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## A walk in Maritime Ipswich

The Old Customs House, ① now the offices of the Ipswich Port Authority, was designed by J. M. Clark and was opened in 1844. Clark died five years later at the age of 36. From the Customs House it is possible to look out over the Dock, which when it was opened in 1842 was the largest area of enclosed water of its kind in England. In charge of the construction of the dock was Henry Palmer, appointed by the newly created Dock Commission in 1837.

What he did was to cut off a section of the existing river by excavating the New Cut to carry the waters of the Gipping from just below Stoke Bridge, then a cast-iron structure of 1818, to a point downstream of the quays. Both ends of the by-passed section were closed off and an entrance lock was built where the harbour-master's office still stands.

When you stand in front of the Old Customs House you are standing on the historic Common Quay, which was important to the town long before the building of the Dock. The earlier shoreline was further back than it is now, somewhere under the present line of Key Street.

Turn to the east and walk along the quay past the Home Warehouse ②, built about 1880 by R. & W. Paul for use in their malting business. Just beyond are Henry Palmer's stylish sheds for timber storage, in red brick with white brick trimmings; the canopy between them is an early addition.

In the narrow lane leading through to Salthouse Street is a sarsen stone used to prevent damage to walls by waggons driven up against them. At the other end of the lane is an old cannon having the same use. Traces of the original cobble paving can be seen here.

On the east side of the lane is a warehouse, probably of 18th century date extended in the 19th towards the quay. Next to this was formerly the Wherry public house, named after the sailing vessels which ran a regular service between Ipswich and Harwich before the advent of the steamers. This was only one of a number of dockside public houses, some of which opened early in the morning for the convenience of dockworkers.



*Barges entering Ipswich Dock  
in the 1890s.*

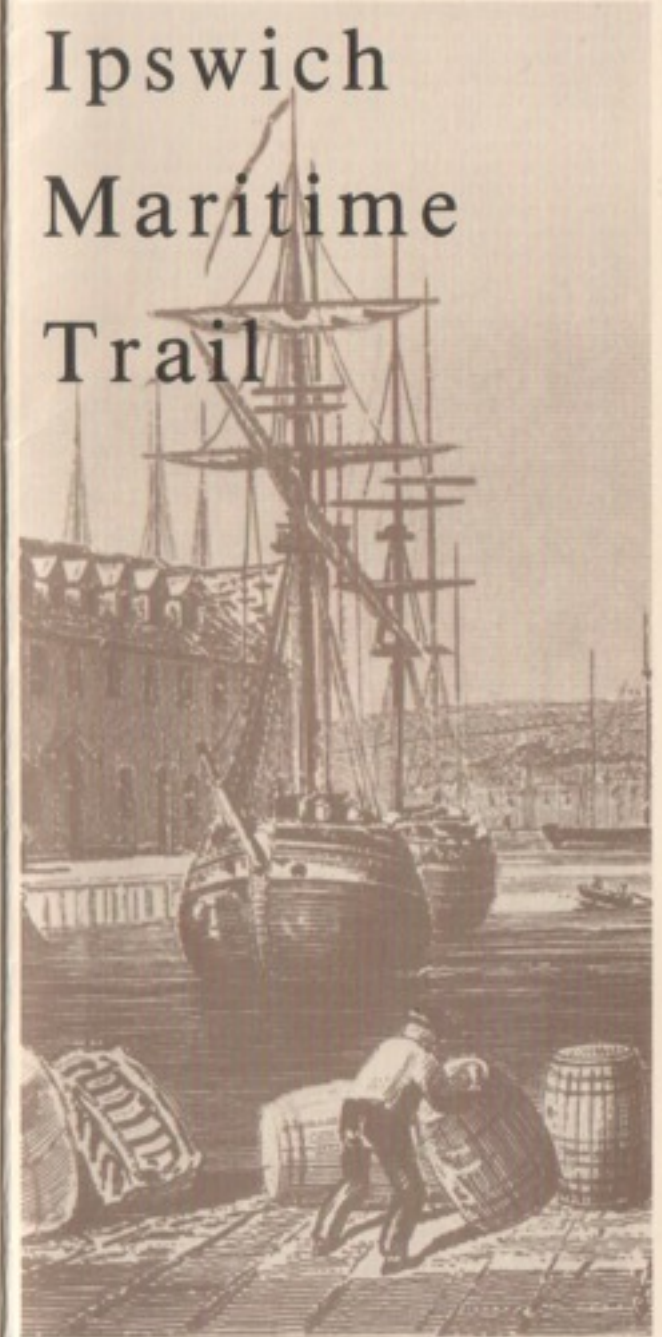
The Ipswich Society exists to foster an awareness of our local environment and to encourage its conservation and enhancement. It is a non-political organisation with membership open to anyone who shares our concern to make Ipswich a more attractive town in which to live and work.

