

PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
CAMBRIDGE ANTIQUARIAN
SOCIETY

(INCORPORATING THE CAMBS & HUNTS
ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY)



VOLUME LXVII

1977

IMRAY LAURIE NORIE AND WILSON

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A MID-SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY VIEW OF NEWMARKET COURT HOUSE

DANIEL W. HOLLIS III

DURING the Civil War, the Parliamentary government was forced by the exigencies of war finance to rely partly upon income from church, crown and royalist properties in areas where the Parliamentary armies controlled these lands. The lands became subject to sequestration in 1643, and the county committees were designated to administer them for Parliament. Because the collection of rents was slow and the administration of the lands expensive, the Parliament was eventually faced with the necessity of selling part or all of the properties in order to pay the army and other Parliamentary creditors.

The initial legislation for the sale of confiscated lands was passed in 1646 and applied to the bishops' lands.¹ The sales began the following year after surveys had been made to determine the market value of the properties. The precedent for sale of the confiscated lands was thus established and shortly utilized on a vast scale. In April 1649, the dean and chapter lands were ordered sold.² The following July the Parliament passed an 'Act of the Commons Assembled, for the sale of the Honors, Manors, and Lands heretofore belonging to the late King, Queen, and Prince.'³ The Act excluded such items as the King's personal goods, fee-farm rents, forest lands, and certain royal properties to be utilized by the Commonwealth (e.g., Whitehall, Westminster, St James's, Windsor Castle, and the Tower of London). The legislation provided for comprehensive surveys to be made before the lands were offered for sale. In addition, the legislation named trustees and established the office of Surveyor-General to supervise and coordinate the surveys and sales. Colonel William Webb, the Surveyor-General, and the trustees devised a precedent or model survey to be used by the surveyors as a guide. The surveyors were appointed in groups of three or four to work in various regions of the country.⁴

The crown lands in Cambridgeshire subject to survey and sale were neither as numerous nor as valuable as in many counties, but they were nonetheless important. Two of the crown lands were manors, two were urban court houses, one was a small parcel of land, and there were also rents from properties under the jurisdiction of the Honor of Clare and Richmond in the county. The rental income from crown lands was generally far below the market value because

the crown traditionally utilized its lands primarily for political rather than financial purposes.⁵ However, the rental income from Cambridgeshire crown lands was above the national average.

The most impressive and best known royal property in the county was Newmarket Court House. The property contained only fifty acres of land, but the surveyors found the per annum value to be £123. There was no lease for Newmarket because it was frequently used by the early Stuart monarchs on their visits to the races at Easter and Michaelmas. Another royal house was located in Royston, a corn and cattle market on the border with Hertfordshire. Royston Court House contained only four acres, and the annual value was estimated to be £51 by the surveyors. There was also no crown lessee for the property because the house was used by the royal family, usually as a rest stop on journeys. The house was a two story brick structure which was probably built by Inigo Jones. The largest royal property in the county was Burwell and Ramseys Manor which contained 560 acres and rented for £77 per annum. The lessee before the Civil War was Justinian Povey, the Auditor General to Queen Henrietta Maria. His lease of sixty years was dated 1639. The other crown manor in Cambridgeshire was Waterbeach which was formerly parcel of the House of Minoreesses. It rented for £48 per annum and was leased to Walter Knight at the time it was confiscated. The remaining royal property was the Swinecroft parcel of five acres at Cambridge. The rental had been seven shillings per annum for Richard Wichalls whose lease of twenty-one years was dated 1640.⁶

After the Cambridgeshire crown lands were surveyed between December 1649 and September 1651, they were offered for sale. In almost every county many of the purchasers were soldiers, and Cambridgeshire was no exception. The soldiers were allowed to use their debentures toward the payment of the royal properties. One of the best examples of a regimental purchase with debentures was the sale of Newmarket Court House. The property was obtained for Captain Christopher Mercer's troop in Colonel John Okey's regiment of dragoons. The regimental agent or attorney acting on behalf of the officers and rank and file who held debentures was Major Tobias Bridges. Newmarket was sold at fourteen years purchase of the annual income for a total of £1722.⁷

The Parliamentary survey of Newmarket Court House reveals a number of interesting details about the structure and premises which are not found in other sources. The survey followed a pattern similar to most of the crown land surveys, but in the case of Newmarket the descriptions by the surveyors were more specific than usual. It was obviously an impressive property for the surveyors to have taken the time and effort to provide details which were not otherwise required. The following transcript includes not only the original manuscript wording but also the form used in the surveys. Explanatory notes have been added to enhance the understanding of the document.

