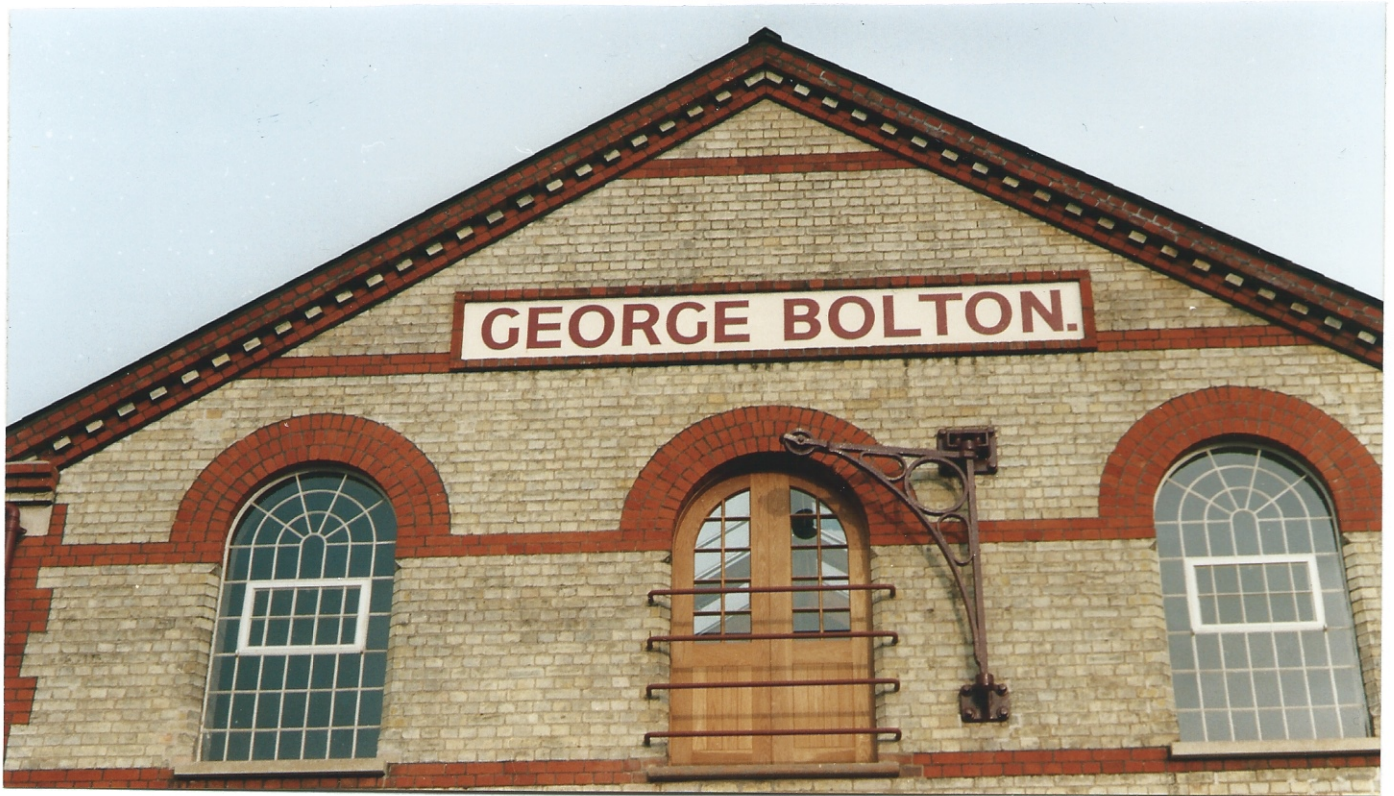


**THE WAREHOUSE**  
**GEORGE BOLTON'S: A FAMILY BUSINESS**

A brief history of three generations of the Bolton family.  
Cambridge Furniture Removers: 1869-1955

Allan Brigham (1995)



The Warehouse: Tenison Road, Cambridge.

17 Romsey Road  
CAMBRIDGE

# Letters

Cambridge Evening News, Tuesday, January 3, 1995

## Memories of firm sought

CAN any readers help?

George Bolton's Furniture Warehouse in Tenison Road is being renovated.

I am interested in writing a history of the building and of the firm.

Do any readers have memories or photographs of the warehouse or of the people who worked there?

I would be very pleased to hear from them if they do.

The warehouse is an impressive building but I have been able to find very little written information about it.

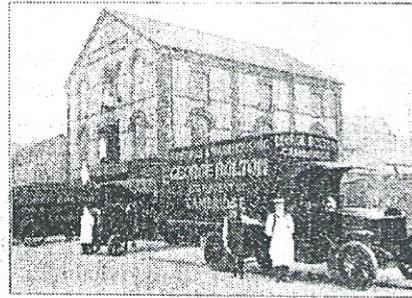
Nearby, in Glisson Road, was another large furniture depository.

In 1895 this was occupied by "Bolton Bros".

Were they related to George Bolton? Were they rivals?

Any information would be very helpful.

ALLAN BRIGHAM  
17 Romsey Road  
Cambridge  
CB1 3DD



**GEORGE BOLTON,**

**FURNITURE REMOVER  
AND WAREHOUSER**

**110, REGENT STREET**

— AND —

**TENISON ROAD (only).**

Telegrams—G. BOLTON, 110, REGENT STREET, Cambridge. Telephone 624

**Furniture Removed to All Parts of  
the United Kingdom by Road or Rail**

No Packing Required. Estimates given free to Cover all Risks

**CARTING DONE OF EVERY DESCRIPTION.**

■ An advertisement for George Bolton's

## INTRODUCTION

The firm of 'George Bolton: Furniture Remover and Warehouser' left few records behind for posterity. Their advertisements feature prominently in the annual Street Directories published earlier this century by Spaldings. But there is little else to remind us of their existence today. Yet for many Cambridge families from the 1860s until 1955 it would have been 'Boltons' whom they contacted when they wanted to move house.

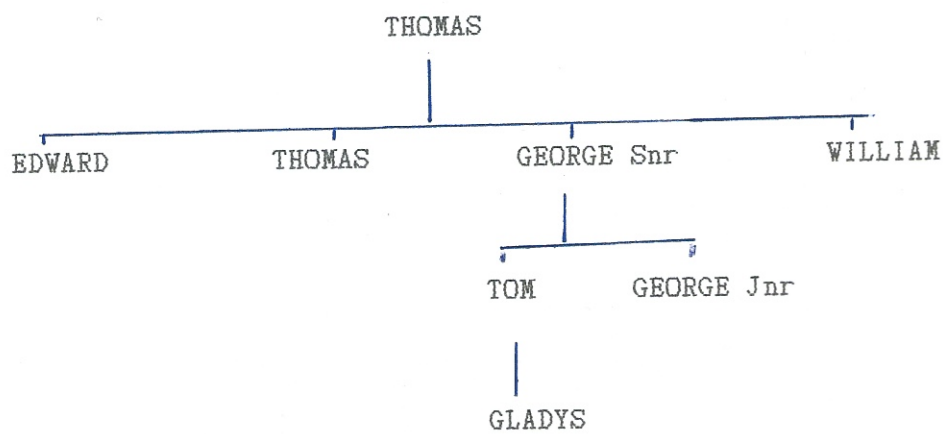
'George Boltons' warehouse in Tenison Road is the most visible reminder of the firm. To passers-by it has looked unused for many years. The fading name written on the walls was the only clue to its past. The conversion of the building into offices in 1994/5 provided an opportunity to discover a little about the warehouse and the Boltons.

This is not a history of the family or of the business.

It is a brief record compiled to mark the restoration of the warehouse.

Perhaps one day someone may use this record as part of a fuller history of Cambridge in these years. The Boltons as a family and as proprietors of local businesses are firmly entwined with the social and economic of the streets running off Hills Road close to the Station. When Thomas Bolton first moved into 'New Town' in the 1840s it was a new suburb on the edge of the town. When his grandson Tom Bolton died a century later Cambridge had grown far beyond the railway and these streets had become part of the 'inner city'. The story of the Boltons forms part of the story of this area.

George Bolton in old age: With his grandson



CAMBRIDGE

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## THE BOLTON FAMILY.

George Bolton was born in Cambridge 1854 or 1855 (1). His family were newcomers to the area. Both his parents had been brought up in Hertfordshire. Thomas Bolton was born in Buntingford, his wife Sharlotte nearby in Hare Street (2). Their migration eastward to Cambridge was part of the local population explosion that saw the number of inhabitants of the town grow from 11,000 in 1801 to 26,000 in 1851. This rate of growth was well above the national average. The Boltons, together with many others, came here because of the employment opportunities offered by the town.

- 1 1851 Census
- 2 1851 Census

### 'THOMAS BOLTON'

The Boltons had settled in Cambridge by the mid 1840s when their eldest daughter Fanny was born (3). Thomas was then a young man of about 25, his wife Sharlotte a year older (4). They had probably moved from Hertfordshire because Thomas had a job - or was looking for a job - with the rapidly expanding railways.

The Eastern Counties Railway Company had reached Cambridge in 1845, and by the time of the census in 1851 Thomas was recorded working as a Railway Porter. The family were living near to the Station in Coronation St. This was part of the suburb of New Town. The area had been developed over the preceding twenty years on land between Hills Road and Trumpington Road. It had previously been open fields. For the following hundred years the Boltons remained firmly associated with these streets and those that were later built to the east of Hills Road. Thomas Bolton's great grand-daughter still in 1995 regularly attends the Parish Church of St Paul's, built in 1841 to serve the growing population.

At sometime in the years following 1851 Thomas Bolton left the secure employment of the railway company to establish himself as a 'Furniture Van Proprietor and Carter'. The first reference to his new occupation is in Spalding's Street Directory for 1878, but he probably made the change in 1869. This was the date later prominently displayed over his son Edward's premises after he had purchased Thomas's business in the late 1880s.

