely neat, and stands against a pillar on the east side; the roof is supported by two rows of slender pillars; ranging with them are galleries

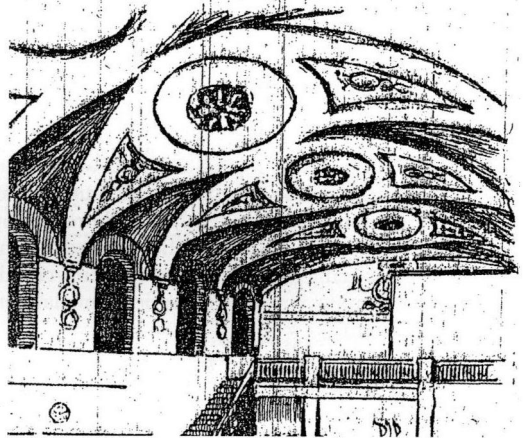


Fig. 16

The Duke of Norfolk's chapel: interior, drawn shortly before its demolition. The vaulted ceiling shows affinities with Lord Arundell's 1776 chapel at Wardour Castle, also by James Paine. From *Eastern Daily Press* (27 February 1964), artist unknown

on the sides, and an organ loft at the south end on which is a neat organ. At the north end is the altar which is elevated by several steps and beautifully adorned with pillars of plaster work; in the middle is a fine painting of the crucifixion and in the extremities are curious carvings of the three theological virtues; on the altar are a crucifix and six candlesticks of silver gilt. There is a sermon preached in English every Sunday morning after which high mass is sung accompanied by the organ and in the afternoon vespers are sung. Service is likewise performed on all the festivals and feasts of the church of Rome.⁴⁵

The Archives of the East Anglia Diocese contain a later description in connection with a visitation in 1860:

Style of Chapel – Grecian, consisting of galleries running round the whole of the Chapel, and of open seating in aisle and sides. It will accommodate about 300 people. There are a few free seats at the [end?] of the Chapel. The Chapel was erected by the Rev'd Father Beaumont, at the end of the last century, about the year 1790. It was merely blessed – not consecrated. Rev'd E Beaumont died in 1820. It is dedicated in honour of St John the Evangelist. It contains but one altar. It is badly ventilated and is lighted by gas. There are two boxes for the poor and one for the intended church. There is one vault in which reposes the body of a Priest, viz. The Rev L. Strongitharm. Mass is said nowhere else.⁴⁶

Browne's description of the church as large and handsome is somewhat exaggerated, as is the subsequent reference to it being in the Grecian style, although the late 19th-century photograph of the interior does show simple classical detail applied to the pillars (Fig. 17). However, Canon Richard Duckett observed that when he arrived in the parish



Fig. 17

St John's chapel in the Maddermarket: interior decorated for Christmas.
Late 19th-century photograph reproduced in A Great Gothic Fane (1913), 79

in 1877, he found the chapel 'hardly fit to say Mass in'.

Some years after the opening of the chapel the frontage cottages masking it were removed and schoolrooms and a small house for the master were built on the north side of the courtyard thus formed (Fig. 18). This was in the 1830s and either then or later a low wall with railings was erected across the frontage, with a round arched opening in the centre surmounted

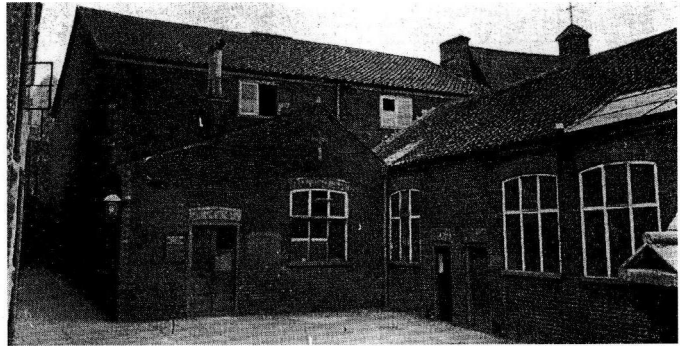


Fig. 18

St John's chapel: exterior in the late 19th century. The taller building behind is the chapel; those in the right foreground are school buildings added some thirty years later (cf. Figure 22 which shows its subsequent transformation to a Shakespearean theatre).