Parliamentary Survey of Newmarket Court House, Cambridgeshire¹
 A Survey of New Markett Courte house, with the Rights, Members
 and appurtenances thereof lying and being in the Towne of
 New Markett in the Countie of Cambridge aforesaid late p-
 cell of the possession of Charles Stuart, late Kinge of
 England made and taken by us whose names are hereunto
 subscribed in the Monneth of Januarie 1649² By ver-
 tue of a Comission grannted upon an Acte of the
 Commons assembled in Parliament, for sale of
 the honners Mannors and Lands heretofore
 belonginge to the late Kinge Queene,
 and Prince, under the hand and
 seale of five or more of the
 Trustees in the said Acte
 named and approved⁴

All that Capitall Messuage, Mansion howse or Courte howse with the Appurtenancies
 Commonly called New Markett howse scittuate lying and being in the Towne and Parish of
 New Markett aforesaid, in the foresaid Countie of Cambridge consistinge of severall distincte
 buildings, as followeth (viz.)

All that Bricke buildinge Commonly called the kinges lodgings, adioyning to the Tennis
 Courts conteyninge 84 foote of Assize in length, and 38 foote of Assize in breadth, being
 double built, cont divers and severall lodginge roomes, & other Roomes of service, being
 Three stories high, guttered with lead, the Chimneyes built in ye midst of the said buildinge,
 the severall Chambers beinge all well flowered with sawen boardes, and matted; With a
 small Gardin to the same belonginge on the Southside thereof, inclosed with a Wall conteyn-
 inge one Rood of ground in good reparacons not fitt to be demolished, and is worth p. an

acres	roods	Yearely value
00	01	xv £i.

All that Bricke buildinge called the Tennis Court, with Two other small Brick buildings
 equall with the said Tennis Court at the South and North ends thereof conteyninge in the
 whole 120 foote of Assize in length, and 36 foote of Assize in breadth worth p an xiii £i.

All that old Buildinge beinge partly Bricke, and partly Tymber called the Kings Kitchin
 beinge 40 foote of Assize in length, and 28 foote of Assize in breadth wch standeth distincte
 from the other buildings and are very much out of reparacons worth p an. xx s.

All that Tymber buildinge that leadeth from the Kings lodgings, to the Princes lodgings
 northward called the longe Gallery beinge 72 foote of Assize in Length, and 32 foote of Assize
 in breadth, under which said Gallery are Divers lodging Roomes and Offices under which
 said Roofe, and on the West side of the said Gallery devided with a wall a Rainge of divers
 lodginge Roomes below stayres, and above stayres, equal in depth and length with the said
 Gallery, and fitt to make convenyent Tennementes for habitation, and are worth p an x £i.

All that Bricke buildinge scittuate nex to the Common streete in New Markett, called the
 Princes lodginge, being double built Three storyes highe, conteyning 70 foote of Assize in
 length, and 44 foote of Assize in breadth well floured with sawen boardes and matted, and
 conteyninge 6 Chambers belowe stayres and 6 Chambers above stayres, with fayer Garrets
 in very good reparacons, and very fitt for habitation and worth p an xx £i.

All that old Tymber bulidinge that runneth flush with the said Princes lodginge scittuate nex to the Common streete in New Markett aforesaid, and being 44 foote of Assize in length and 26 foote of Assize in breadth, conteyninge divers Roomes and Offices, belowe staires, & sundrey Roomes above stayres, in parte whereof dwelleth Mr. Richard Grymes, the howse-keeper, fitt for convenyent habbitacone, but out of reparaire, and worth p an vii £i.

All that Crosse old Tymber buildinge, that abutteth with the foresaid buildinge, and runneth flush with the kings lodginge conteyninge 88 foote of Assize in length, and 16 foote of Assize in breadth, heretofore called the pantrey, Buttery, and Wardrobe, all old and very much decayed worth p. an. ii £i. x s.