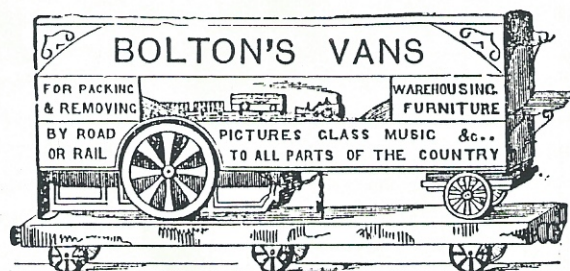
From 1878 to 1887 Thomas Bolton's address was 26 Union Road, just a street away from where the family were first recorded living.

There was a strong connection between the railways and carting. Raw materials and finished goods were brought by train to Cambridge where they were then transferred to carts for local delivery. Furniture was also carried by train. This is illustrated by the advertisement for 'Bolton's Universal Vans' in Spalding's Almanack of 1879. Thomas would have met many people while working at the Railway Station. He may well have been employed by the railway company to move goods around the yard by horse and cart. It would have given him the contacts, and the familiarity with vehicles and animals, to establish himself in business on his own.

Thomas was still recorded as a 'Carman, Contractor & Furniture Remover' in the Street Directory of 1887. He would then have been about 67. By 1891 he was dead (5). His four sons survived him. All entered the same business.

- 3 1851 Census. Fanny Bolton: Born 1845/46
- 4 1851 Census. Thomas Bolton: Born 1820/21
- Sharlotte Bolton: Born 1819/20
- 5 1891 Spalding Cambridge Almanack. Advert for Edward Bolton: 'Purchased business of late Father.'

T H E  
CAMBRIDGE PANTECHNICON WAREHOUSE,  
ESTIMATES OF ALL KINDS FREE.



EDWARD BOLTON,  
76, NEWMARKET ROAD, & 7 & 47, PANTON  
STREET, CAMBRIDGE.

Contractor for Household Removals  
TO OR FROM ANY DISTANCE,  
WITHOUT PACKING, RISK, OR EXPOSURE TO WEATHER.

Household Removals throughout the entire system of Railways in the United Kingdom and Continent. By this system the cost of packing is entirely avoided, and the Furniture, &c., remain in the same lock-up Van throughout the entire journey, irrespective of distance.

→\* ALL ORDERS PUNCTUALLY ATTENDED TO.\*←

~~~~~  
BRICK, TILE AND DRAIN PIPE MERCHANT.  
~~~~~

*E. B. begs to inform the Public that he has purchased the business of his late Father, Thomas Bolton, of 26, Union Road. His Terms are most reasonable, and will compare favourably with any other house in the Kingdom.*

→\* A TRIAL SOLICITED.\*←

All communications should be addressed to 7, Panton Street.

Edward Bolton: 22 Hills Road, mid 1890s.  
(Cambridgeshire Collection: P Bol JP 21155)



22 Hills Road - 1995



## 'EDWARD BOLTON'

Edward Bolton was Thomas's eldest son, born in 1848 or 1849 (6). He was also the first to marry and leave home.

Although Edward probably started working as a young man for his father the need to support his wife led him to set up business on his own. At the age of 31 he was running 'The Hearts of Oak' public house at 76 Newmarket Road, taking in lodgers and working as a 'Contractor' (7). By 1885 his advertisements for 'The Cambridge Pantechnicon Warehouse' claimed that he had built 'large and commodious warehouses capable of storing any amount of property'. In addition he undertook:

'Household Removals throughout the entire system of Railways in the United Kingdom and Continent. By this system the cost of Packing is entirely avoided, and the Furniture &c., remains in the same lock-up Van through-out the entire journey, irrespective of distance.' (8)

Three years later he was also offering for hire Brakes, Omnibuses, Wagonettes, Dog Carts and Pony Traps, with special arrangements for School Treats, Picnics and other excursions (9).

By 1891 Thomas Bolton had died. Edward purchased his business and had moved back to New Town, where he was living at 7 Panton Street with his wife Emma, their three sons, a lodger and a female servant (10). He had premises further down the street at No 47, as well as those on Newmarket Road. Within four years he had moved his business offices and family to a distinguished three-storied building on Hills Road (11). There he remained until his death slightly over twenty years later (12). He had not travelled far from the terraced house in Coronation Street but socially he had risen dramatically.

The exterior of 22 Hills Road was crowded with boards advertising the full range of Edward's business activities to the passing public. As well as Removals, Storage and Carting, he acted as a Coal and Coke merchant and was a Brick Manufacturer. It is in this last role that he left his most marked memorial in Cambridge. The houses built with 'Bolton's Bricks' are unidentified; but the pit where the clay was extracted to make the bricks remains. Today it forms a hidden lake between Barton Road, Grantchester Road and Fulbrooke Road known as 'Bolton's Pit'.

- 6 1851 Census  
7 1881 Census. In 1995 this was the site of Barclays Bank.  
8 1885 Spalding Cambridge Almanack  
9 24.8.1888 Cambridge Chronicle  
10 1891 Census  
11 1895 Spalding. See Advert for Edward Bolton  
12 1916 Spalding Directory: 22 Hills Road - Edward Bolton  
1919 22 Hills Road - Mrs Bolton  
BOLTON BROS

Telegraph Address—EDWARD BOLTON, Cambridge.  
Corn Exchange Stand, No. 19.

.....

**EDWARD BOLTON,**  
**REMOVAL CONTRACTOR & COAL MERCHANT.**



Removals to all parts by Road, Rail, or Sea.

ESTIMATES AND TESTIMONIALS SUPPLIED FREE.

Extensive Warehouse for the safe storage of  
valuable furniture, &c.

*N.B.—Please note the address*

**22, HILLS ROAD, CAMBRIDGE,**

*as there is another firm of the same name.*

Telephone—No. 105.

Established 1869.

## **'BOLTON BROS'**

Thomas Bolton had three other sons. Tom, born 1850. George, born 1854/55. And Walter William, born in 1859/60. Like their elder brother Edward they followed their father into the removals business. They were still living with Thomas Snr at 26 Union Road in 1881 when the eldest, Tom Jnr, was already 30. None was yet married. The occupation of each was given as 'Contractor' (13).

Tom, George and Walter William established 'Bolton Bros: Contractors' the following year, in 1882 (14). At first the offices were at 15 Union Road where Thomas Jnr was then living, just down the road from their father.

Four years later, in 1888, the offices had moved to 40 Hills Road. The premises were not as grand as Edward's were to be, but they were now on the main thoroughfare as it approached the town from the Railway Station. There must have been considerable confusion between the two firms as the 'Bolton Bros' advertisement for 1895 clearly states:

*'T.G. and W. Bolton beg to inform the public, as E Bolton has opened an office on Hills Road, and mistakes are frequently being made, they wish it to be known that he is in no way whatever connected with the firm of BOLTON BROS.'* (15)

Between 1888 and 1885 the brothers built a Furniture Warehouse in the recently developed Glisson Road. Towering above the surrounding houses it features proudly on their advertisements. A functional building designed to hold furniture the facade has nevertheless been embellished with decorative detail that distinguished it at the time and still does so today. The soft red bricks around the windows were not necessary but they contrast with the white bricks of the walls and draw the attention of the passer by to the building. The Boltons had used warehouses before. They were for storage. This building the Bolton Bros. used to announce themselves to the people of Cambridge. It still stands. Today the uncluttered floors with high ceilings are used as a Dance Studio.

In the 1890s or the early years of the 20th century Tom Jnr died. Perhaps related to this, or to the pressures of a young family, George dissolved the partnership and established himself on his own.

'Bolton Bros' continued as 'Removal Contractors and Carters' under Walter William's proprietorship into the 1930s. The business was eventually sold when he retired to 'W Eaden Lilley', who had acquired the Glisson Road Warehouse by 1933 (16).

13 1881 Census: Age and Occupations

14 1933-34 Spalding Directory. See Advert for 'Bolton Bros.': Est 1882

15 1895 Spalding

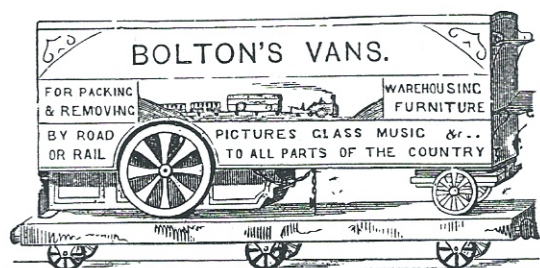
16 Information from Directories and G Butcher



Bolton Bros  
40 Hills Road.  
Date ?

Date: 1995

*To Families Removing To and From any  
Distance by Road or Rail.*



## T. G. & W. BOLTON BROS.'

### UNIVERSAL VAN.

Household Removals throughout the entire line of RAILWAYS. By this system the cost of Packing is entirely avoided, and the Furniture, &c., remains in the same van throughout the entire journey, irrespective of Distance. Taking all risks. Testimonials on Application.

CARTING GOODS OF EVERY DESCRIPTION.

GARDEN GRAVEL, SAND, STONE & MANURE

MAY BE HAD AT THE SHORTEST NOTICE.

Estimates post free. All Orders punctually attended to.

Sole Offices:—40, HILLS ROAD, CAMBRIDGE.



1891 - Spaldings Almarnack

SPECIAL BUILT WAREHOUSES FOR THE SAFE STORAGE OF FURNITURE  
ON REASONABLE TERMS.



**T. G. & W. BOLTON BROS.,**

## CONTRACTORS FOR REMOVALS.

To or from all parts of the United Kingdom by  
Road, Rail, or Sea. No Packing Required.

*Estimates Free. Taking all Risks. Testimonials on application.*

Address: BOLTON BROS., Cambridge.

