



The Ipswich Society

The Ipswich Society was founded in 1960 and is a community of people who care about the appearance, character and well-being of the town, its past and its future.

To join us or for further information
please visit
www.ipswichsociety.org.uk



The Ipswich Society

THE IPSWICH SOCIETY

has installed a number of blue plaques in the town - our version of the English Heritage Blue Plaques seen originally in London. What started at the turn of the century continues to be an important and relevant tribute to some of the most distinguished people who were born in the town or subsequently lived here. Our hope is that the plaques will make the streetscape and our history more interesting and reveal some hidden features of the town.

Although most of our plaques are in and around the town centre where most passers-by might see them, we now have seven which are a slightly longer stroll from the town but are nevertheless worth visiting.

There are further plaques, erected by other organisations, in the town. These are also listed in this booklet.

A plan showing the location of the plaques can be found in the centrefold of this booklet.

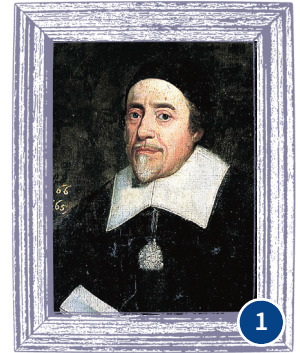
NATHANIEL BACON

**1593 - 1660 Manor House,
St Margaret's Green**

Nathaniel Bacon was a member of the Bacon family which achieved great prominence under Elizabeth I.

A key figure in Ipswich political life in the mid-17th century, Bacon became its leading lawyer: the Recorder; MP and historian, being the compiler, 1654, of the Annalls of Ipswiche, The Lawes Customes and Government of the Same.

During the Civil War he was a supporter of the Puritan cause. This made him very important regionally and nationally during the war, although he was opposed to the execution of the King and the proclamation of the Commonwealth.



THOMAS GAINSBOROUGH

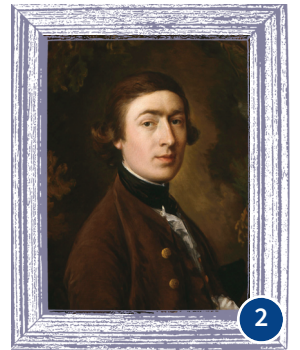
1727 - 88 32 Foundation St

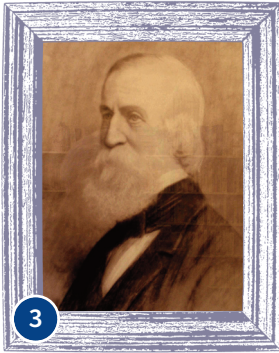
Although born in Sudbury the great Suffolk artist spent formative years in Ipswich from 1752-1759.

He came to Ipswich after apprenticeship and a time in his birthplace because commissions for portraits were more easily obtained

here. The house he rented in Foundation Street was shamefully demolished in the early sixties, but thirty-two, where the plaque is mounted is very similar. As well as painting he was a keen member of the Ipswich Music Club, playing several instruments.

Moving to Bath in 1759 the artistic opportunities were even more favourable, but it is appropriate that in Ipswich at Christchurch Mansion one of the best collections of his paintings outside London is housed.





JOHN GLYDE

1823 - 1905 9 Eagle Street

John Glyde lived at this address and is considered the foremost 19th century historian of Ipswich and Suffolk, the author of books which are still standard reference works on broad social and economic issues of the time.

A radical thinker, he was involved in many organisations working for social and cultural improvements for Ipswich, including the founding of a Free Library for the town. His bequest of books and manuscripts to the Ipswich Corporation in 1905 is now in the Record Office. During his working life he was a bookseller, an agent for domestic servants and a registrar of marriages.



JEAN INGELOW

1820 - 1897 2 Elm Street

A distinguished Victorian author highly regarded by Tennyson and Ruskin, Jean Ingelow was one of the best-selling authors of poetry, children's stories and novels from 1850 until her death. However, her fame critically declined in the 20th century, though she is still celebrated in the USA.