All that Bricke buildinge with a Turrett called the Princes kitchen beinge a square of 24 foote of Assize, With one other small Tymber howse which are fitt to make Two convenyent small Tennementes, and worth p an. v £i.

Memord. all the foresaid Buildinges and houses are encompassed with a stone wall upon the West, South and East sydes of the same, and with the Comon Streete on the North the Scite of which, with the foresaid Gardin and Courte yeardes contaynes one Acre or ther aboutes And all Wayes, Passages, Lightes, Casementes, Waters, Watercourses, Commodities, advantages, and Appurtenancies whatsoever to the said Manor or Courte House, and Scite thereof, or any pte or parcell thereof in any wise belonginge or appurtaing, and are worth in the whole as aforesaid p an.

acres	roodes	lxxij £i. x s.
01	00	

Memorandum

We have vallued the foresaid howse, with the buildinges, and Offices thereunto belonginge before menconed, and as they nowe stand att lxxij £i. x s. P an. in consideracon that many of the said howses, buildinges and Offices, abutt upon the Streete side, may bee sett out and devided into severall Convenyent habbitacons, with distincte accomodacons to each of them.

Memord. divers of the howses, and Buildings before menconed are in very good reparaire, and not fitt to be demolished yet wee have taken a viewe of the severall Materialls thereof & doe estimate the same, togeather with the Materialls of the severall Outhouses, Offices, and Buildinges thereunto belonginge to be worth in Tymber, Lead, Tyles, Stone, Bricks, Glasse and Iron, upon the place, besides the takeinge of them Downe^t ix Cxx £i.^s

And then the Scite thereof conteyneth one Acre as aforesaid, when the said Materialls are cleared of, wilbee worth P an. xxx s.

All that old decayed Tymber Stable conteyninge 132 foote of Assize in length, and 16 foote of Assize in breadth beinge Thatched, with Two other old Decayed Barnes Thatched alsoe beinge 90 foote of Assize in length, And 18 foote of Assize in breadth scittuate upon the Church Yeard on the South, and North, Togeather worth P an. xl s.

All that newe Bricke buildinge conteyninge 116 foote of Assize in length att 40 foote of Assize in breadth conteyninge Stables for the greate howse belowe stayres, with divers fayer lodgings above staires, and Garretts over them, well Tymbered and Tyled, worth P. an. xv £i

All that Tymber Rydinge howse rayسد upon substancyall Tymber, and boarded upon one side and one end with a Deepe Tyled Roofe conteyninge 104 foote of Assize in length, and 36 foote of Assize in breadth worth P. an. ij £i. x s.

All that Bricke buildinge called the Dogghouse, beinge 44 foote of Assize in length, and 28 foote of Assize in breadth, with a Bricke stable thereunto belonginge, and a Gardin thereto adioyninge conteyninge by estimacon 1 Rood, as ye same are inclosed with a Pale, & Stone Wall, worth P an. iiij £i

All that Bricke buildinge called the Clarke of the Workes his howse, beinge 32 foote of Assize in length, and 28 foote of Assize in breadth, with a Stable thereunto belonginge beinge Twenty foote of Assize in length, and fowerteene foote of Assize in breadth, built all of Tymber, and alsoe a Gardin plott thereunto belonginge conteyninge Two Roodes or there aboutes, as it is nowe inclosed with a stone wall, worth P an. iiij £i.

All that peece of Arrable land, nowe plowed up, lyinge and being upon the West side of the Clarke of the workes his howse, and thereunto adioyninge as the same is nowe inclosed conteyninge, fower Acres, worth P an.

acres	Roodes	iiij £i.
04	00	

All those two peeces of Pasture, lyinge and beinge upon the South syde of ye Church, with the Walkes thereto belonginge cont Sixe Acres, worth P an 06 00 iiij £i.

With all Wayes, Passages, Lightes, Casementes, Waters, Watercourses, Commodities, Advantages, and Appurtenance whatsoever to the above menconed, Buildinges landes and Pasture or any Pte or Pcell thereof in any wise belonginge or apptayninge as Pte, and Pcell of the said Mannor or Courte howse of New Markett, aforesd, and are worth in the whole as aforesaid P an. xxxv £i. x s.