**TELEPHONE No. 86.**

Offices: 40, HILLS ROAD.      Warehouses: GLISSON ROAD.

N.B.—T. G. and W. Bolton beg to inform the public, as E. Bolton has opened an Office on Hills Road, and mistakes are frequently being made, they wish it to be known that he is in no way whatever connected with the Firm of BOLTON BROS.

Bolton Bros: Warehouse, Glisson Road - 1995



1927-28 Directory: T.G.& W. Bolton Bros.

SPECIALLY BUILT WAREHOUSES FOR THE SAFE STORAGE OF  
FURNITURE ON REASONABLE TERMS.



## T. G. & W. BOLTON Bros.

ESTABLISHED 1882.

Contractors for Removals.

Motor Removals a Speciality to or from all parts  
of the United Kingdom by Road, Rail or Sea.

**NO PACKING REQUIRED.**

Estimates Free. Taking all Risks. Testimonials on Application.

Address: **BOLTON BROS.,** Cambridge.

TELEPHONE No. 86.

TELEGRAPHIC ADDRESS: BOLTON BROS., CAMBRIDGE.

OFFICE: 40, Hills Road. WAREHOUSES: Glisson Road.

*Carting of Every Description by Day or Contract.*

RUBBER TYRED FODEN STEAM LORRY FOR HIRE.

## 'GEORGE BOLTON'

George Bolton left 'Bolton Bros' to set up business for himself between 1901 and 1904.

George had married late, and his wife Mary was ten years younger than him (17). To begin with they had lived at 40 Hills Road, where their first children, Alice and Tom were born. By 1904, when 'George Bolton' first appears in the Street Directories, the family and the offices were at 106 Regent St. Later the opportunity arose to purchase a nearby property and they moved to 110 Regent St.

In these same years George built a Warehouse in Tenison Road.

George was nearly 50 when he struck out on his own. He had been working in the same trade for over thirty years, first as a boy and young man with his father, and later with his brothers. There is no way of knowing how these family relationships had been balanced in the running of the business but from the moment he established himself in Regent St he was in sole control. He was responsible for promoting the firm, estimating prices, ordering the workload and ensuring that payments were kept up.

Much of the office work was probably done by George's first wife, Mary. After her death in 1919 George married again to Elizabeth Thompson, a friend of his daughter Daisy. Elizabeth looked after him in his later years and managed the office too (18).

The carting and furniture removals were based at Tenison Road. Advertisements show vehicles and staff proudly arrayed outside the warehouse. George employed between five and seven staff here. These included when they were old enough his two sons Tom and George Jr., who are pictured wearing boys uniform in the first, 1907, advertisement.

Removals were time consuming and awkward. Furniture had to be manoeuvred out of the house down staircases and through doorways that were only just wide enough. The beds, chairs, tables, chests and packing cases then had to be loaded into the van and firmly secured so that they were not damaged in transit. A small house could take two men two or three hours to empty, while a large house could take four or five hours. Unloading at the other end would be slightly quicker.

Haulage was another important part of the business. At one time George Bolton had sole contract for all Cambridge Corporation carting. His grand-daughter remembers him waiting in the Regent St office until 4.00, when the boy from the 'Corp' would arrive on a bike with their requirements for the next day. Her grandfather would then walk to Tenison Road to give his staff their orders.

17 1891 Census

18 Information from G Butcher

George Bolton: 110 Regent St, early 1900s



## 'GEORGE BOLTON'

This relationship with the corporation was long-standing. In 1882 George's father, Thomas, was working for the Improvement Commissioners. It is recorded that on the 18 October his cart was being loaded with rubble in Station Road when a tram hit the horse and threw it against the fence of a nearby timber yard. The animal was killed and Thomas took the Tramways Company to court, claiming £40 compensation for the loss. He won the case, but was only awarded £20. It is a reminder that roads were dangerous even in the years before the introduction of motor vehicles. Those in charge of vehicles had to be careful (19).

By the outbreak of World War I George Bolton was 60. His two sons were by then working with him. The eldest, Tom, was in his mid twenties. He continued to work with his father for the first years of the war as the firm had a number of government contracts, but after the Battle of the Somme he was called-up.

Following the war George took a less active part in the business and Tom acted as manager. Sometimes he would accompany removals as far as Scotland or Ireland and could be away for up to two weeks. His wife recalled that in those days before they had a telephone the only communication she had with her husband once he had left Cambridge was from cards in the post. She just had to assume that he was alright and carry on looking after their young family alone.

George Bolton died in 1933, aged 78. In his obituary the strength of his religious and political beliefs were stressed:

'a staunch Protestant and a Conservative.'

The writer concluded that he had possessed:

'a genial disposition which endeared him to all who knew him.'

Tom Bolton had inherited his father's business. For twenty years he had worked with his younger brother, George. Slowly a gap had appeared between the two as Tom became more involved in management. When George eventually came into his inheritance when he reached 40 he was to leave the firm, and Cambridge (20).

The offices remained at 110 Regent St until World War II. A young woman was employed to deal with customers, and Tom Bolton's wife would go over every afternoon to deal with the finances and administration. With the outbreak of war it became difficult to find staff. The building was let and Mrs Bolton ran the business from the family home in Tenison Road.

The staff based at the warehouse in the 1930s, '40s and '50s included Mr Stalley, Mr Pink, Mr Stearn, Mr Witt and the Muncey brothers. Joe Stalley had a legendary reputation amongst those that remember him. A giant of a man, he is reputed to have carried a grand-piano from his van up the steps of the old Guild hall. On another occasion it is claimed that when his van blew over near Hyde Park Corner during a gale he unhitched the horses and heaved the van back onto its wheels (21). Although such stories may well be exaggerated they are a reminder that physical strength was an important attribute. Furniture was heavy.

- 19 'Victorian Cambridge', (Page 208). Ed. Enid Porter
- 20 Information from G Butcher
- 21 Letter: Ted Fisher, 1995

Telegraphic  
Address :  
GEORGE BOLTON,  
REGENT STREET,  
CAMBRIDGE.



TELEPHONE: 644

# GEORGE BOLTON

Furniture Remover . .

and Warehouser . . .

106, REGENT STREET, CAMBRIDGE

**Furniture Removed to all**

**Parts of the United Kingdom**

**By Road or Rail & Warehoused**

No Packing Required. Estimates given to cover all risk

CARTING DONE OF EVERY DESCRIPTION.

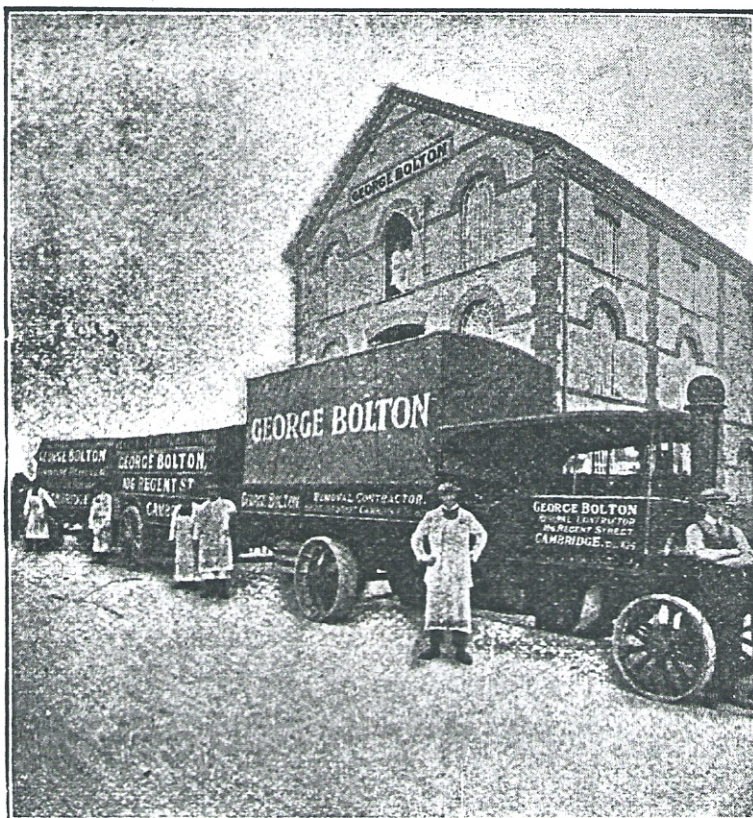
1915: Directory .



Telegraphic  
Address:

**G. BOLTON,**  
**106, REGENT**  
**STREET,**  
**CAMBRIDGE.**

TELEPHONE 624.



**FODEN**  
**STEAM**  
**LORRY**  
**FOR HIRE.**



# GEORGE BOLTON,

Furniture Remover . .

and Warehouse . . .

**106, REGENT STREET**

AND

***Tenison Road (only).***

---

**Furniture removed to all**  
**Parts of the United Kingdom**  
**by Road or Rail.**

---

**NO PACKING REQUIRED. ESTIMATES GIVEN FREE TO COVER ALL RISKS.**

---

**CARTING DONE OF EVERY DESCRIPTION.**



**GEORGE BOLTON,**

**FURNITURE REMOVER  
AND WAREHOUSER**

**110, REGENT STREET**

— AND —

**TENISON ROAD (only).**

*Telegrams:* G BOLTON, 110, Regent Street, Cambridge, Tel. 624.

---

**Furniture Removed to All Parts of  
the United Kingdom by Road or Rail.**

---

**No Packing Required. Estimates given Free to Cover all Risks.**

---

**CARTING DONE OF EVERY DESCRIPTION.**

## 'GEORGE BOLTON'

By the mid 1950s the warehouse was no longer full. Perhaps this was related to the decline of the Empire; people no-longer needed to store their furniture while they went to work abroad. In 1955 Tom Bolton was 65 and he decided to retire. His son had pursued a different career, and the business was put up for sale. Planning Acts put restrictions on the sale of the Tenison Road warehouse, stipulating that the building must continue to be used for the same purposes. It was bought by the Cambridge and District Cooperative Society as part of their furniture storage and removals business.