Born in Lincolnshire, Jean moved to Ipswich, aged fourteen, when her father became manager of a banking company. Living in Elm Street for ten years in the spacious first floor rooms over the bank she began her first experiments as a writer. After bank failure and the family's departure, the arch was created and Arcade Street was built on the site of the Ingelow's garden.

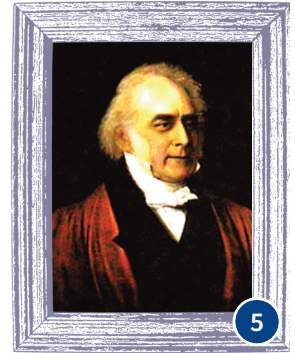
WILLIAM KING

1786 - 1865

19 Lower Brook Street

William King was born here where his father, The Rev John King, was Master of Ipswich (Grammar) School in this building. He became a physician, working in Brighton, but he is celebrated as a founder of co-operative democracy.

He created a Co-operative Benefit Fund and a Co-operative Trading Association. He also founded and wrote the periodical *The Co-operator* (1828-1830), which helped to inspire the 'Rochdale Pioneers' of the Co-operative Movement later in 1844. It is fitting that in Ipswich, where co-operative retailing held its own remarkably well, we should acknowledge this pioneer of the social and philosophical principles of co-operation.



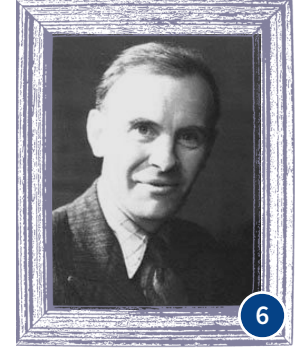
V S PRITCHETT

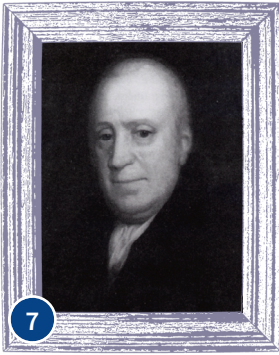
1900 - 1997

41 St Nicholas Street

Simply calling V S Pritchett a 'writer' is accurate because he excelled in so many genres of writing.

Arguably amongst the finest of short story writers, he also published novels, travel books, literary criticism, reviews and an absorbing autobiography: *A Cab at the Door*. This includes an account of his parents, lodging at the address when Victor was born in December 1900. Pritchett was knighted in 1975 and was made Companion of Honour in 1993. He died in 1997. The plaque records him as 'V S Pritchett', because that is how he signed himself as a writer and how he is known to all his readers.





ROBERT RANSOME

1753 - 1830 Old Foundry Rd

Ransomes, as far as manufacturing was concerned was possibly the most famous Ipswich name around the world. Robert Ransome came to Ipswich in 1789, setting up an iron foundry near the quay and later at St Margaret's Ditches, now Old Foundry Road, the

name of which commemorated the site. Still under family control the foundry moved in 1849 to the dockside eventually becoming Ransomes, Sims and Jefferies, making agricultural equipment, forklifts and even aeroplanes in WW1. Ransomes & Rapier was formed in 1869 when engineers and relatives of Robert established a new firm manufacturing railway equipment and other heavy products soon to be renowned throughout the world. Robert was a member of a group of influential Quakers. He was very sympathetic towards his workers and was instrumental in bringing gas lighting to Ipswich.



LESLIE BAREFOOT GC

1887 - 1958 The Walk

H.J Leslie Barefoot GC was the architect of the pedestrian shopping streets in the centre of Ipswich known as Thoroughfare and The Walk, the latter of which is the site of his plaque.