Reproduced in A Great Gothic Fane (1913), 78

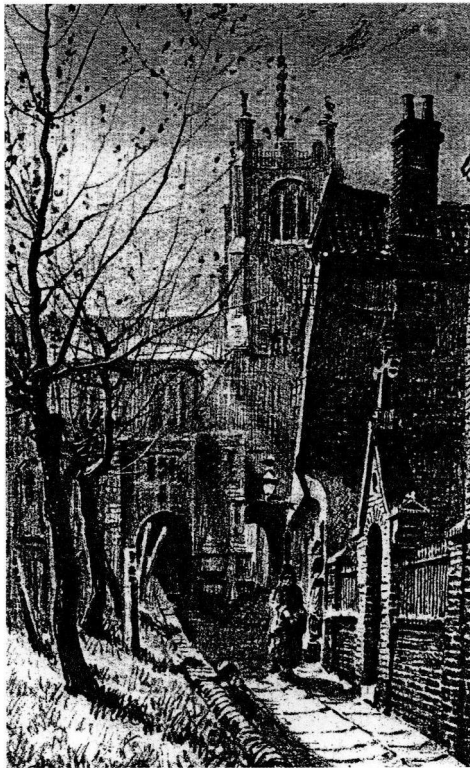


Fig. 19

St John's Alley, with the railings and archway shown on the 1883 OS map but removed in the early 1940s; they replaced earlier frontage cottages. The medieval church of St John Maddermarket can be seen in the background.

Drawing, artist unknown, reproduced in A. Stephenson, The Maddermarket Theatre (n.d., c.1971)

by a stone coped gable, thereby announcing its ecclesiastical purpose which was by then becoming more acceptable (Fig. 19). The chapel remained in use until 1894 when the nave of the new church of St John the Baptist just beyond the city walls (Fig. 5,G) was opened for worship and the Maddermarket and Willow Lane congregations were combined, not without a certain amount of resentment on behalf of the latter. The new church had been planned for some time (see note 46) but Canon Duckett was the driving force behind its eventual realisation, thanks to the generosity of Henry, 15th Duke of Norfolk, who financed the project.

By the time the Maddermarket chapel was closed a considerable estate had been built up, which was sold along with the school which had by then replaced the Jesuit chapel in Ten Bell Lane. The property, known as 'The Catholic Church Estate', was auctioned on 8 July 1896. Apart from the chapel itself, with its attached school, and the 'HISTORICAL BUILDING being STRANGERS' HALL with cellar under same, now used as a Gymnasium and a Dwelling House adjoining, formerly used as the Presbytery, and large garden', the estate