Tom Bolton died in 1965.



The Removal Men:  
Left to Right: Unknown; Unknown; Mr Stalley; Tom Bolton

Haulage: Army work, 1914-1918. (Selwyn Road, Cambridge?)



Removals



Tenison Road: Tom Bolton's Home

No.38



No.35



## THE BOLTON FAMILY: CONCLUSION

Tom Bolton's death brought to an end the family connection with furniture removals, storage and haulage. It was a connection that had spanned three generations and was closely associated with the streets that ran off Hills Road. It was here, close to the station, that the family lived and developed their business.

The railways were probably the reason for Thomas Bolton Snr's original migration to Cambridge from Hertfordshire. They certainly provided him with employment in the early years of his marriage and it is likely that he chose to live in New Town because of its proximity to his workplace. This was an expanding suburb in a growing town and it was in these new streets that he and his children settled. Thomas in Coronation St and Union Road; his son Thomas also in Union Road; William Walter in Warkworth St; Edward first on Newmarket Road but then returning to Hills Road; George starting above the office on Hills Road, moving to Regent St, and then coming back towards the Station to the even newer Tenison Road.

This was the area where the different Bolton families grew-up and provided the community that they were part of. The Churches, St Paul's and St Barnabas, were particularly important. But beyond the houses and the churches was the railway. Physically and economically it dominated this part of Cambridge.

The siting of the Station 1½ miles from the town centre helps to explain the development of the nearby fields for housing. It provided jobs not just for Thomas Bolton but for many others. And the links that it provided with the rest of the country encouraged the growth of many other associated businesses. Carting was one of these. Goods arrived by train; they still had to be conveyed to their local destination. Furniture removals was another. With the specially designed vans that feature in the early 'Boltons' advertisements a household's belongings could be loaded in a Cambridge street, pulled to the Station by horse, transferred to a goods wagon and safely transported across the country.

Other factors obviously contributed to the success of the removals business. The population was growing and mobile. Increasing affluence meant that a greater number of people owned more than just the basic necessities of bedding, cooking pots and a few clothes. When families moved house they needed assistance. When they went abroad their possessions were valuable enough to merit placing in store. But it is the coming of the railway to Cambridge that explains why Thomas Bolton and his sons started their businesses, and why they were sited where they were.

These businesses were family affairs. Fathers worked with sons, wives helped to manage the paper-work. Office and home was frequently the same building. This provided a strong sense of involvement. It could also lead to tensions. Why did Edward Bolton establish his own firm and not work with his younger brothers? What led George Bolton to leave the partnership with Walter William in mid-life? How did George's youngest son, George Jnr, feel when his elder brother Tom inherited their father's business? It could be hard for the women too, expected to organise the family and to run the office. George Bolton's granddaughter remembers going to relieve her mother two afternoons a week so that she could go shopping.

## THE BOLTON FAMILY: CONCLUSION

The tensions might be personal. They could also be about money. The family assets were those of the firm, and sons, daughters and widows needed to be provided for. Walter William's son chose not to continue with his father's business after his death and it was sold. George Bolton's son, George Jnr, left the firm, taking with him his share of his father's inheritance. What was established by one generation could very easily be divided by the next.

There are no surviving financial accounts for any of these businesses. They were successful and they flourished. Thomas Bolton was a Railway Porter living in Coronation St in 1851. His children lived in far grander houses in Hills Road, Warkworth St and Tenison Road. The Bolton family name was known all over Cambridge, proclaimed on offices and from passing vans.

From the late 19th century until the mid 20th century 'Boltons', 'Edward Bolton', 'Bolton Bros' and 'George Bolton' were familiar names in the town. Today they are forgotten, but the two warehouses in Glisson Road and Tenison Road remain as a reminder of the family and their business activities.

The Warehouse: Tenison Road



## THE SITE

'A lovely building.

It was just part of my childhood. You hear of people who grow up on farms...We used to go there and we used to play; my brother used to play too.

I just cannot remember not remembering. It was always there. It was where we went, the yard and everything.'

Gladys Butcher (nee Bolton)

George Bolton built the Tenison Road warehouse between 1904 and the end of 1906 (22). No original deeds or records have been found.

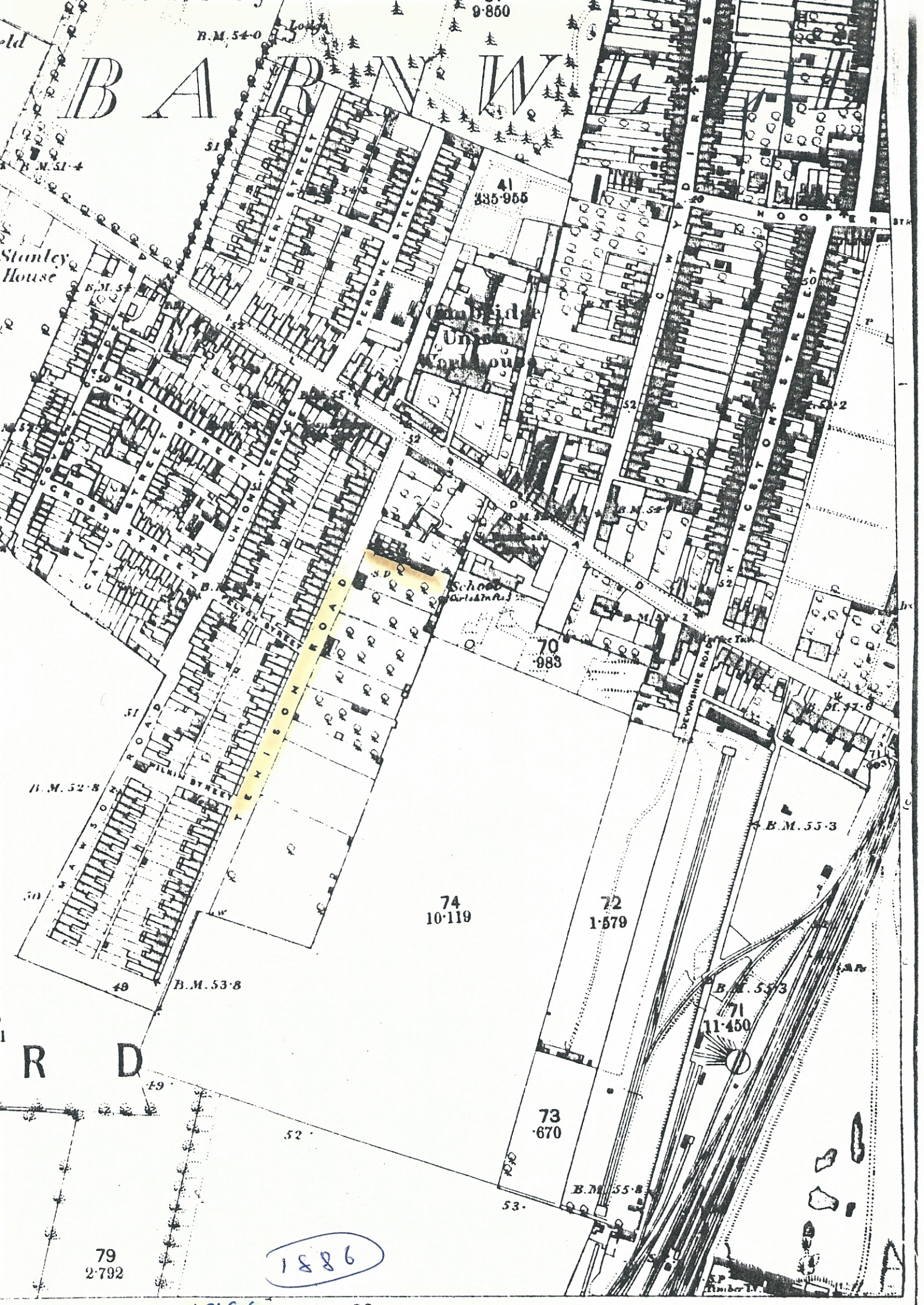
The first houses in Tenison Road had been built a little over 20 years earlier when the terraced row now opposite the warehouse was erected on land owned by Corpus Christi College. The East side of the street remained undeveloped and in 1887 was still described in the Street Directory as 'Field and Garden only'.

During the 1890s and the first decade of the 20th century these 'Gardens' were developed as a mixture of private residences and small business premises. Substantial middle class homes were built facing the artisans' terraces, while at the Mill Road end of the road there were Duncombe and Roberts' marble workshop, Wallis' ale store and Illsley Son's stables (23).

George Bolton's warehouse was built next to Illsley's stables. By 1907 immediately to the south was R Sharman's Builders Yard.

Later George Bolton's son and family came to live in the road. They moved into one of the terraces on the west side at first, No 38, before moving across the road to No 35, a larger residence. The warehouse was scarcely a couple of minutes walk from the family home.

- 22 1904 Spalding Directory: No reference  
1906 Spalding Almanack: Referred to in advertisement (Published Dec 1905)
- 23 1904 Spalding Directory



B.M. 54-0

41  
335-955

Cambridge  
University

School  
Girls & Boys

70  
983

74  
10-119

72  
1-579

73  
670

71  
11-450

79  
2-792

1886

B.M. 53-8

B.M. 55-3

B.M. 55-8

B.M. 52-8

Stanley  
House

B A B N W

R D



1903

GREAT EASTERN RAILWAY

ROMSEY WARD

## 2 THE WAREHOUSE

The warehouse was built for furniture storage. This provided an assured and steady income to supplement that earned from carting contracts and from removals.

