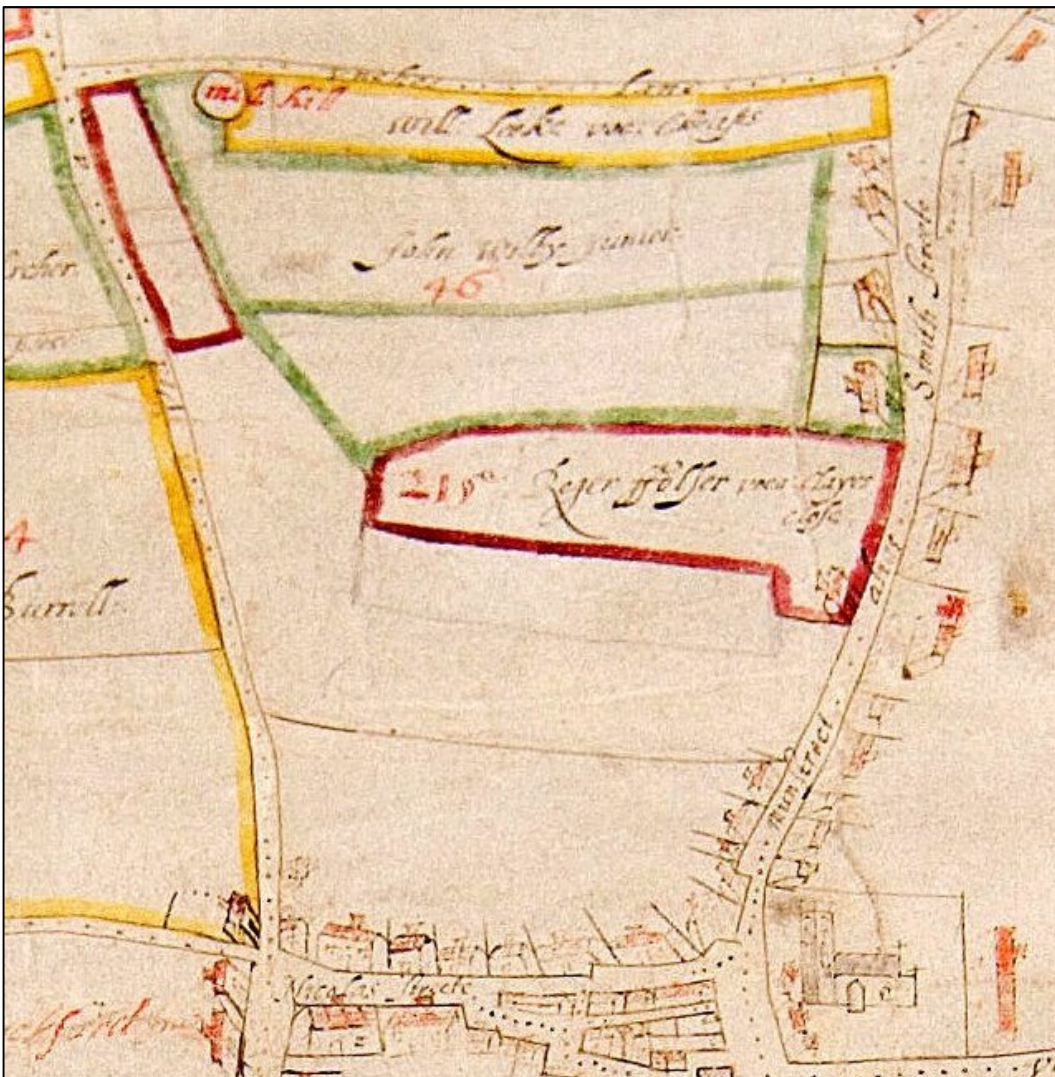


HISTORICAL NOTES ABOUT THE LAWN & PARISH FIELDS

1637

Earliest known map of the site by William Tampon, shows two separate fields or pastures owned or tenanted by John Wilby Junior (the northern part - now The Lawn) and Roger Folser (the southern part - known as Clay Close, later Parish Close).



1722

Land recorded as formerly known as Parish Close and containing a large pit – thought to be that next to Mount Street.

1744

Philip Meadows II, a solicitor, moves to Diss, takes up residence in the Manor House (known as 'Pallas') on Mount Street. His father was Mayor of Norwich in the 1730s. At that time Mount St (aka Mund St) was the old road from Diss to Norwich.