Memord all the last recyted severall and distincte buildinges and houses are scituate in and sevall places and partes within the Landes before mencoed called the Kinges Closes, and belonginge and neare adioyninge to ye backside of the Chiefe Mancon, or Courte howse aforesd upon ye South beinge sewed^e from the greate howse and buildings thereunto belonginge with ye Comon Streete Church & Churchyard on ye South, & cont by admeasurement 11 acres

acres	Roodes
11	00

Memorandum

We have valued the foresaid howses, and Buildinges with the 11 acres of Land thereto belonginge att xxxv £i. x s. P an, And in consideracon that the same may be sett forth and divided into severall commodious habitacons with distincte accomodacons to each of them The Dogg-howse and the Clarke of the Workes his howse are in very good repaire and not fitt to be demolished, wch we have valued distinctly att ye annuall Rent as aforesaid Viz viiij £i.

The New Bricke stables, the Ridinge howse with the longe Stable, & the Two old Barnes thatched are all decayed, and not more worth then the Materialls/ Wee have taken a viewe of the sevrall Materialls thereof and Doe estimate the same togeather to bee worth in Tymber, Lead, Tyles, Bricks, Stone, Glasse, and Iron upon the place besides the charge of takinge them Downe cclx £i.⁷

And then the Scite thereof with the Landes thereunto belonginge conteing Tenn Acres when the said Materialls are cleared of, and will be worth P an vij £i.

All yt Stone buildinge called ye Brewhouse cont 82 foote of Assize in length, and 60 foote of Assize in breadth, haveing two distincte Roofes thereupon well tyled, not fitt to be demo-

lished, but fitt to make convenyent habitacons, wch said brewhouse is Scittuate on ye backside of ye Greyhound in Newmarkett aforesd on the South wth $\frac{1}{2}$ an acre of ground more or lesse thereunto belonginge, and worth P an

00 02 iij £i.

All that Bricke buildinge called the Coachhowse in Pte whereof there is a Smythes forge in the possession of John Reade conteyning in length 56 foote of Assize, and in breadth 20 foote of Assize, and is in good repaire and not fitt to be demolished, beinge fitt to make convenyent habitacons with halfe an acre of Land thereto belonginge worth P an

Acres Roodes iij £i.
00 02

Memord that the Brewhouse and Coachhowse are in very good repaire, and nott fitt to be demolished, yet very fitt for convenyent habitacon and soe wee have valued them they standinge distinctley, and severed from all the rest of the other Buildings, beinge bounded with the Signe of the Greyhound on the North, and with the Landes of Jeremie Gawen on the South worth in ye Total P an.

vij £i.

Memord that all the premises aforesaid are in present possession, and in the whole are worth P an.

cxvj £i.⁸

Wardrobe Thomas Hide, nowe dwellinge in the Towne of Royston in the foresaid Countie Keeper of Cambridge gent Claymeth the Office of Wardrobe keeper by and under Lres⁹ pattentes dated ¹⁰ in the 3d yeare of the late kinge Charles, duringe the naturall lyfe of him the said Thomas in both the howses of Newmarkett, and Royston,¹¹ with an Annuall sallary thereto belonginge and a certaine allowance alsoe yearely for Broomes, & Brushes And fower pound a year for a Liverie, as may more fully appeare by the Lres Pattents produced before us reference thereto beinge had/

All those Acres of Pasture ground lyinge and beinge upon the Common heath called Newmarkett heath in the Parishes of Swasham Bulbeck and Burrowegreene in the Countie of Cambridge aforesaid commonly called the Hare Parke, as it was heretofore Inclosed, with the Appurtenancies thereunto belonginge, And as it was used occupied and inioyed to and with the said Capital Messuage, Mancon howse or Courte howse of Newmarkett aforesaid Scittuate in the foresaid Countie of Cambridge, conteyning by estimacon in the Whole Thirtie fower Acres more or lesse, Whereof Thirtie acres more or lesse are nowe in the teanure and occupacon of Ambros Mortlocke of Birchelock in the said Countie of Cambridge And the other fower Acres more or lesse are in the occupacon of Thomas Renowe of Dullingham in the said Countie of Cambridge worth P an.

34 00 vij £i.