From the outside the building looks very similar to the 'Bolton Bros' warehouse in nearby Glisson Road. Both are three storeys, with the gable facing the road. Large double doors on the ground floor open onto the road, allowing vans to back in to load or unload furniture. On the floors above were further openings, with a crane on the top floor for hoisting furniture up from below. Large windows let in as much natural light as possible.

Both warehouses are built of white 'Cambridge' bricks. Each is decorated with bands of red bricks running around and up the building, and over the window and door arches. One of the few differences between the buildings is the size of the first floor opening.

Internally the floors have high ceilings and are undivided.

Despite the many similarities between the warehouses at least ten years separate the buildings. It is not known if both were constructed by the same builder, or whether it was a local design or a standard pattern. But the fact that as his own business expanded George Bolton chose to repeat the style of the Glisson Road warehouse on the Tenison Road site presumably indicates his satisfaction with the earlier design.

To begin with there was plenty of spare space, and George Bolton enhanced his income by using one of the floors for roller skating. But slowly the warehouse filled-up. Families moved or families went abroad, and their furniture would be placed in store. Every quarter they were sent a bill from the firm's office in Regent St.

The furniture was stored in household groups. Space was money, and it was important to be able to store as much as possible while retaining ease of access and of identification. George Bolton's son Tom was noted for being particularly efficient at packing and dovetailing everything in: 'It was a real work of art.'<sup>(24)</sup>

Once each household's belongings were stacked they would be draped in Hessian. This was part of the 'Warehousers' stock in trade, and there were rolls and rolls of it in the building. It would be nailed to the ceiling and sewn together around each newly arrived stack, clearly demarcating it from its neighbours. On the front was placed a card with the details of whose furniture it was and when it was taken into store. A visitor to the warehouse would have walked through lines of these Hessian shrouded homes awaiting the day when they would be re-assembled as part of someone's life.

Some furniture remained in store for only a short period of time. Some remained for years. Occasionally items were left behind, forgotten or unwanted. Richard Naylor remembers playing on an Exercise Bike on the top floor, a novelty in the 1930s. George and Tom Bolton both employed 'Catlings' to sell the abandoned items at memorable sales when the big ground floor doors would be opened to the world.

24 Information from Gladys Butcher

George Bolton:  
Tenison Road  
1904-1906



Bolton Bros:  
Glisson Road  
1888-1895



The Yard & Polly:  
George Bolton Snr  
kept Polly for his Trap.



The Stables:  
Tom Bolton



## THE WAREHOUSE: THE YARD

At the side of the warehouse was a yard. This doubled in width at the rear of the building and ran back to the boundary with the St Barnabas Rd properties. There was space for the vans and motor vehicles, an office, and stables for the horses.

There was stabling for (possibly) six horses, and a harness room. A ladder in the end box stall gave access to the loft that ran above. A pump provided water, and maize, oats and mangle wurzles were stored for feeding the animals. Dung - and there must have been a lot of it - went in a manure pit (25).

Tom Bolton's daughter, Gladys, used to love visiting the yard. She would chop up the wurzel-mangles in the machine and feed the pieces to the horses. In World War II her father kept chickens there too. As the number of horses were reduced he also let out one of the stalls to a man who kept two goats there. The young Gladys Bolton went to look at them one Sunday after tea while her father was feeding the horses:

'One of them came at me to butt me. I went back to my father. He had no time for cowards, he didn't believe me. He came back, and of course the goat did it again. He gave this goat such a clout...'

Horses, chickens, goats, all in the heart of residential Cambridge. Today it might well be illegal, and would certainly be considered eccentric. 60 years ago there were probably many other yards like this around Cambridge.

25 Information from Gladys Butcher



Gladys Butcher - 1995  
George Bolton's granddaughter

## THE YARD: TRANSPORT - VEHICLES

Storage was one third of the Boltons business. Haulage contracting and furniture removals were the other two thirds. Both these required vehicles.

George Bolton continued to use the horse drawn wagons familiar to his father. His first advertisement in the local Directory (1907) shows two pantechnicons and two covered carts displayed outside the new Tenison Road warehouse. After World War I there were supplemented by motor vehicles, and they feature prominently in the firm's advertisements during the 1920s. It is claimed that 'George Bolton' was one of the first firms in Cambridge to have a Foden steam lorry (26). This had been acquired by 1915, when it was being advertised for hire (27). Later the firm bought other vehicles, including a Dennis lorry. In what must have been a prestigious removal these were photographed drawn up outside Trinity College. Behind them at the rear was one of the old pantechnicons. These survived in use until the World War II.



George Bolton: Vehicles and Staff outside Trinity College

Staff: Left to Right - Mr Stern; George Bolton Jnr; Unknown; Tom Bolton; George Bolton Snr

- 26 Information from Gladys Butcher
- 27 1915 Spalding

## Back in business—after a 20-year break



This lumbering giant of the Victorian age took to the road again today for the first time in 20 years.

The giant 90-year-old removal van, pulled by two Clydesdale horses, set out from Church Farm, Babraham, en route to Leeds.

It was bought at the weekend in a sale at Church Farm by a Leeds removal firm owner, Mr. William Hamilton, the only man in the country who still uses horse-drawn vehicles for his business.

Mr. Hamilton was tipped off about the sale of the pantechnicon by friend Mr. Peter Killick, of The Close, Babraham. There are only three of the vehicles left

in the country and Mr. Hamilton rushed down to Babraham at the weekend to snap it up.

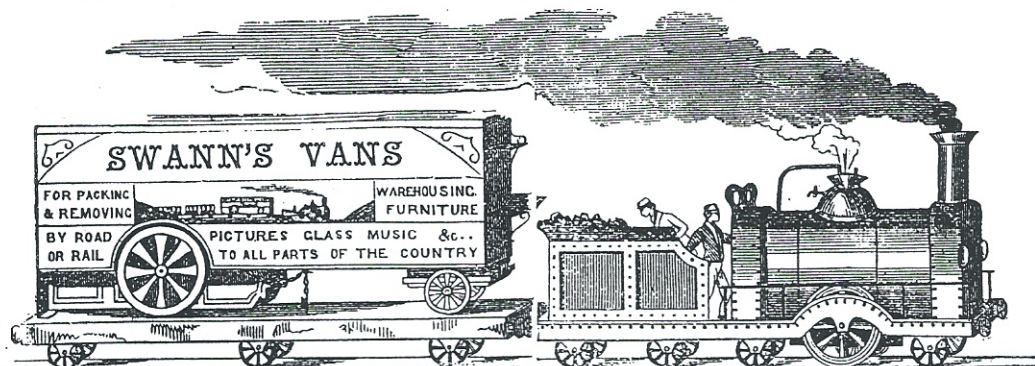
With him came the two Clydesdales, Jock and Laddie, who now face a seven-day haul in 22-miles-a-day stages back to Leeds.

Once there, the pantechnicon will be used on local city removals and restored for showing.

The van was bought 20 years ago by the late Mr. Reg Robinson, who then farmed Church Farm, from the Cambridge removal firm of Bolton's.

All it needed today on the start of its first leg of the journey to Godmanchester was a drop of oil and grease and a minor alteration—the fitting of two shafts instead of one pole.

SWANN'S VANS ESTABLISHED OVER A CENTURY.



WITHOUT PACKING OR RISK, TO ANY DISTANCE.

ESTIMATES FREE.

# J. J. SWANN, CONTRACTOR FOR REMOVALS,

To or from all parts of the United Kingdom & Continent, by Road, Rail, or Sea.

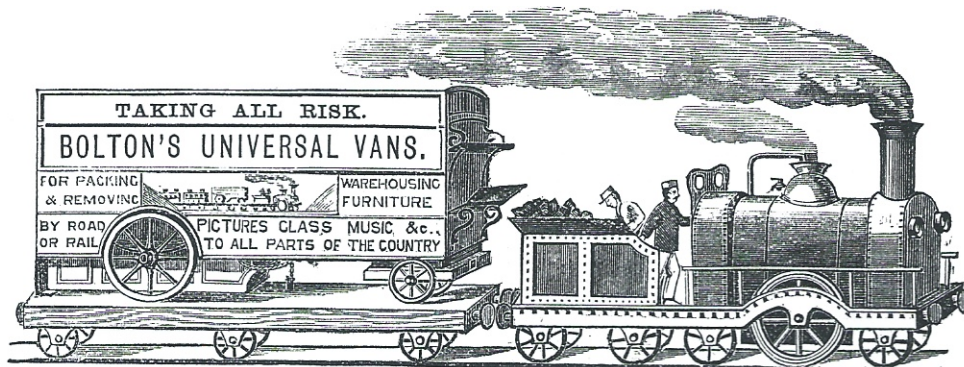
VANS LET TO THE TRADE BY DAY OR HOUR.

31, HILLS ROAD,  
CAMBRIDGE.

VAN OFFICE.

31, HILLS ROAD,  
CAMBRIDGE.

ESTIMATES FREE.



# BOLTONS, CARRIERS AND CONTRACTORS

For the removal of all kinds of Furniture, Machinery, Corn, Coal and Property of every description by Road, Rail or Sea to any part of the World.

VANS LENT TO THE TRADE BY DAY, HOUR, OR OTHERWISE.

Nos. 11 & 26, UNION ROAD, CAMBRIDGE.

## THE YARD: VEHICLES - TUNNEL WAGON

It was the pantechnicon, or 'Tunnel Wagon', that Thomas Bolton used to promote his business in 1879. So did his longer established competitors (28). They were developed in the later years of the 19th century to take advantage of the new railway system, and derived their name from the 'tunnels' that they had to pass through.

Instead of long journeys over badly surfaced roads, furniture was loaded into these specially designed wagons, driven to the nearest railway station by horse, and then the entire wagon was run off an end platform onto a Goods Truck. It was then taken to the station nearest to its destination where locally hired horses would complete the journey. Before being placed on a Goods Truck the wagon would be tested under a loading gauge equipped with bells adjusted to the height of the tunnels on the route. If the bells rang when the wagon passed through then the load was too high and the wagon would be pulled down onto its springs.