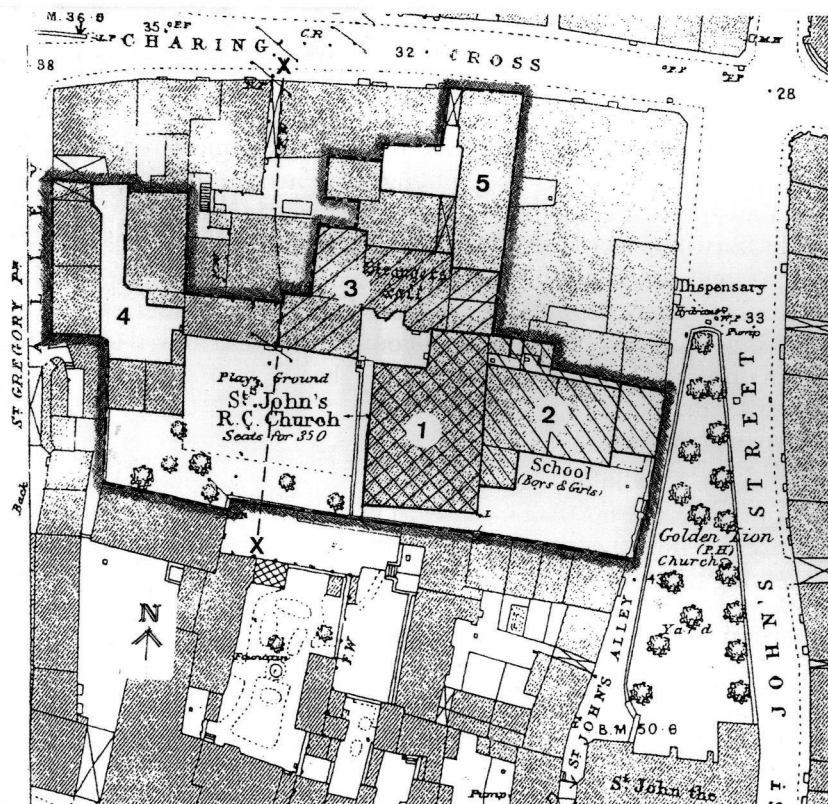


Fig. 20

Plan showing the extent of the Catholic Estate auctioned in July 1896. The chapel and school were approached from St John's Alley where the railings and arch (cf. Figure 19) are clearly shown. X-X marks the approximate boundary between the ancient parishes of St John Maddermarket and St Gregory. The main features marked are - 1, the Maddermarket chapel with attached vestry; 2, the somewhat later school, with boys' and girls' classrooms, a small third classroom, outside privies and a small house for the teacher; 3, domestic accommodation for the clergy approached from Charing Cross; 4, a yard facing St Gregory's Alley including four tenanted cottages; 5, a furniture store with frontage to Charing Cross, including a dwelling.

Based on the auctioneers' plan (Diocesan Archives) and superimposed by the author on the 1883 OS map of the city

owned several shops with related storage facilities and some cottages. The site, which extended into the adjoining parish of St Gregory's, had street frontages on three sides and an area of approximately 21,200 square feet (Fig. 20). The sale particulars stated that 'owing to the fact that early Possession can be had of the entire property, and taking into account the large Area, and that it has Frontages to three thoroughfares, the sale offers a fine opportunity to Builders, Speculators and others to obtain a Site capable of highly profitable development'. The vendors also reserved the 'right to remove any Antique or Historical Fixtures and Fittings in the Strangers' Hall or the Passage Way from Charing Cross'.

Fortunately for Norwich, the Strangers' Hall later fell into the sympathetic and generous hands of Mr Leonard Bolingbroke who presented it to the city in due course as a museum (Fig. 21).⁴⁷

The chapel and adjoining school premises also survived. Fr Strongitharm's remains were exhumed and subsequently reinterred in Earlham Cemetery, and following a few years as a Salvation Army citadel the buildings were acquired in 1921 by the theatrical impresario, Walter Nugent Monck, as the permanent home for his amateur theatre company, the Norwich Players, founded in 1911. Monck 'Elizabethanised' the building, including applying false half timberwork to the frontage, and over the years there have been other improvements and enlargements but its essential character remains (Fig. 22). The wall, railings and arch along the front boundary were removed during the Second World War in order to facilitate escape from the theatre during air raids.⁴⁸

POSTSCRIPT

Two other Catholic buildings in the city are worthy of mention. In 1896 a new chapel was opened in Fishergate, north of the river; it was made a separate mission in 1899 and in 1911 the river became the boundary between two separate Norwich parishes, that of St George serving the northern sector. The chapel was a former school (Fig. 23) built in 1864 and designed by James Smyth Benest (1826-96), who had earlier been architect to the Norwich School Board. The school, or chapel as it was to become, was attached at right-angles to the northern end of a much earlier building of an educational charity founded by Thomas Anguish, who was mayor of the city in 1611.⁴⁹ The building ceased to be used in 1885, when the funds of the charity were reallocated, and it served as a Catholic chapel until the 1960s when a larger parish church and two daughter churches were opened in then more populous suburbs. Some years afterwards, the buildings were demolished and the site redeveloped.