Memord the said Hare Parke with th appurtenance thereto belonginge is in present possession

Memord that wee have Contracted with the above named Ambrose Mortlocke, who is to hold Thirtie Acres more or lesse of the said Hare Parke, and in his owne possession, att the Rente of Sixe pound, for one whole yeare from the birthday of our Saviour last past, and payable att the feastes of the Nativitie of John the Baptist, and the birth of our Saviour aforesd 1650, by equal porcons¹²

An abstracte of the present value of the Courte Howse of Newmarkett aforesaid The said Courte, with all the Howses and Landes thereto belonginge as aforesaid are in present possession, and are in ye whole P an

cxxij £i.¹³

The Materialles of the said Courte Howse, and Outehouses, besides those Howses that are fitt for habitacons are valued in grosse att Mciiijxx £i.¹⁴

Signed and subscrd by us whose names are here under written beinge nominated and appointed Surveyors for the Countie of Cambridge by the Trustees, accordinge to the foremenconed Acte this fiste ¹⁵ day of Febr. 1649¹⁶

Tho: Fowle

S. Tine

Jn. Ward

Ex. Will Webb Suprs Generl ¹⁷

1. *Acts and Ordinances of the Interregnum, 1642–1660*, edited by C. H. Firth and R. S. Rait (3 vols.; London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1911), I, 879–83.
2. *Ibid.*, II, 81–104.
3. *Ibid.*, II, 168.
4. *Ibid.*, II, 170–75, 188–89.
5. On this subject, see especially B. P. Wolffe, *The Royal Demesne in English History: The Crown Estate in the Governance of the Realm from the Conquest to 1509* (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1971).
6. Public Record Office, Exchequer 317, Cambridgeshire Parliamentary Surveys 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7; *Victoria County History of Cambridgeshire*, II, 292, 298; Joseph Beldam, "Royston Court House and Its Appurtenances," *Archaeologia*, XL (1866), 119–21, 124; Edmund Carter, *The History of the County of Cambridge, from the Earliest Account to the Present Time* (London: S. & R. Bentley, 1819), 242–43, 258, 300.
7. Public Record Office, Chancery 54/3606/38; Exchequer 121/1/56; Exchequer 320/C11; British Museum, Add. MS. 21327, f. 53; Add. MS. 30208, f. 22; H. J. Habakkuk, "The Parliamentary Army and the Crown Lands," *Welsh History Review*, III (1967), 415–18. For a detailed explanation of the use of debentures and the military purchases of crown lands, see Ian Gentles, "The Management of the Crown Lands, 1649–60," *Agricultural History Review*, XIX (1971), 25–41, and Gentles, "The sales of Crown Lands during the English Revolution," *Economic History Review*, 2nd series, XXVI (1973), 614–35.

REFERENCES

¹ Public Record Office, Exchequer 317, Cambridgeshire Parliamentary Survey 3, 8 folios. The transcript of Crown-copyright records in the Public Record Office appears by permission of the Controller of H. M. Stationery Office.

² The date is Old Style so that the year by the New Style calendar would be 1650.

³ The titles of the crown land surveys are in the shape of an inverted pyramid. The form was used mainly to distinguish the crown land surveys from the fee-farm surveys which are included in the same set of documents.

⁴ Part of the surveyors' instructions included the valuation of the building materials of structures. If the structure was so badly decayed as to be uninhabitable or unusable, the trustees might decide to have the structure destroyed and the materials and site sold separately.

⁵ £920.

⁶ The word is probably severed.

⁷ £260.

⁸ £116.

⁹ Letters.

¹⁰ Apparently, in his claim, Thomas Hide could not provide the surveyors with the precise date of his patent. The blank space could be filled later when the letters patent were produced.

¹¹ The reference to Royston could mean that Hide was also the wardrobe keeper for the royal property of Royston Court House.

¹² The surveyors were allowed to let unleased lands for up to one year before their sale. See *Acts and Ordinances*, II, 180.

¹³ £123.

¹⁴ £1,180.

¹⁵ first.

¹⁶ Again, the date is Old Style so that the year by the New Style calendar would be 1650.

¹⁷ The Surveyor-General, Colonel William Webb, examined and signed virtually all of the Parliamentary surveys.

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