Tunnel wagons were large rectangular boxes built to take as much furniture as possible. They were usually between 12' and 18' in length and 7' wide. To take full advantage of the body width the wheels would be of small diameter and positioned below the floor line (See: vehicle in the foreground of the 1907 'George Bolton' advert). This would have been a big vehicle to be on the roads in the 1880s.

One of George Bolton's Tunnel wagons survives to this day. It was sold by Tom Bolton when he retired in 1954 to his friend Reg Robinson of Church Farm, Babraham. On Mr Robinson's death it was put up for auction, and bought for £290 by Mr William Hamilton. In 1973 the purchaser drove it by horse to Leeds, where he ran a horse-drawn removals business. Mr Hamilton has now retired, and the wagon still stands in his yard, no longer road worthy but still used to store hay for his remaining horses.

1879 Spalding Almanack

## THE YARD: VEHICLES - THE LAST BOLTON TUNNEL WAGON:

'I sat 8'6" from the ground, the reins in my left hand and the whip in the right hand. It was a great feeling, when I first climbed up, I'd never been so high up driving before...

I looked down on the horses' backs, set off and I was singing old fashioned songs, old time songs like: 'My old man says follow the van, don't dilly dally on the way.' Nobody could hear. Peter said: 'I think the old wagon is coming to life.'

William Hamilton

William Hamilton's 'Bolton' wagon is probably the vehicle seen at the rear of the photograph taken outside Trinity College. It may be the wagon pictured outside the house in Union Road. It is certainly a similar design. 7' wide and 16' long, it is amongst the largest of its type: '16' is long enough, you've a fair old length for furniture, if you know how to pack, if you can pack you can get plenty on.'(WH)

It weighed about 30cwt when empty, including the lamps and the shafts, and could carry approx 4 tons: 'You'd have to have a heck of a lot of furniture, and a lot of tea chests full of books and heavy gear to make up 4 tons.'(WH)

This wagon has a sunken well at the rear, with a cranked rear axle. The well was used for storing smaller items and crockery. Once full it would be covered over with boards and the heavier pieces of furniture were then placed on top. It was a design originally produced by a Mr Purdy, and because it created a greater interior capacity it soon replaced the earlier flat floored types. It still has small front wheels under the wagon but the well left no space for these at the rear, where large wheels were set into semi-circular recesses in the side of the vehicle. These 'paddle-boxes' are no deeper than necessary so as not to encroach on the storage space inside.

Access to the wagon was through double doors at the rear. Outside of these was a drop tail-board hinged to the bottom of the well. This was used for getting furniture in or out, but could also be used to carry suitably strapped-down wardrobes or chests during transit.

The roof is arched to encourage the rain water to run off quickly. It is single-panelled and covered in black canvass. Bolted to the outside edge of the roof are boards so that trunks, chairs or other items could be safely carried on top: 'You could put as much on the roof as inside if you knew how to pack.'(WH)

There is a small louvred opening in the side to allow air to circulate. The sides are double panelled to give as much protection from the elements as possible. The outside boards are mahogany, and the inside boards pine. Between the panels is a type of oil cloth.

The wagons could be pulled by one horse or two. Two horses would give better breaking as double shafts would hold back a lot more.

William Hamilton:  
Driving George Bolton's  
Pantechnicon from Babraham  
to Leeds - 1973



## VEHICLES - THE LAST BOLTON 'TUNNEL WAGON'.

The driver sat high up at the front, 8'6" from the ground. He controlled the horses with reins, and operated a break on the off-hind wheel by foot. There was no other seating. The driver's mate would stand on the tail board. Or if the weather was bad he would get inside, probably wrapping himself in the Hessian sacking used to protect the furniture.

The wagon was a mobile advertising hording.

The sides, the rear and the front could all be used to display the firm's name, address and the type of business undertaken. Sometimes illustrations were used, often showing a tunnel wagon being whisked through the countryside towards its distant destination by train. Such a scene is depicted on the vehicle illustrated in the early 'Boltons' advertisements, and appeared on the 'Bolton Bros Universal Van' photographed in Union Road. The sign-writing on William Hamilton's wagon was less elaborate. Nevertheless he found proudly displayed in gold leaf under the green paint that had covered the vehicle when he bought it:

GEORGE BOLTON  
106, Regent St,  
CAMBRIDGE

Golden flourishes decorated the surrounding areas. Around the side roof boards it stated: 'Household Removals', while the smaller boards on either side of the driver proclaimed: 'Estimates Free', 'Taking All Risks': 'Well lettered, they used to go to a lot of trouble to get plenty of advertising on, they never wasted any space.'(WH)

This vehicle is nearly 120 years old. One axle is stamped 'August 1877', the other 'September 1877'. They were made at Kirkstall Forge, Leeds, and were probably sent by rail to Cambridge where the wheelwright would have constructed the rest of the wagon. William Hamilton described it:

..'its all done by hand, a lot of holes to drill and mortise and tenon joints and such like. There's plenty to do, and the wheels to make, while he's waiting for the axles.

It is a well made wagon. To say that its basically just a box on wheels to carry goods about in, they've gone to a lot of trouble to get it just right. They'll have selected all the best timbers, free from knots and shakes, splits and things, they'll have thrown away and burnt the rubbish, they'll be no wood worm in it or anything like that, it will be all best selected timbers. They had to do it good in order to get the work. It was a good advert for them you see. They'd get another one, someone else would want one. And they'd hurry along and get it finished so they could ask for the money when it was all over, get some money in the bank.'(WH)

William Hamilton took five days to drive the wagon up to Leeds, averaging just over 22 miles a day. En route he had to find stabling for the horses, while he slept in the back of the vehicle.

George Bolton's 'Tunnel Wagon': During restoration by William Hamilton.



2-10-1944 21-8



## VEHICLES - THE LAST BOLTON 'TUNNEL WAGON'

One night as he was settling down to sleep in the countryside near Huntingdon with the doors closed against the cold he heard someone walking around outside.

I could hear him shuffling around, this old chap, he might have been in his 70s, and he said:

'My, my what a beautiful old wagon. What a beautiful old wagon.'

That's all he said. He didn't know I was inside. I heard him shuffling off, and that was it. It had reminded him of the old days, because he'd remember them you see...'

The words have stayed with William Hamilton.

He added:

'And it is a beautiful old wagon when you look at it.

The way its been made, its shaped, and all it is, is a box on wheels to carry people's belongings around about. I mean, when it pulls up at the door you wont be looking at it, and admiring the shape of it, would you ? You'd be wanting to get your things on and get loaded, you'd be wondering how long they were going to take if it was 'So Much An Hour', you'd even be helping them to load to keep the cost down.'



George Bolton's Wagon Restored

William Hamilton:  
1995



William Hamilton's yard:  
Stables and 'Bolton Wagon'



## THE YARD: TRANSPORT - HORSES

'You really had to understand horses and have a gift'

Gladys Butcher: 1995

Horses have now completely disappeared from the urban scene. It is difficult to remember that even within living memory they remained the prime means of pulling or transporting goods and people around once they were beyond the reach of the railways.

Just as motor vehicles require specialist driving and maintenance skills to ensure that they run effectively, so did horses. They needed stabling, feeding and caring for.

The Boltons' horses were stabled at the rear of the warehouse. Tom Bolton had between 4 and 6 animals in the 1930s (29), and continued to use them at least up to World War II. Richard Naylor was brought up in these years above his parents Green Grocers just around the corner on Mill Road. He remembers lying in bed at night as a child listening to the horses stomping away in their stalls. It is not a sound associated with Mill Road today.

Percy Pink was a experienced horseman who went to work for Boltons in the 1930s. He had learnt his skills while employed as a drayman with a Brewery on Newmarket Road. His daughter, Pamela Ford (Born 1931) recalled in 1995 how her father loved being with the animals and enjoyed the job despite the low wages that meant there were 'no frills in the life of his children as they grew up'. She used to accompany him on Sunday mornings when he went to Tenison Road to clean out the stables and to feed the animals. Her memories are of how huge the horses were, the excitement of offering them an apple, and the terror that they might bite her fingers off. But her strongest impression is of how furry their feet were, probably what a five year old would notice first.

Sidney Utteridge was another horseman who joined 'Boltons' in these years when the horse was slowly being superseded by the motor vehicle in one firm after another. He had previously worked for Thompson's, a Furniture Removers with a shop in Fitzroy Street and warehouse and stables in St John's St. His 15 years experience as a horse driver was of no value to the firm when they sold their last horse and invested in the latest motorised van. He worked for Boltons until the war, when he left to go to the City Council, still for a short while as a horseman.

It is the horses that feature prominently in the memories of those who can remember 'Boltons' today. The horse-drawn furniture wagons made their way through the streets of Cambridge with the driver sitting high up above the animals and passing pedestrians (30).

29 Information from R Naylor, G Butcher

30 Information from Mr Royston, Mr Peck

## TRANSPORT - HORSES

The loads could be heavy and it must have often been gruelling work even in a town with few hills. Mrs Ivy East commented on this when she described her father, Sidney Utteridge, moving his own household belongings across Cambridge. The wagon was so full there was no room for any of the family:

'He had a very long van for the removals which he used to move us from 'Dove House', New Park St, to Franks Lane, Chesterton, in 1936.

This was on his half-day, after he finished work at 2.00. He changed Bob, a small brown horse that had worked during the morning to a black mare as he knew it would be a heavy load.

My sister left with my uncle and his two boys on bikes and I walked, pushing my month-old brother in his pram. I had been promised a ride on the van but there was no room. The black cat was in the back, sharing an orange box with the tortoise. My mother followed later on the bus.'