Born in Dulwich he served with distinction in WW1. In 1920 he came to Ipswich

with his family and designed laudable buildings throughout East Anglia, becoming president of the Suffolk Association of Architects. Rejoining the army in 1939 with the Royal Engineers he volunteered to form a new unexploded bombs unit. The 1941 citation for the George Cross states: 'for most conspicuous gallantry in carrying out hazardous work in a very brave manner.' He was the first army officer to receive the award and is commemorated, with other GC recipients, by a plaque in Westminster Abbey.

EDITH MAUD COOK

1878 - 1910 90 Fore Street

Edith Maud Cook, born here on 1st September was a balloonist, a parachutist and according to the RAF Museum website is stated as the first woman pilot in the United Kingdom. Making hundreds of balloon ascents she demonstrated the use of parachutes years before her solo flights in 1910, however she did not obtain a pilot's licence.

In July 1910 as reported in The Times: 'Miss Viola Spencer (a pseudonym) in a parachute descent at Coventry on Saturday, alighted on a factory roof ... Spencer fell onto the roadway injuring herself severely.' Edith died on 14th July as a result of her injuries.

In her book Before Amelia Eileen Lebow relates accounts of women pioneer aviators: Edith Maud Cook is praised there as an adventurer and a very courageous woman.



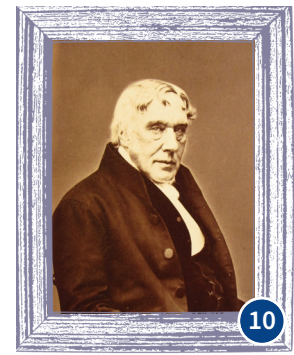
RICHARD DYKES ALEXANDER

1788 - 1865 Alexander House, St Matthews Street

A Quaker, pacifist and banker, his grand house was built in the fields to the west of the town, parts of which are still discernible, holding his plaque.

An amateur photographer, many of whose images are accessible at the Record Office he was involved in the committee of management of the Ipswich Museum in the 1850s. He was deeply concerned for the social and spiritual welfare of the working population of the town and was a devoted supporter of the abolition of slavery.

In the 1850s he made neighbouring land available for housing, specifying that some streets be named after leading abolitionists.



JOHN HARBOTTLE

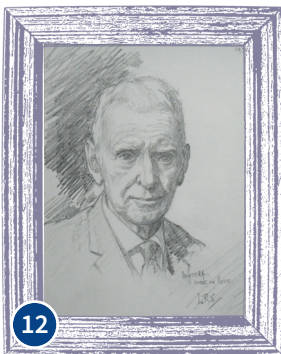
11

d 1577 Jarman House, 2 - 4 Northgate Street

The wealthy, influential wool merchant and landowner lived in an imposing Tudor mansion on this site. Chamberlain in the town in 1542 later he was co-leader of the Suffolk contingent of Kett's rebellion.

According to historians it would appear that the Suffolk upheaval differed from the Norfolk rebellion mainly in that it attracted fewer yeomen tenants and artisans.

Although the rebel leaders achieved little, their families were installed in the folklore of Suffolk: among them the Harbottles. They are remembered not for what they accomplished but for their audacity, bravery and according to Dairmaid McCulloch: 'adroitness in surviving the upheavals...' at his death Harbottle was termed an esquire.



LEONARD SQUIRRELL

1893 - 1979 82 Spring Road

A most distinguished and well-loved Suffolk artist Leonard Squirrell spent his childhood in Spring Road. After training at the Ipswich School of Art, he went on to the The Slade in London.

An outstanding topographical artist he depicted the

landscapes of Suffolk and East Anglia at its exquisite best. He also produced works abroad. A superb etcher and pastelist, he is best known as a watercolourist: of railway carriage prints; glowing railway posters and outstanding watercolours for commercial companies including Rolls Royce. Equally at home with local companies he produced masterpieces for Ransomes, Sims & Jefferies and Fisons. All his work is much sought after.