The other building is the Catholic chapel in Earlham Cemetery west of the city centre. The cemetery was opened in 1856 when the city churchyards were closed, and its layout and buildings were by Edward Everest Benest (1824-1901), also at one time architect to the School Board. This chapel was built in 1874 and stylistically seems likely to have been by one of the Benests;⁵⁰ architecturally it is also close in style and date to the former Ten Bell Lane School. All three buildings were of flint with stone dressings and had ornamental gables and turrets. The cemetery chapel (Fig. 24) still stands but is unused, and its interior commemorates the memory of Fr Beaumont, removed to Earlham from St Giles churchyard in the city centre, and Fr Strongitharm, exhumed as already stated from the former Maddermarket chapel.

Following the completion of the large new church of St John the Baptist in 1910 it was decided to hold a National Catholic Congress in Norwich in early August 1912. At the end of that month the city experienced the most serious floods in its known history, due to a combination of exceptionally heavy rains and high tides. In order to prove that prejudice still held sway certain Protestant voices proclaimed this to be a judgement on the city for allowing the Congress to be held there,⁵¹ just as in London in 1666 the Catholics had been held responsible for the Great Fire. *Déjà vu!*

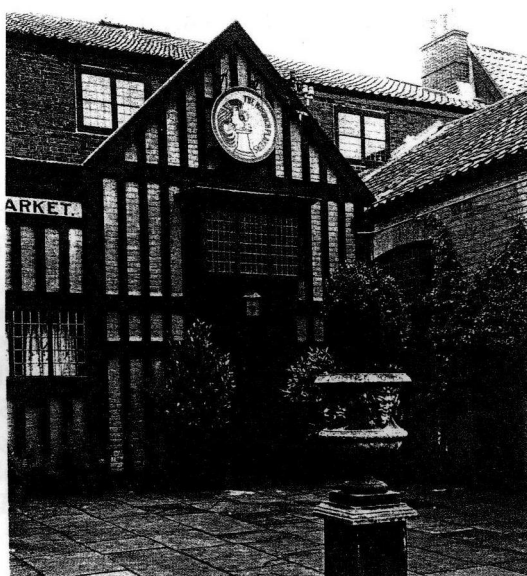


Fig. 21 (top-left)

The Strangers' Hall: interior, used as a house for the Catholic clergy for much of the 19th century, now a museum (cf. Figure 20,3).

Reproduced in The Book of the Norwich Festival (Norwich, 1951), 67



Fig. 22 (top-right)

St John's chapel and school in 1921, following their conversion to the Maddermarket Theatre, including 'Elizabethan' false half-timbering (cf. Figure 18, showing the former appearance of the buildings towards the end of the 19th century).

Photograph, author unknown, A. Stephenson, The Maddermarket Theatre (n.d., c.1971)



Fig. 23 (middle-left)

St George's Catholic chapel in Fishergate, formerly a charity school. *Reproduced in A Great Gothic Fane (1913), 222*

Fig. 24 (bottom-left)

The Catholic chapel in Earlham Cemetery, built in 1874. *Reproduced in A Great Gothic Fane (1913), 213*

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The initial research for this article was undertaken in the latter half of the 1970s when the author was head of conservation in Norwich City Planning Department and secretary of the Norwich Preservation Trust. At that time he received considerable assistance from the late Fr T.G. Holt, S.J., then archivist of the English Province of the Society of Jesus in London. The present author was in his turn able to supply Fr Holt with additional local material. Fr Holt's article in *Norfolk Archaeology* (1979) is a most useful source, as is that of T.B. Trappes-Lomax (*Norfolk Archaeology*, 1968), and also the anonymous *A Great Gothic Fane* (1913); see further the endnotes.