Mrs East did not get her ride. Nor did she get her promised treat:

'The other thing I remember about the move was stopping at the Co-Op shop on the corner of Chapel St to get some buns for tea but they were sold out so we had to have a 1/6 loaf cake.'

Some children were luckier:

'As a junior at St Paul's Sunday School, Russell St, we had an outing by horse drawn pantech-nicon belonging to G.Bolton.

It was pulled by two muscular shire horses. We sat on benches placed laterally across the interior. I remember the yelps of the children tumbling over backwards when the horses lurched forward.

Our destination was a garden off Grange Road, where after the usual bun-fight, games and singing, we returned via our horse box to the school.'

Ted Fisher

## TRANSPORT - CONCLUSION

Horse drawn vehicles are only seen in Cambridge today at carnivals or special events. They are an anachronism. In parts of the country they were familiar for much longer. Rag and Bone men can still be seen driving horses and carts round Bradford, Yorkshire.

William Hamilton took his Boltons pantechnicon up to Leeds and ran his horse-drawn removals business through the 1970s and 1980s:

'I've stuck up for the horses you see, I've been on the side of the horse. I got hooked on them when I was only 14, and I could see them in 1944, 1945, going, they were disappearing, everybody was getting motors. And I liked the horses, you see....

I've steered my way round with these horses so that the customer doesn't lose out.'

Few others shared his sentimental attachments or his determination. Tom Bolton liked horses, but he moved with the times. He had a family to support. But some of his staff may well have sympathised with William Hamilton:

'I like the atmosphere round it. I like the mechanics of it. I'm always looking to do it more efficient.'

'I wouldn't be interested in carrying if it wasn't for the horse. I've tried it with motors. Oh its dull! Its a right uninteresting job is carrying! But the horse just put the top on it, like the icing on the cake.'



Bolton Bros: Tunnel Wagon in Union Road. George Bolton Snr or his son Tom are nearest to the wagon.

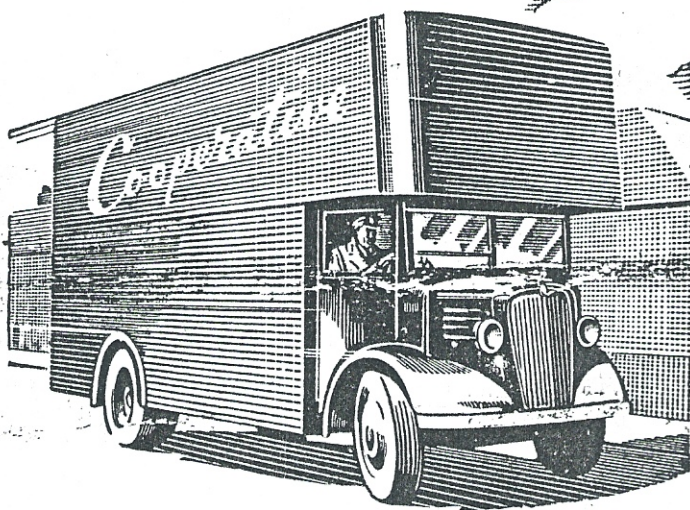
Is this William Hamilton's van?

## POSTSCRIPT

George Bolton's Tenison Road warehouse continued in use after it was sold by his son Tom in 1955. It was bought by the Co-Op, who used it for storage and for furniture repairs. The Co-Op then sold the building in the early 1970s to Barry Gasson, who used it as an architects studio.

Hang up for reference

# Announcing a New Service



★ *Furniture Storage*

★ *Furniture Removals*

Local and long distance  
removals by fully  
experienced staff

Estimates Free  
from the  
Furnishing Department

INCORPORATING GEORGE BOLTON

# Cambridge & District Co-operative Society Ltd

73 BURLEIGH STREET

CAMBRIDGE

TELEPHONE 3221

## MR and MRS GASSON

In 1973 or 1974 the Warehouse was acquired from the Co-Op by Mr and Mrs Gasson.

Barry Gasson was a lecturer at the University School of Architecture. In the early 1970s he and his colleague John Meunier entered an architectural competition to design a new museum in Glasgow for the Burrell Collection. There were 242 entries. In 1972 they were declared winners.

This was a major commission intended to bring together one of the great Scottish collections and to revitalise Glasgow's cultural life. It was to eventually cost £16.5 million.

Gasson had thought hard about the design for the museum but winning still came as a surprise. He and his wife were living at the time in a University flat on Fen Causeway. They liked the setting, and they liked their neighbours, but it was their home, not a studio. Gasson sent his students to scour Cambridge for a building with adequate space for him to complete his plans. They found the disused warehouse in Tenison Road.

The Gassons were only able to acquire the premises because they said that they would convert the stables at the rear into a private residence. This they did, eventually moving in themselves. The top floor of the warehouse became an architectural office, spacious and light. The other floors were let to Barry's students. A visitor described it as 'an intellectual Disneyland'.

It took Barry Gasson ten years to complete his design. Although he had eventually to move to Glasgow, most of the drawings and the experimentation with different lighting effects was done in Tenison Road. The museum was described at its opening:

'It had a modesty of presentation but a lovely elegant plan, and the siting was brilliant...

There is in the gallery today a real sense of promises fulfilled, of a variety of spaces, of intriguing views and cross-vistas, of the Gothic doorways pressed once more into use. There are some splendid inventions: the display of the heraldic glass, which threatened to be a back-lit nightmare, becomes a simple pleasure in the windows of the cafeteria and south walkway. The tree walk, the main perimeter route, is a marvellous marriage of nature and art.

There are few materials: lots of wood in beams and ceilings, smooth concrete columns, pink stone floors and plaster walls. The architectural forms are elementary and the services neatly integrated. It would be easy to rehang the display completely without damage to the building.

## MR and MRS GASSON

There is also a great deal of moderately sophisticated light and sun control, manually operated, so that the galleries are spared the deadening effect of an even light. The public amenity spaces are bright, glazed and Scandinavian: light wood and brown leather seating which goes well with the laminated beams.

In short the Burrell Gallery has turned out to be an excellent building and well worth waiting 14 years for.

Theo Crosby: The Architects' Journal (19.10.1983)

Mrs Gasson has vivid memories of the tests made to find the most effective form of lighting. What visitors to 'The Burrell' see today was first enacted in the yard at the back of George Bolton's warehouse.

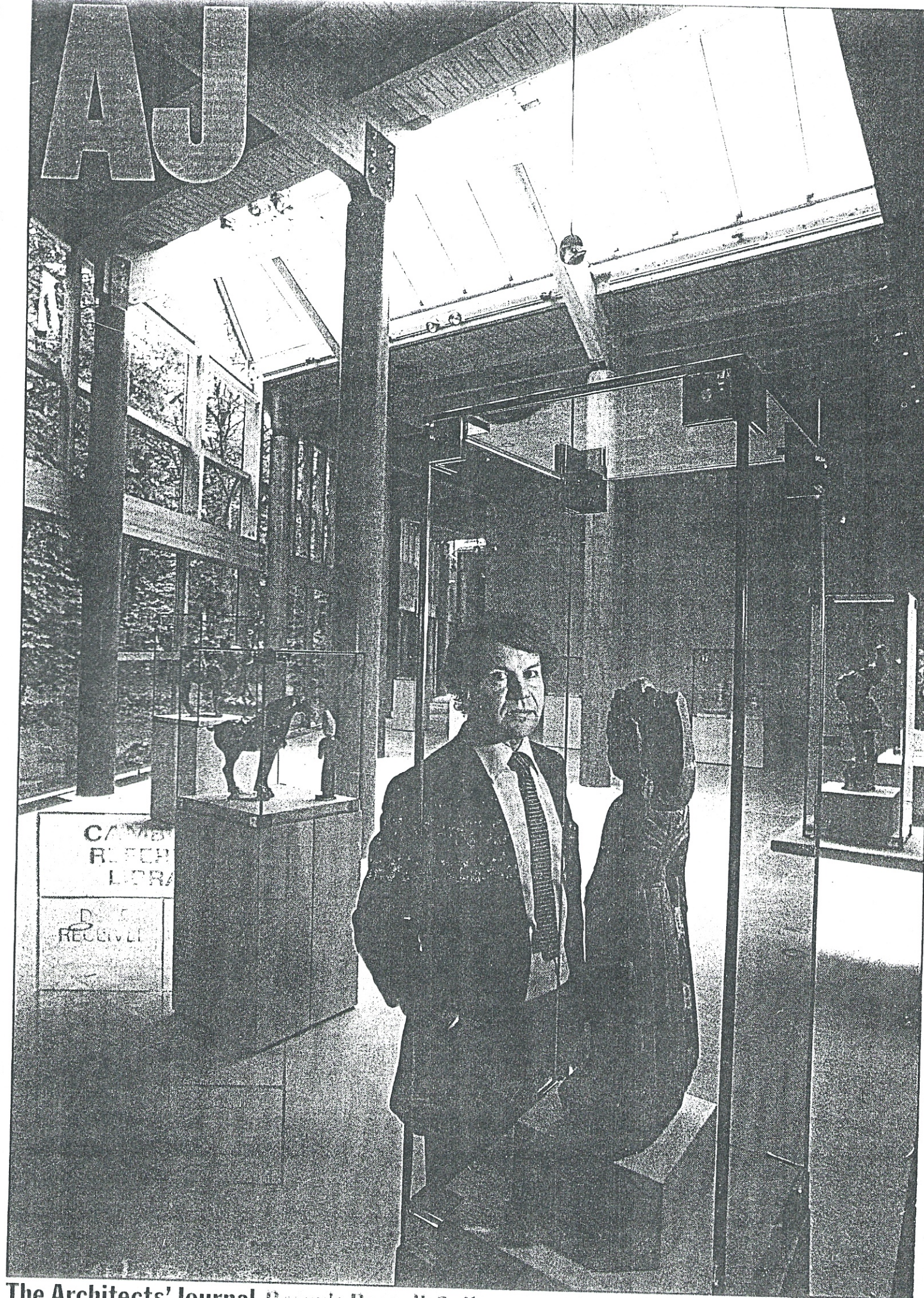
Another commentator stated:

'Certainly Gasson does not have the demeanour of the successful architect. He is not self-seeking or even possessive about his master work. His most outstanding quality is his modesty. He seems to have recognised that the museum building would have to be subservient to the art it contained. Consequently his main aim has been to show that each work, whether it be from China, Arabia or mediaeval France, could find a natural home in the essentially Scottish landscape of Pollok Park'

Richard Demarco: The Architects' Journal (19.10.1983)

Mrs Gasson still lives in the converted stables behind the warehouse. Hidden from the street and shaded by a tall tree it has the air of a rural farmyard. She has found old clay pipes in her garden, presumably discarded by George Bolton's workmen. If it wasn't for the sound of the traffic few would know that it lay so close to Mill Road. And none would guess of the connections between the neighbouring warehouse and one of the major civic buildings in Scotland.