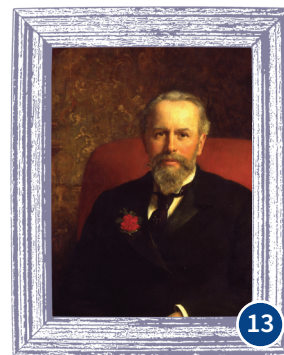
FELIX THORNLEY COBBOLD

1841 - 1909 The Reg Driver Centre, Christchurch Park

Born at Holy Wells Mansion and educated at Ipswich School, Felix was a great son of Ipswich. After Eton and Cambridge he became a lawyer, a brewer, a farmer, a banker, a JP and MP.

He gave the site and funds for public baths in Fore St; a clock and carillon to St. Clement's Church and his Mayor's fund provided great sums for the East Suffolk and Ipswich Hospital. By 1906 he was MP, a seat which he held until his death. He bequeathed Gippeswick Park to the Borough; considerable sums for the purchase of works of art in the Mansion and much land to the county.

A most memorable generous act was, when Christchurch Mansion was threatened with development he bought it for the Borough: he later gave townsfolk parties there. He truly was 'a munificent benefactor'.



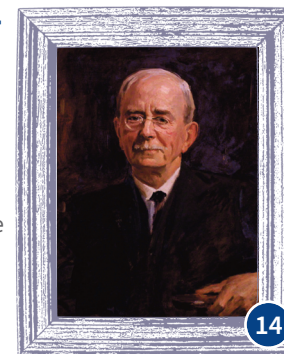
SIR CHARLES SCOTT SHERRINGTON OM GBE PRS

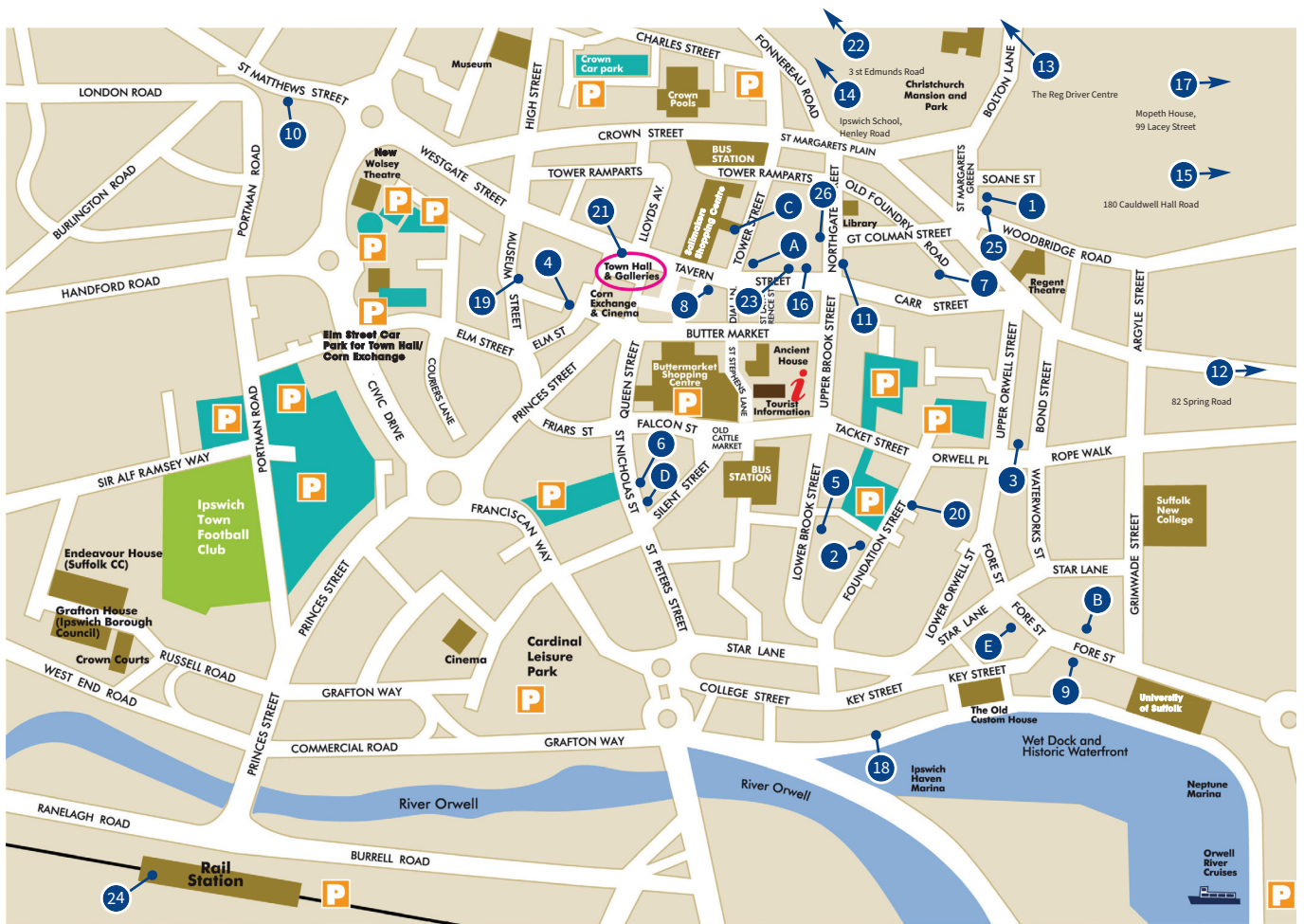
1857 - 1952 Ipswich School, Henley Road

This eminent man of medicine had many associations with the town. In the 1860s the family moved to Anglesea Road and he was educated at Ipswich School from 1871-1876.

Sherrington played football for his school, for Ipswich Town Football Club, and rugby while a student at St. Thomas' Hospital, London.

After study at Cambridge, work in Liverpool and Oxford, he is most renowned for his research into neurophysiology, for which he received the Nobel Prize in Medicine with Edgar Adrian in 1932. This was for their work on the functions of neurones. Sherrington, in retirement made his home in the town where he continued to work on his poetic, historical, and philosophical interests. From 1944 he held the honorary office of President of the Ipswich Museum.