For the present article the author also acknowledges the assistance of staff at the Norfolk Record Office and Norwich Heritage Centre, the Archivist of the Diocese of East Anglia (Mrs Dora Cowton) and colleagues, the Honorary Librarian of the Norfolk and Norwich Archaeological Society (Mrs Judy Sims) and colleagues, Ms Anna Edwards at the Archives of the British Province of the Society of Jesus, London, and the Librarian to the Duke of Norfolk (Dr John Martin Robinson) and colleagues at Arundel Castle. Contemporary photographs of the former Holy Apostles Chapel were kindly supplied by Mr Bruce Faulkner of Rogers and Norton, Solicitors. Mrs Genevieve Godber has magically transformed the author's text from typescript to electronic disk and Mr Timothy MacDonald has scanned the illustrations.

NOTES

- 1 The Papal Bull, *Regnans in Excelsis* (1569), was issued by Pius V (1504-72, Pope 1560-72), against 'Elizabeth the pretended Queen of England' and unleashed a savage persecution against her Catholic subjects. The full text appears in J. Saward, J. Morrill and M. Tomko, eds, *Firmly I Believe and Truly* (Oxford, 2011), 104.
- 2 Bishop Richard Challoner (1691-1781) was Vicar Apostolic of the London District from 1758-81. After 1685, until the restoration of the hierarchy in 1850, the Catholic Church in England and Wales was divided into four districts overseen by titular bishops. The London District covered ten counties; Norfolk was in the Midland District. *Memoirs of Missionary Priests* was first published in 1741-2; information here is from the edition revised by J.H. Pollen, S.J., (London, 1924). Bishop Challoner's body was translated to Westminster Cathedral in 1946.
- 3 For the execution of Protestants, see F. Blomefield, *An Essay Towards a Topographical History of the County of Norfolk*, 2nd ed. (11 vols), vol.III (Norwich pt I), 140 sqq. Blomefield's preface to this volume is dated 1741 and he died in 1752, leaving the work to be completed by others. He records executions of Lollards as early as 1424. The place of execution was the Lollards' Pit on the eastern fringe of the medieval city. It is marked on Thomas Kirkpatrick's 1723 map as 'Lollards Pitt, in wch ye Papists were us'd to burn such Persons as they called hereticks'; the name still stands.
- 4 Father Thomas Tunstall, alias Helmes, was hung, drawn and quartered in Norwich on 13 July 1616 following a period of incarceration in Wisbech gaol; his head was displayed on St Benedict's Gate at his own request since he had been hoping to join the Benedictine order (Challoner, *Memoirs*, 353-8).
- 5 Oldcorne, alias Hall, a Yorkshireman, was hung, drawn and quartered at Worcester in April 1606 (Challoner, *Memoirs*, 289-91). John Gerard lived to write his autobiography which included a description of his escape from the Tower of London. In penal times the Jesuit order, established on the continent in 1633, was organised in England into five 'Colleges'; Norfolk was included with adjoining counties in the College of Holy Apostles and code named 'Mrs Suffolk'.
- 6 For the history of the Jerningham family see, *inter alia*, the anonymous *A Great Gothic Fane* (Brighton and London, 1913), 192-211.
- 7 T.B. Trappes-Lomax, 'Roman Catholicism in Norfolk, 1559-1780', *Norfolk Archaeology* XXXII (1968),