The society offers a range of activities: practical work projects, social events, lectures and visits. Small groups of members have been working on topics such as pedestrianisation, listed buildings, conservation areas, redundant churches, and this Maritime Trail.

Should you wish to know more about the society, please contact the honorary membership secretary:

Mrs. M. C. Chilvers,  
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## Ipswich Maritime Trail





Shipping in Ipswich Dock about 1880, before the building of the Home Warehouse obscured the view of St. Clement's Church.

Some of these might in former times have had their brewhouse attached and have obtained malt from the little 18th century malting now belonging to Isaac Lord which stands to the east.

Further along, on Neptune Quay, which takes its name from a one-time public house in Fore Street, is the former oil mills of George Mason, and next to it the chandlery business of J. O. Whitmore, transferred from Harwich at the end of the 19th century.

Mellonie and Goulder's coal yard once received cargoes of coal by ship; the remains of a gantry by which coal was carried across the quay can still be seen.

Another gantry further along served to carry ballast dredged from the Stour into a works which occupies the site of maltings belonging to Meux's Brewery Co. Ltd.; the malting windows are still visible in the wall on the right.

Coprolite Street is named after the phosphatic nodules which used to be quarried east of Ipswich and which formed the basis of the early chemical fertiliser industry in Suffolk. The low brick walls on the south-east corner of the street are all that remains of the first artificial manure factory ① set up in Ipswich in the mid-19th century.

This fertiliser works stood on the site of St. Clement's Shipyard, which closed down when the Dock was constructed, a new yard then being opened outside the Dock. The building slip was on the line of the entrance to the fertiliser works yard.

Pause before walking down Coprolite Street and look out over the Wet Dock. The indent in the bank on the far side of the Dock to the left shows the site of the original entrance lock, replaced in 1881 by a new lock at the southern extremity of the Dock. In the right distance can be seen the big floor maltings "over Stoke" which when they closed in 1978 were the last floor maltings operating in Ipswich.

Go along Coprolite Street and turn left towards Fore Street. Pause to look across the roundabout to Holy Trinity Church ②, built in 1838 as a chapel of ease to St. Clement's at a time when this was a populous parish, largely inhabited by seafaring men and those concerned with the Dock. More recent buildings are the Grimwade Memorial Hall, named after Edward Grimwade (1812-86), and St. Clement's Congregational Church.

Just around the corner in Fore Street is a row of old timber-framed buildings, Nos. 132-138, with a carved bressumer bearing the date 1620. Opposite stood the Social Settlement, founded in 1896 by Sir Daniel Ford Goddard as an undenominational and non-political social centre for this largely working-class district.

Walk on down Fore Street past the other side of what was Meux's maltings, of which only the lower walls survive. On the opposite side of the street is a group of dilapidated timber-framed buildings, two of which have been refronted. Inside are 17th century plaster ceilings. Next to this group is the former Sorrel Horse public house, extending round the corner of Grimwade Street, once called Church Street, but with a one-time corn merchant's shop actually on the corner.