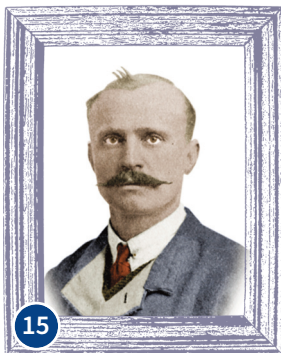
LOCATION OF PLAQUES IN IPSWICH TOWN CENTRE

- | | | |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1 Nathaniel Bacon | 13 Felix Thornley Cobbold | 23 Arthur Edwards GC |
| 2 Thomas Gainsborough | 14 Sir Charles Scott | 24 Peter Schuyler Bruff |
| 3 John Glyde | Sherrington | 25 Margaret Catchpole |
| 4 Jean Ingelow | 15 Arthur Frederick | 26 Sophie Youngman |
| 5 William King | Saunders VC JP | |
| 6 VS Pritchett | 16 Charles Dickens | |
| 7 Robert Ransome | 17 Charles Whitfield King | |
| 8 Leslie Barefoot GC | 18 Edwad Ardizzone | |
| 9 Edith Maud Cook | 19 Constance Andrews | |
| 10 Richard Dykes Alexander | 20 Nina Layard | |
| 11 John Harbottle | 21 Mary Whitmore MBE | |
| 12 Leonard Squirrel | 22 Margaret Tempest | |

OTHER PLAQUES

- A Chaucer's family
- B Thomas Eldred
- C Admiral Benjamin Page
- D Thomas Wolsey
- E Cor Visser





15

ARTHUR FREDERICK SAUNDERS VC JP

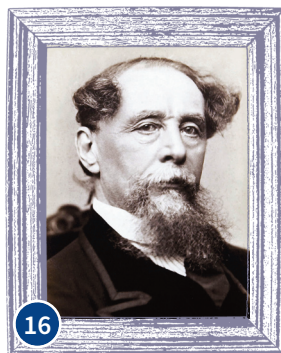
1878 - 1947

180 Cauldwell Hall Rd

Arthur Saunders lived here at the time he won his Victoria Cross, the first such decoration ever awarded to the Suffolk Regiment or a citizen of Ipswich. Joining the Royal Navy aged just 15

in 1893 he was a Petty Officer for fifteen years. He married Edith Everetts in 1908 and they had three children. He worked for Ransomes, Sims & Jefferies.