- 27-46, gives considerable detail of the troubles of Norfolk recusants in this period, including the Paston occupation of Thorpe Hall prior to 1670. The number and distribution of safe houses in the county fluctuated considerably as families changed allegiance and the intensity of persecution varied.
- 8 Lists of the clergy for both missions appear in T.G. Holt, S.J., 'Catholic Chapels in Norwich before 1900 – Secular and Jesuit', *Norfolk Archaeology* XXXVII (1979), 153-65. Prior to the dates given there were undoubtedly priests operating in Norwich under aliases and peripatetically but their identities and whereabouts would have been carefully concealed.
- 9 The latter part of the 18th century was something of a nadir for recusant fortunes and the stimulus for the 1778 Relief Act was to some extent at least the necessity of finding recruits to fight in the American War of Independence. The failure of the Jacobite rebellion of 1745 had been a demoralising experience and led to widespread acceptance of the Hanoverian Succession. Trappes-Lomax described the resistance movement as almost beaten and estimated a sharp drop in the numbers of Mass centres and Catholics. The proportion of recusants in East Anglia was significantly lower than in other parts of the country due to the strength of nonconformity.
- 10 Blomefield, *Topographical History*, vol.III, 422-3.
- 11 Holt, 'Catholic Chapels', 165-6.
- 12 H. Sutermeister, *The Norwich Blackfriars* (Norwich, 1977).
- 13 Blomefield, *Topographical History*, vol. III, 424. Riots had occurred in London in the wake of the so called Popish Plot instigated by Titus Oates, and Catholics were also blamed for the Great Fire of 1666; this may have spread to the provinces and Norwich was strongly anti-Papist.
- 14 *A Great Gothic Fane*, 90, quotes a letter from Dr Husenbeth, priest at Costessey, which suggests that the chapel was 'below Blackfriars Bridge', this information being supplied by a man who attended the chapel; it is of course possible that there was more than one location.
- 15 Jesuit Archives, correspondence relating to the College of the Holy Apostles. Henry Matchet died in 1788 and was also a benefactor of the Jesuit chapel in Ten Bell (formerly St Swithin's) Lane (see below): see House of Lords list in F.J. Devany, *The Faithful Few* (Norwich, 2008), 162, 168-9.
- 16 F. Browne, *The History of Norwich from the Earliest Records to the Present Time* (Norwich, 1814), 162.
- 17 Jesuit Archives, f.232.
- 18 *A Great Gothic Fane*, 90-1.
- 19 Jesuit Archives, plan of an Estate in St Giles, in the City of Norwich; it includes floor plans of the house which was subsequently sold, which had (and has?) three floors and a basement, all one room deep.
- 20 Howard Colvin, *A Biographical Dictionary of English Architects 1600-1840* (3rd rev. edn, New Haven and London, 1995), 741, gives brief biographical details of Patience, including that he began his career as a mason in Colchester and Bury St Edmunds, was bankrupted in 1812 and was practising in Norwich as an architect by 1820, becoming city surveyor in 1836. On Cow Hill he lived in the building known as Holkham House, believed to have been built by Matthew Brettingham (1699-1769) for his brother Robert (1696-1768). Matthew had worked on Holkham Hall as superintendent of works under William Kent. Sir Peter Eade, *Some Account of the Parish of St Giles, Norwich* (Norwich, 1886), 369, describes Patience as a builder and says that he built Holkham House. A paving rate assessment of 1826 (reproduced in the above work) includes the name of Patiance(sic) as a tenant of a member of the Brettingham family. Patience was later recorded as living in York Place and he died in the suburb of Lakenham; his death was announced in the *Norwich Mercury* on 22 April 1843 'on Sunday last ... in the 74th year of his age'.
- 21 For the involvement of Patience in the building of the Subscription Library, see the Library minutes; builders were on site only ten days after his appointment! The interior was badly damaged by fire towards the end of the century and reinstated by Edward Boardman.
- 22 *Norwich Mercury*, 25 July 1829.
- 23 Letter from Patience, 10 March 1836; see Jesuit Archives, College of Holy Apostles papers, 1775-1840.
- 24 Letter from Fr Tate, 11 May 1836; *ibid.*
- 25 A letter of August 1846, *ibid.*, states that 'Mr Stannard the Surveyor' had been consulted. There were local father and son architects both named Joseph Stannard; the father lived from 1771 to 1855 and the son (City Surveyor, 1840-8) from 1795 to 1850; thus either or both could have been involved but