On the other corner of Grimwade Street is Lyndon House, a Salvation Army men's hostel, with mock Tudor facade. Beyond the hostel is a garage occupying the site of a house owned by Thomas Cavendish (1555-92), the circumnavigator.

On the west side of the road just beyond an alley leading back to Neptune Quay is the Old Neptune ③, a timber-framed building bearing the date 1639; internal evidence indicates an earlier building date. Further on, glance through the entrance of No. 80 ④, now the premises of Isaac Lord, the coal merchants, at the long courtyard with ranges of warehouses running back to the quay. These premises are particularly interesting as the residence and workplace of a Tudor merchant, which are still in use both for residential and business purposes.

The artificial fertiliser factory on the corner of Coprolite Street, now demolished.



A photograph by William Vick of the junction of Fore Street and Angel Lane, with the Lion and Lamb on left.



Cross Fore Street at the Salthouse Street junction traffic lights and walk back along the east side of the street, from which we can see the Tudor merchants' houses with greater ease. The Lord Nelson public house ⑤ opposite the junction is a strange mixture of old and new; one can see where the roof of the timber-framed section has been raised at some time.

Further along on the east side, note the etched glass panel in a door of what was E. J. Owles' chemist's shop.

Turn left into Grimwade Street. Opposite is a range of timber-framed houses, Nos. 79-83 Grimwade Street, known as "The Captain's Houses." ⑥ The date 1631 appears on the bressumer, but there are inserted details of later date including a pedimented doorway at No. 81 and sash windows of the 18th century. No. 77 was originally a fourth house in the row, but is an early 18th century rebuild of the timber-framed house in brick, with a very nice doorcase and sash windows.

Turn left into St. Clement's Church Lane. The redundant St. Clement's Church ⑦ is now in the care of the Ipswich Historic Churches Trust. In the churchyard, which includes the section of lane adjacent, is buried Sir Thomas Slade, an 18th century Surveyor of the Navy who was responsible for the design of Nelson's flagship H.M.S. Victory. Note the seven cast-iron bollards in the lane, products of an Ipswich foundry.

Pause at the end of the lane. The busy junction to which we have come was once the site of picturesquely narrow Angel Lane, with the Lion and Lamb on one corner and the Angel on the other. This was right beside Fore Street Baths, built in 1891 on a site given to the town by Felix Cobbold.

On the opposite side of Fore Street is a timber-framed building with pargeted front. Next door is a 19th century brick front on a much earlier timber-framed building; the shop front is contemporary with the facade, but the plate glass replaces the 19th century glazing; evidence of the former glazing bars can be seen on close inspection. Similar glazing bars can still be seen in No. 52, one of a handsome range of 19th century brick buildings with vehicle entry in the middle of the range. Beyond this are other small timber-framed buildings, No. 42 even retaining its jetty in spite of considerable alterations.

On the right-hand side of Fore Street, the new Star Lines building retains something of the shape and scale of the one burned down some years ago. Beyond is a marvellous variety of genuine timber-framed buildings; No. 25 contains remains of a side entrance with a timber arch, now in the interior of the building.

On the left-hand side is an outstanding Tudor merchant's house with "Ipswich" windows similar to those in the Ancient House in the Buttermarket.

Beyond this the character of the left-hand side changes, with brick-fronted buildings typical of late-Victorian and Edwardian periods. Pause at the corner of Lower Orwell Street to look up Upper Orwell Street at a variety of buildings, many timber-framed. On the left-hand side "Commemoration Buildings", the premises of Martin & Newby, an old-established ironmongers, dates from 1897, the year of Queen Victoria's diamond jubilee.

An older generation knows Upper Orwell Street as the Upper Wash; the stream that flowed down Spring Road from the Cauldwell (Cold

*The merchant's house in Fore Street before the insertion of a shop front in part of the ground floor.*



*The Great Eastern Railway steamers which ran to Felixstowe, Harwich and Shotley, seen in the New Cut.*

Well) Hall estate ran through here on its way to the Orwell. Turn left into Lower Orwell Street, or the Lower Wash, then right into School Street, built across the line of the 13th century town rampart; the hump of the bank is still visible.