At the outbreak of WW1 he joined the Suffolk Regiment being quickly promoted to Sergeant. Within a month of arrival in France he saw action at Loos where, despite a shattered leg 'for conspicuous bravery ... defending the remains of the Battalion and covering its retirement' the Victoria Cross was awarded on 26th September 1915. Arthur Saunders became an Honorary Freeman of the Borough and a Magistrate. During WW2 he re-enlisted and became RSM in the Home Guard.



16

CHARLES DICKENS

1812 - 1870 The Great White Horse Hotel, Tavern Street

A frequent visitor to Suffolk, Dickens made references to the county in his works and stayed in the hotel, dubbed: 'more conspicuous by a stone statue of some rampacious animal with flowing mane and tail'. In one

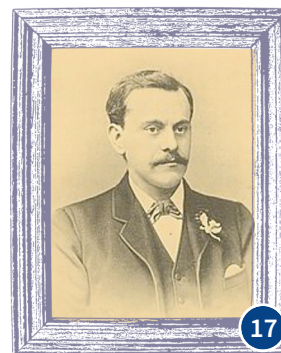
episode in *The Pickwick Papers* our eponymous hero, takes rooms at the hostelry, mistakenly disrobing in the small hours within the room of 'a middle-aged lady, in yellow curl-papers'. The ensuing consequences contribute greatly to the delight of the novel.

Dickens opened the lecture hall for the Ipswich Institute Mechanics in 1851; he reported on our elections; toured the county giving recitals of his works - he even came for fishing on the River Gipping.

CHARLES WHITFIELD KING

1855 - 1930 Morpeth House,
99 Lacey Street

From humble beginnings, as a clerk for a shipping firm at the docks, Charles Whitfield King created the second largest stamp firm in the UK, (or maybe even the world). His company 'Whitfield King and Co' exported and imported stamps from around the world.



17

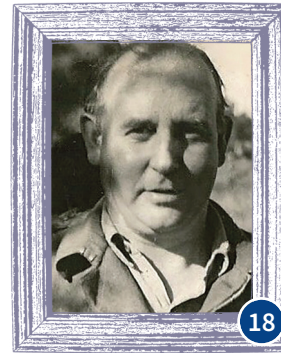
In 1876 he began the venture establishing his offices and his house on either side of Lacey Street. Designed by his brother and built by his father, Morpeth House, named after his honeymoon destination, was occupied by 1887. Also at his residence at Morpeth house, he created a room that was entirely decorated with stamps: featuring on 'Down Your Way' with Richard Dimbleby in the 1950s.

The stamp room now has only a small part above the fireplace decorated with stamps. In the early sixties the business failed when the interest in philately seriously declined.

EDWARD ARDIZZONE CBE, RA

1900 - 1979 Albion Wharf,
the Waterfront

Edward Ardizzone was a writer and illustrator, mainly of children's books. Born in French Indo-China in 1900 his family lived in Ipswich from 1905 to 1914, where he was educated at Ipswich School. While his parents were on foreign service he was brought up with his two sisters by their grandmother at her house in Gainsborough Road.



18

He is noted for having illustrated the covers and contents of children's stories. However, his best-known work is the *Tim* series featuring the maritime adventures of the eponymous hero. The most famous of the books *Tim All Alone* won the British Library Association's Kate Greenaway medal for illustration in 1956.