- the son is perhaps more likely. For their dates, see N. Pevsner and B. Wilson, *Norfolk 1: Norwich and North-east*, Buildings of England (2nd edn, Harmondsworth, 1997), 187.
- 26 *Norfolk Chronicle*, 6 November 1847; the report appeared alongside an editorial vilifying *The Tablet* and Pope Pius IX regarding the proposed restoration of the Catholic hierarchy (which occurred in 1850) and another in similar vein on the Irish question.
- 27 William Eusebius Andrews (1773-1837), a native of Norwich, became managing editor of the *Norfolk Chronicle* and published his polemical *Orthodox Journal of Entertaining Christian Knowledge* from 1813-20 and intermittently between 1823 and 1838; Saward et al., *Firmly I Believe*, 386 (as in note 1).
- 28 Jesuit Archives, 1822-82: report ff.144-54, plans f.151 (see Figure 9).
- 29 Confidential correspondence during 1880, in the Diocese of East Anglia Archives, between Bishop Riddell of Northampton and the Jesuit provincial, Fr Purbrick, is evidence of some haggling over the value of the properties, and ultimately a unilateral acceptance by the Jesuits to surrender their mission to the diocese and relocate their clergy to Great Yarmouth.
- 30 Charles John Brown (d.1932) had become architect to Norwich Education Committee; he was the third generation of his family after John Brown (1805-76) and John Henry Brown; information from Day and Young card index, Bridewell Museum, Norwich, 1977.
- 31 East Anglia Diocese Archives; diary of the then parish priest, Canon H.S. Squirrel: the school toilets were condemned in December 1938 and the school reopened after refurbishment in August 1939.
- 32 The events summarised took place during the mid- to late 1970s when the present author was secretary of the Norwich Preservation Trust and his drawing of the roof structure (Fig. 7) dates from this period; the engineer who prepared a report on behalf of the SPAB (dated 12 November 1976) was Mr John Mason.
- 33 G. Goreham, *Norwich Heritage* (Norwich, 1977), 34.
- 34 The artist, and presumably also the designer of the building, was Alfred Morant (1828-81), City Engineer of Norwich from 1865-72 and before that Borough Engineer of Great Yarmouth; after 1872 he moved on to Leeds (Pevsner and Wilson, *Norfolk 1*, 159).
- 35 This report was a valuation, by the local auctioneer Spelman, of the chapel in Willow Lane and the school in Ten Bell Lane on behalf of the Bishop of Northampton. The Jesuits meanwhile obtained a higher valuation and it was agreed to split the difference (see also note 29). The East Anglia Diocese Archives also include considerable and relatively contentious correspondence relating to the taking over of the mission by the secular clergy, including petitions by prominent local Catholics against the Jesuit withdrawal.
- 36 Virtually all the information given here about the relevant dukes of Norfolk is based on J.M. Robinson, *The Dukes of Norfolk* (rev. edn, Chichester, 1995); see also E.A. Kent, 'The Houses of the Duke of Norfolk in Norwich', *Norfolk Archaeology* XXIV (1930), 73-87.
- 37 Blomefield, *Topographical History*, III (Norwich I), 432, refers to the setting up of three workhouses with Boards of Guardians in the city, under the Act of 1712; one of them being 'in the remains of the DUKE'S Palace'. Eventually the Board of Guardians was also to take over the former chapel as its offices.
- 38 Letter quoted by Fr Holt: Fr Butler had moved to Worksop Manor, another ducal house. A further letter, in the Archives of the Midland District (now Archdiocese of Birmingham), 26 August 1753, states that 'Mr Alb' (i.e. Fr Alban Butler) had gone to Norwich, and another of 2 October 1753 says that he is 'now fixed at Norwich'. Butler subsequently became tutor to the heir presumptive of the then duke, having previously been the author of *Butler's Lives of the Saints* and Professor of Divinity at Douai, also supplying Bishop Challoner with material for his work on the English martyrs. The 1767 census of papists has a reference to 'Beaumont, supposed priest'.
- 39 In 1839 the Norwich Museums Committee added a rather distinguished classical frontage building designed by John Brown, resulting in partial demolition of the house. This building also fell victim to road widening as did the somewhat later, also handsome, free library building by E.E. Benest on the corner of Duke Street. They are both illustrated in beautiful drawings by the late Noel Spencer (1966 and 1963 respectively), published in *Norwich Drawings* (Norwich, n.d., c.1970).
- 40 G.A.F. Plunkett, *Disappearing Norwich* (Lavenham, 1987), 81 (with photographs).
- 41 Arundel Castle Archives, James Paine accounts, MD18.