On the right, through a grill in a wooden door, can be seen a row of stone arches, some of which are the remains of the Blackfriars monastery; others are apparently "restorations". More traces of the monastery survive in the cellars of the heating engineers' premises, formerly Catchpole's Unicorn Brewery and then the mineral water works of Talbot and Company. It is a typical mid-19th century brewery building, surmounted by an iron water tank.

Return a few yards along School Street and turn into Shire Hall Yard, once the site of the Shire Hall, built in 1699, where the Quarter Sessions were held and in which Thomas Clarkson spoke in favour of the abolition of slavery.

Turn right beside Tooley's and Smart's almshouses named after these Tudor merchant benefactors. Although the foundation dates back to the 16th century, these almshouses are early Victorian and have been both extended and modernised. Foundation Street was once a residential street, but houses have now been replaced by business premises.

Cross Foundation Street and go through Rosemary Lane; on the left is the site of St. Edmund de Pountney chapel, one of the town's earliest redundant churches. The site is now occupied by Haven House, a new customs house serving a much wider area than the Port of

Ipswich. On the corner of Rosemary Lane and Lower Brook Street is a pleasant early 18th century brick house, now used as offices; note the plain cast-iron street name sign on the wall.

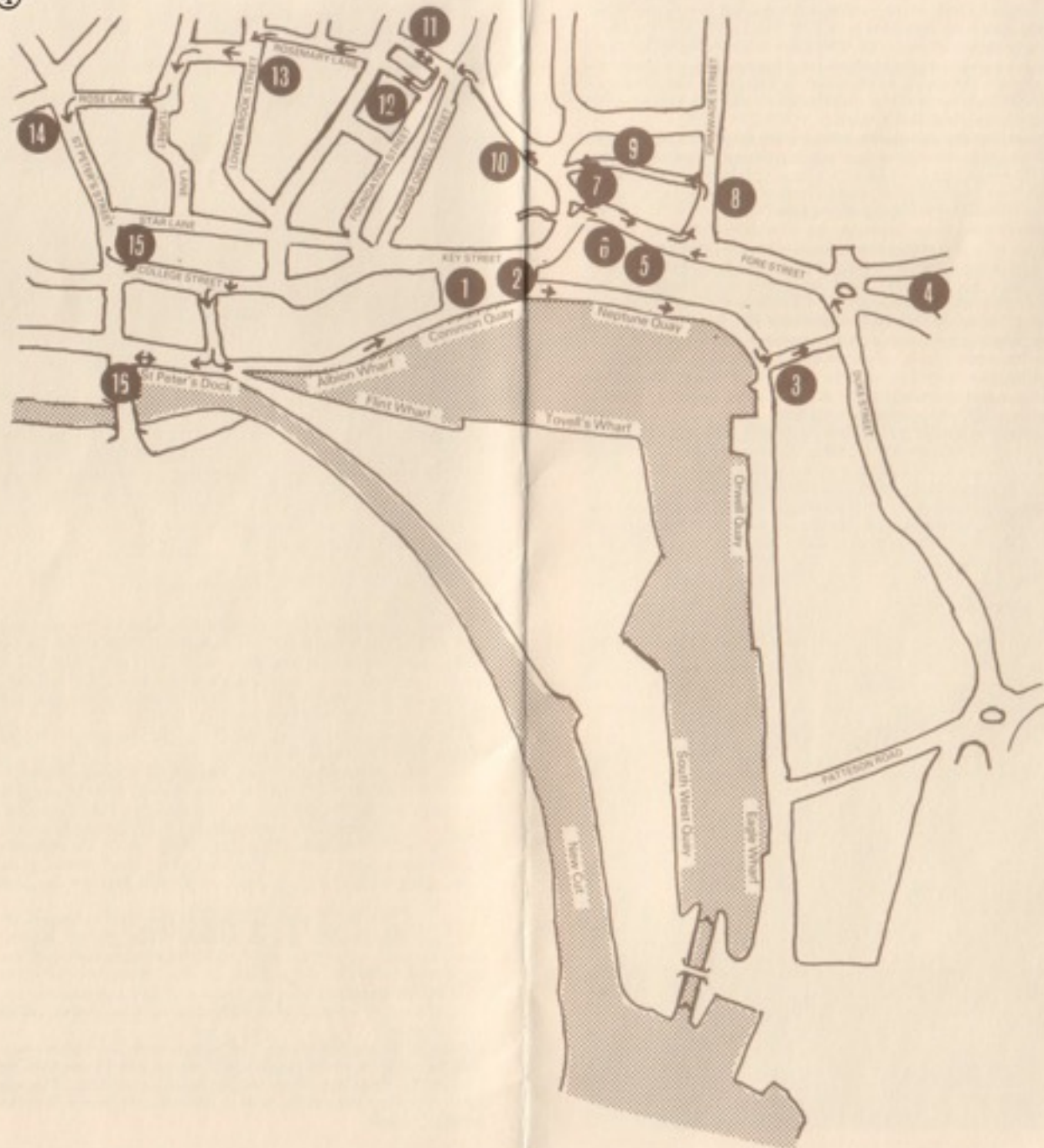
Cross Lower Brook Street, once a fashionable residential street, and go through Turret Lane; on the right-hand side are modern buildings designed in imitation of the old. Pause at the end to look right at the towers of three of the town's churches, St. Lawrence, St. Stephen and St. Mary-le-Tower, and left at St. Peter's. We are standing on one of the linear routes linking the port area with the town centre.