CONSTANCE ANDREWS

b1864 Arlington's Brasserie, Museum Street

Constance Andrews, a leading Ipswich suffragette, was committed to social justice and the campaign for Votes for Women. She formed the local branch of the campaigning group The Women's Freedom League. This inspired a group

of women who demonstrated, held meetings, organised propaganda events and carried out acts of civil disobedience - all to gain support and put pressure on the government to give women the vote on equal terms with men.

In 1911 she organised the 'No Vote, No Census' protest in Ipswich, when about thirty women spent the night in the Old Museum Rooms to boycott the Census. Later she spent a week in Ipswich prison after refusing to buy a dog licence - part of a No Vote, No Tax campaign. She was met at the prison gates by a large crowd of supporters, and processed in a carriage through the streets to a celebration breakfast at 16 Arcade Street.



NINA LAYARD

1853 - 1935 Unicorn House, Foundation Street

Nina Layard was an archaeologist and writer. She is credited with the first excavations of the old Dominican Friary in Blackfriars, Foundation Street in 1898. Her work on the Valley Brick field in Foxhall Road, has been

acknowledged as highly significant, and her paper on the Hadleigh Road Anglo-Saxon site was presented to the Society of Antiquarians in London, where she was one of the first women to become a Fellow. Following a newspaper appeal by her, public subscriptions were raised for the memorial to nine Ipswich Martyrs (now) in Christchurch Park (1903). She also published Seventeen Suffolk Martyrs and other local history books. She was a founder member and first woman president of the Prehistoric Society of East Anglia.

MARY WHITMORE MBE

1884 - 1974 Town Hall

Mary Whitmore (nee Fisher) was an Ipswich suffragette, socialist and for many years a politician. Her interest in politics started with the suffragette movement, when the Ipswich branch of the Women's Social and Political Union was formed. She

became a Labour Councillor in 1930 and Ipswich's first woman Mayor in 1946. She was one of the founder members of the local Workers Education Association. At a civic function in 1948, she warmly welcomed people who had recently arrived from the Caribbean to the town. Mary Whitmore was awarded the MBE in 1951 for her contribution to public services in Ipswich.



MARGARET TEMPEST

1892 - 1982 3 St Edmunds Rd

Margaret Tempest (Lady Mears) was born at 28 Fonnereau Rd Ipswich, later moving to 34 Park Rd. She attended Ipswich Art School and Westminster School of Art, graduating in 1914. She was a founder member of the Chelsea Illustrators - a society of twenty women illustrators, who successfully worked together between 1919 and 1939.

Margaret is credited with the distinctive design of Alison Utley's Little Grey Rabbit books, which she illustrated from 1929 into the 1960s. She illustrated her own books as well as those of a wide range of authors. From London, Margaret returned to Suffolk many weekends to pursue her passion of sailing.

In 1939 Margaret moved permanently to the Ipswich area and married Sir Grimwood Mears. They moved to 3 St Edmunds Rd in January 1951, where Lady Mears continued living until her death. A long-time member and committee member of Ipswich Art club, she exhibited her artwork until the age of 82.





ARTHUR FREDERICK EDWARDS GC

1895 - 1984

33-35 Tavern Street

Arthur Frederick Edwards GC was born in Islington and moved to Ipswich between 1895 and 1900. He was educated at Ipswich Grammar School and Bishop's Stortford School.

He was awarded the George Cross in 1971, having received the Edwards Medal in 1919 (now in the Ipswich Museum) for assisting in the rescue of casualties following an explosion at Faversham Powder Mills store in 1916. Bombardier Edwards and his colleagues also helped prevent further explosions at the site.

He became a director of his family's business, J & J Edwards Outfitters, in premises at 33-35 Tavern Street.



PETER SCHUYLER BRUFF

1812 - 1900

Ipswich Railway Station

Bruff was born in Portsmouth in 1812 and moved to Ipswich in the 1840s.