1746

Philip's sister, Margaret Meadows, marries Richard Taylor (her father Presbyterian Minister at the Octagon Chapel, Norwich, 1733-57).

1781

The Cedars, a grand house next to the Manor House, is purchased by Mr Moore. He enhances

his view towards The Lawn by constructing a white brick wall across the road from his house.

1781/82

Philip Meadows II dies. His nephew and adopted heir Meadows Taylor buys The Manor House. In 1793 he marries Elizabeth Dyson.

1801/02

John Dyson buys Diss Brewery for £15,000.

Meadows Taylor and his brother-in-law, Thomas Dyson, launch the first bank in Diss (where Barclays Bank now stands).

Thomas Lombe Taylor born, a birth marked by the planting of a pair of cedar trees – one in the Manor House garden, next door at The Cedars.

1807

Meadows Taylor joins John Dyson – Thomas's brother – as owner of the Diss Brewery.

1826

Bryant's map of Norfolk shows the site as parkland with one clump of trees and surrounded by a boundary belt on two sides.



1838

Meadows Taylor dies. The Cedars & The Lawn recorded as now owned by Harry Browne.

A Tithe Map shows the site as parkland with two clumps of trees and boundary belts on three sides. An oak tree (and perhaps also the yew trees) in the boundary belt dates from this time.



Counting the 182 growth rings of a recently-felled dead oak on the Boundary Belt, March 2019.

1845

Meadows Taylor's wife Elizabeth dies and is buried alongside him in the Unitarian burial ground Palgrave. Mary Taylor, one of nine children, inherits the Manor House. Francis Taylor born to Thomas Lombe Taylor.

1851

The Census shows Mr Heffill, a solicitor born in Braintree, Essex, lives at No.1 Mount Street. Mary Taylor is the sole occupant of the Manor House.

1854

Diss Corn Hall was built and paid for by Thomas Lombe Taylor.

1886

First edition OS map shows Parish Fields and The Lawn as mature parkland surrounded by a belt of trees and having two ponds.

1871

A hoard of over three hundred Medieval gold and silver coins of King Edward IV dating from c.1485 found in a pottery vessel in Mount Street. As a result there is a lot of interest in excavating the nearby Parish Fields.

1873

Thomas Lombe Taylor dies. His son Francis Taylor marries Susan Rigby.

1885

Francis becomes MP for South Norfolk.



1888

Francis Taylor inherits the Manor House when Mary Taylor dies.

1890

Mrs Heffill of No.1 Mount St dies and the property sold – Including Lot.3 A small plantation called 'Parish Meadows'. Bought by Francis Taylor for £360, and leased to Walter Burroughs.

1900

The Taylors provide the land for Diss Grammar School to be built on. They open up Park Road for use as a public highway, thus providing a much shorter route around the Mere.

1946

Aerial photo of the site shows many mature trees and intact boundary belts.

1905+

Mrs Francis Taylor involved in opening of the Hospital (originally Haddon Lodge) – supplied with electricity from Diss Brewery. Wounded servicemen are treated there in World War One.

The Lawn forms part of the pasture for Brewery Farm owned by the Taylors. This then was leased to Clement Gaze who reared Red Poll cattle.

1939-'45

Local residents dig temporary Victory Gardens on bordering parts of The Lawn.



1964

John Betjeman (later Poet Laureate) visited Diss to make a film called 'Something about Diss', and he remarked on The Lawn. *"On the other side of Mount Street do you see that bit of country? ... A bit of country coming right into the town - a little park"*.



John Betjeman Something About Diss (Norfolk) Part 2

A still from the film on YouTube

[1970s]

Diss Youth Centre built at the western end of the Parish Fields.

1980s

Commander Patrick Taylor died and The Lawn area was sold to WBA Gaze & Sons. The site is still used for grazing cattle.

The Parish Fields area was also sold, one part to Diss Town Council (for the Health Centre) and the other to South Norfolk Council (for the Youth Centre, two car parks and the Citizens Advice Bureau).

1997

The Lawn recorded in the Norfolk Gardens Survey Report, commissioned by English Heritage, and given a Grade** (regional importance) listing.

1998

'The Cedars and The Lawn' designated as Norfolk Historic Environment Record site 33463, 'The only example of a detached landscape park within a town in Norfolk'.