Turn left past the imposing former Turret Green Baptist Chapel of 1842, then right into Rose Lane and walk to the end, where stood the Rose public house, now offices. Just before reaching the end, notice the pair of small warehouses, reminiscent of dockside buildings.

At the end of the lane pause to look right at the junction of Silent Street and St. Nicholas Street. Cardinal Wolsey was born in premises which formerly stood hereabouts; not, as is popularly supposed, in the timber-framed shop on the St. Nicholas Street corner. Opposite is the Sailor's Rest, so called because it was for a time used as a seamen's mission; it has been restored as offices, and the neighbouring modern building has been designed to blend with the old.

Walk to the left down St. Peter's Street, passing a fine 17th century merchant's house with courtyard. This house, which contains fine plaster ceilings bearing the pig emblem of the Bacon family, is now divided into antique shops, a restaurant and wine bar.

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Cross Star Lane, a new road forming part of a circulatory traffic system, to reach St. Peter's, another redundant church in the care of the Ipswich Historic Churches Trust, past which turn left into College Street, named after the college which Cardinal Wolsey founded here in 1528. With the fall of Wolsey the college disappeared, only the brick gateway and an adjacent wall near the east end of St. Peter's Church surviving, although the church itself was used as the college chapel.

Cross College Street by the pedestrian crossing and go down Foundry Lane; the name recalls the St. Peter's Ironworks of E. R. & F. Turner, an important firm which was largely responsible for introducing the roller flour mill to this country.



*The old Stoke Bridge, built by Ransome's in 1818.*

At the end of Foundry Lane we find ourselves back at the Dock. We can walk to the right up to the vantage point by Stoke Bridge ④ to look over the Dock and the New Cut, or can turn left towards the Old Customs House. Opposite is a former maltings which was used during the Napoleonic Wars as a barracks. The paved area at the approach to Stoke Bridge was the site of the tidemill; the railway yard in Commercial Road occupies the site of the mill pond in which water to work the mill was impounded at high tide.

As we return to the Old Customs House we pass modern mills and a number of later 19th century floor maltings. At the far end of the quay nearest the Old Customs House stands a Wanderhaufen malting plant built in the 1960s. In front of it can be seen the cast-iron columns which supported the graceful timber warehouses designed by Henry Palmer when he constructed the Wet Dock.