As a civil engineer, he worked for the Eastern Counties Railway (ECR) from 1840 to 1842. The ECR had intended to build a railway line from

London to Norwich but lack of finances and perceived technical problems meant that line stopped at Colchester.

After leaving ECR, Bruff surveyed the route north and in 1846, with the financial help of John Chevallier Cobbold, brought the newly formed Eastern Union Railway to Ipswich. He was architect of the line beyond Ipswich to Bury St Edmunds and to Norwich by 1849. He designed the first sewage works for the town. In the 1880s he was largely instrumental in the establishment of a system of horse drawn tramways through the principal streets of Ipswich.

MARGARET CATCHPOLE

1762 - 1819 Manor House,
St Margaret's Green

Margaret Catchpole is a Suffolk folk heroine, subject of books, plays and an opera, not all of which are entirely factual. It is known that she lived and worked in Nacton.

She became a servant to Elizabeth Cobbold who is considered responsible for encouraging her reading skills. Margaret was said to have had an involvement with a smuggler, Will Laud, and infamously rode a stolen horse from Ipswich to London where Laud had been imprisoned. She was captured, tried and sentenced to death although this was later commuted to transportation to Australia. Here she wrote about Aboriginal communities, wildlife and continued corresponding with Elizabeth Cobbold. Although subsequently pardoned, she never returned to England.



SOPHIE YOUNGMAN

5 Northgate Street

Harriet Sophie Youngman was born in Daventry. She came to Ipswich as the first Principal of the Ipswich High School for Girls, when it opened in 1878 at the Assembly Rooms in Northgate Street. The school was established by The Girls Public Day School Company.

She led and developed the school for 21 years. Held in high regard by her pupils, she was considered a strong and wise woman, challenging local prejudice about schooling for girls. Her leadership and support helped many local girls to enter university education for the first time and to gain professional qualifications. It was also the first time that girls were introduced to physical education and sports in an educational setting.



OTHER PLAQUES...

The family of Geoffrey Chaucer

21 Tavern Street. Plaque on the right side wall,
Tower Street

A

The Malyn family of Ipswich and London, vintners, took the name of Chaucer, derived from the trade of leather working, with which they were also associated. The Chaucer/Malyns including Geoffrey Chaucer's grandfather, owned and occupied premises on this site in the 13th and 14th centuries.

Thomas Eldred

d 1622 97 Fore Street.

Plaque on the side wall facing east

B

An Ipswich merchant and mariner, Eldred sailed with Thomas Cavendish on the second English circumnavigation of the globe 1586-88 - Drake's voyage 1577-80 having been the first. Eldred's house has been demolished but the houses standing across the street today remind us of the period and the style.

Admiral Benjamin Page

1765 - 1845 13 Tower Street

The plaque on this building commemorates the Ipswich-born admiral who lived here on his retirement after a distinguished naval career. He was made an honorary freeman of the borough in 1835. His portrait and paintings of six naval actions in which he took part, which he gave to the town, hang in the library room of the Town Hall.

C

Thomas Wolsey

1475 - 1530 47 Nicholas Street

The most distinguished of all Ipswich people. Wolsey, Cardinal, Archbishop of York and for fourteen years Henry VIII's Lord Chancellor was, after the King himself, the most powerful man in the realm. The plaque is mounted on Curson Lodge close to the David Annand statue commemorating the great man unveiled in 2011. The building is of appropriate age to remind us that a similar structure, Wolsey's birthplace, stood on a site on the opposite side of the street.

D

Cor Visser

1903 - 1982 44 Fore Street

Born in Holland, the artist settled in Ipswich after WW2 during which he was the official war artist to the Dutch government in exile. He lived for some years on a boat in Ipswich dock, finding inspiration particularly in dockside scenes, before making his studio and home in Fore Street in 1962. Ipswich Museum collections contain some of his works.

E

NOTES

The image of Peter Schuyler Bruff is reproduced with kind permission of Suffolk Record Office, Ipswich branch, HD2816/1/1/42.