- 42 Midland District Archives, C923 (Archdiocese of Birmingham).
- 43 Canon Duckett recorded that he used his own funds to purchase a house, which still stands, on St George's Plain, Colegate, north of the river (East Anglia Diocese Archives). The clergy lived there until the new rectory in Unthank Road (now Cathedral House) was completed in 1894.
- 44 29 Wymer Street was probably in Lockett's Court; see L.G. Bolingbroke, 'St John Maddermarket, Norwich', *Norfolk Archaeology* XX (1921), 215-35. This article includes two photographs of the Court and a map of the parish. Fr D'Eterville (spellings vary) was one of a number of continental clergy taking shelter from the Revolution and French wars. Lockett's Court appears with other nearby buildings on the 1883 OS map but was soon to be demolished to allow the construction of Harmer's clothing factory, itself destroyed in the blitz of 1942. Lockett was a Catholic name in Norwich and Bolingbroke describes the court as 'a picturesque old courtyard' with a vaulted cellar and says 'many old and interesting buildings were pulled down'. The artist, John Sell Cotman, lived in the court for a time. Fr D'Eterville taught languages to the writer, George Borrow, who pictures him in chapter 14 of *Lavengro*; see also *A Great Gothic Fane*, 80-1.
- 45 Browne *History of Norwich*, 216.
- 46 East Anglia Diocese Archives, file 1, 1858-95. The reference to the dedication of the chapel to St John the Evangelist is interesting because it is generally assumed to have been dedicated to St John the Baptist, as are its medieval predecessor and its late Victorian successor, now the Cathedral of East Anglia. The mention of 'the intended church' shows that a fund for a replacement building was already established, but this money was lost later due to the failure of Harvey's bank in the city. Fr Leonard Strongitharm, priest from 1821-26 (Holt, *Catholic Chapels*, 165) died at Costessey in March 1827, aged thirty-four (see *A Great Gothic Fane*, 81-2). Gas came to Norwich in the mid-1820s. The observation that 'Mass is said nowhere else' is inaccurate in view of the close proximity of the Jesuit chapel.
- 47 For full sale particulars with an accompanying plan of the estate, along with related correspondence, see East Anglia Diocese Archives, file 2, 1896-1919. A full report of the sale appeared in the *Norfolk Chronicle*, 7 July 1896. At the sale Mr Dunn, the auctioneer, stated that the clause regarding removal of fixtures was misleading and intended to apply only to religious objects. The estate was sold for £2,700 to a Mr John Rout, who also bought the Ten Bell Lane school for £550. The annual report of the Norfolk and Norwich Archaeological Society for the year 1900 records that 'The Strangers' Hall had recently been purchased by Mr L.G. Bolingbroke, the Hon. Secretary of the Society', at whose hand it had undergone 'a careful reparation'.
- 48 Andrew Stephenson, *The Maddermarket Theatre* (Norwich, n.d., c.1971). The wall, railings and arch appear quite clearly on the 1883 OS map.
- 49 According to Blomefield, *Topographical History*, IV (Norwich pt II), 407, under Anguish's will of 1617 he bequeathed the east part of his estate, on the north side of Fishgate (now Fishergate) to the 'MAYOR, sheriff, citizens and commonalty ... to erect, set up and found an HOSPITAL, or convenient place for the Keepinge, bringinge up & teachinge of Younge & very poore children'. The school was 'fitted up in 1618', and by Blomefield's time what was formerly called 'the Children's Hospital' was 'now called the Boys Hospital'.
- 50 Pevsner and Wilson, *Norfolk* 1, 339.
- 51 Information from the present author's father, who remembered as a boy being driven in a cart through the flooded streets of the city.