# AJ



The Architects' Journal Barry's Burrell Gallery: special report 19 October 1983/70p

## SOURCES

### 1 Original letters or interviews:

Noel Abel: Information on 'Tunnel Wagons'. Watton, Norfolk  
Lawrence Bolton (Letter, Jan 1995): Son of Tom Bolton  
Gladys Butcher (Interview, letter Jan 1995): Daughter of Tom Bolton.  
Ivy East (letter, Jan 1995): Daughter of SC Utteridge, 6 Crawford Close, Buchan St, Cambridge  
Ted Fisher (Letter, Jan 1995): 28 Nuttings Road, Cambridge  
Pamela Ford (Jan 1995): Daughter of P Pink  
Mrs Gasson (Interviewed Feb 1995): Tenison Rd Warehouse  
William Hamilton (Interview, March 1995): 169 Cross Flatts Grove, Leeds 11  
Mrs Keir: Owner of Dance Studio, Glisson Rd  
Peter Killick (March 1995): Information on 'Tunnel Wagons'. Bradford Industrial History Museum  
Richard Naylor (Jan 1995): Coleridge Road, Cambridge  
Mr Peck: 163 Catherine St  
Mr Royston

### 2 Others:

Census: 1851, 1881, 1891 (Cambridgeshire Record Office)  
Spaldings Street Directories, Almanacs (Cambridgeshire Collection)

# 1881 CENSUS: CAMBRIDGE, ST ANDREW'S THE LESS

126 Union Road (Ref: 11/1667/73-96)

|          |        |      |       |    |            |                    |
|----------|--------|------|-------|----|------------|--------------------|
| BOLTON   | Thomas | Head | Widow | 60 | Contractor | Herts: Buntingford |
| Thomas R | Son    | UM   |       | 30 | Contractor | Cambridge          |
| Jane     | Dau    | UM   |       | 27 |            | Cambridge          |
| George   | Son    | UM   |       | 26 | Contractor | Cambridge          |
| Ellen    | Dau    | UM   |       | 23 |            | Cambridge          |
| MA       | Dau    | UM   |       | 22 |            | Cambridge          |
| WW       | Son    | UM   |       | 21 | Contractor | Cambridge          |

|        |           |  |  |   |  |        |
|--------|-----------|--|--|---|--|--------|
| DAKIN  |           |  |  |   |  |        |
| Sydney | Grand-son |  |  | 4 |  | London |

276 Newmarket Road: Hearts of Oak (Ref: RG 11/1664/39)

|          |           |         |    |    |                     |                   |
|----------|-----------|---------|----|----|---------------------|-------------------|
| BOLTON   | Edward    | Head    | M  | 31 | Contractor          | Cambridge         |
|          |           |         |    |    | & Publican          |                   |
| Emma     | Wife      |         | M  | 27 | Cambs: Stretchworth |                   |
| THAXTER  | Ellen     | Servant | UM | 18 |                     | Cambs: Burwell    |
| MACLAREN | Duncan    | Lodger  |    | 26 |                     | Scotland          |
| HART     | Frederick | Lodger  |    | 27 | Labourer            | Cambs: Comberton  |
| CONQUEST | Charles   | Lodger  |    | 19 | Labourer            | Cambs: Willingham |

# 1891 CENSUS

## 17 Panton St

|          |        |         |    |                     |                    |                     |
|----------|--------|---------|----|---------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| BOLTON   | Edward | Head    | M  | 41                  | Carting Contractor | Cambridge           |
| Emma     | Wife   | M       | 37 |                     |                    | Cambs: Stretchworth |
| Edward   | Son    |         | 8  | Scholar             |                    | Cambridge           |
| Thomas W | Son    |         | 6  | Scholar             |                    | Cambridge           |
| George D | Son    |         | 5  | Scholar             |                    | Cambridge           |
| PINDAR   | John   | Boarder | 38 | Insurance Inspector |                    | York: Hull          |
| FORDHAM  | Annie  | Servant | 19 | Domestic            |                    | Essex: Colchester   |

## 215 Union Road

|          |               |      |    |   |           |
|----------|---------------|------|----|---|-----------|
| BOLTON   | Thomas Robert | Head | 40 | Contractor, Baker(?), Furniture Remover | Cambridge |
| Jane     | Sister        |      | 36 |   | Cambridge |
| BARTON   | Niece         |      | 4  |   |           |
| Beatrice |               |      |    |   |           |

## 340 Hills Road

|           |        |      |   |           |            |           |
|-----------|--------|------|---|-----------|------------|-----------|
| BOLTON    | George | Head | M | 36        | Contractor | Cambridge |
| Mary Eliz | Wife   |      |   | 26        |            | Cambridge |
| Alice     | Dau    |      |   | 1         |            | Cambridge |
| Tom       | Son    |      |   | 11 months |            | Cambridge |

## 432 Warkworth St

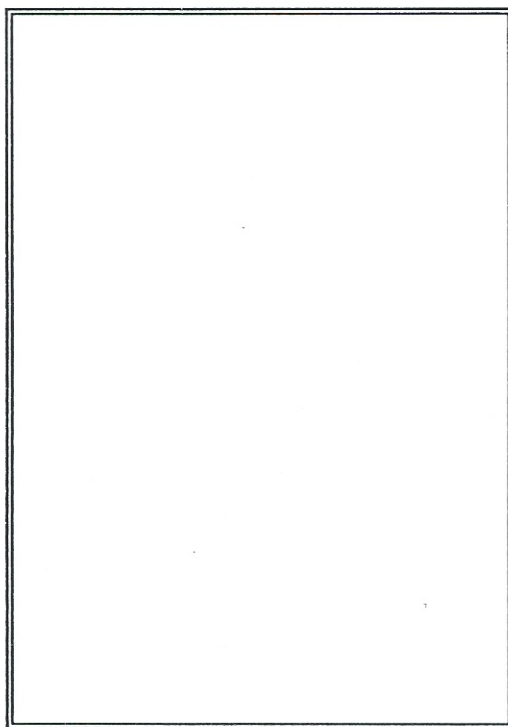
|           |          |         |   |    |                               |           |
|-----------|----------|---------|---|----|-------------------------------|-----------|
| BOLTON    | Walter W | Head    | M | 31 | Furniture Removing Contractor | Cambridge |
| Fanny     | Wife     |         | M | 27 |                               |           |
| William G | Son      |         |   | 3  |                               |           |
| Mabel W   | Dau      |         |   | 1  |                               |           |
| AMBROSE   | William  | Servant |   | 17 |                               |           |

Note: Ambrose family live next door. Is WA related?

# CARTER JONAS

**TO LET  
OFFICE PREMISES**

**BOLTONS WAREHOUSE  
Tenison Road  
Cambridge**



- \* Sympathetic conversion of Edwardian Warehouse Premises
- \* Offices from 1082 sq ft/100 sqm - 3568 sq ft /332 sqm
- \* Car Parking
- \* Sophisticated data linking system

6-8 Hills Road, Cambridge CB2 1NH Tel: 01223 368771 Fax: 01223 369950  
12a St. George Street, Hanover Square, London W1R 9DE

London Cambridge Marlborough Oxford Peterborough York  
Bangor Bridgnorth Hereford Huddersfield Ipswich Stamford Bridge

## LOCATION

Tenison Road, which can be found to the South East of Cambridge City Centre, runs between Mill Road and Station Road.

Boltons Warehouse can be found close to the junction of Tenison Road with Mill Road.

## DESCRIPTION

The premises comprise a single three storey former Edwardian warehouse built to a Victorian design which has been sympathetically restored and converted to office use.

The property is constructed in brick under a pitched slate roof and has many interesting architectural features including banded brickwork, corbelled eaves and numerous large arched small paned windows, which ensure that the property has plenty of natural light. As part of the conversion work a service core has been constructed to the rear elevation enabling the floor space to be left open plan.

The building has been converted so that it is capable of occupation as a whole or on a floor by floor basis. Each floor has its own individual features which distinguish it from the others. In particular, the ground floor benefits from large expanse of glazing instead of the former warehouse doors, while the second floor space is open to the underside of the roof with a large roof light. The refurbishment was completed in June 1995.

## ACCOMMODATION

|              | sqm        | sq ft       |
|--------------|------------|-------------|
| Ground Floor | 100        | 1082        |
| First Floor  | 115        | 1232        |
| Second Floor | <u>117</u> | <u>1254</u> |
|              | 332        | 3568        |

Note: All areas are quoted on a net internal floor area basis.

Exterior: There is parking for a maximum of 6 cars to the rear of the property.

## SERVICES

Gas fired radiator central heating is installed. The units are furnished with RJ45 data sockets at approximately 2 metre intervals within the floor space and a patch panel at each floor level for maximum flexibility in location of computers and telephones.



BOLTONS WAREHOUSE  
Tenison Road  
Cambridge

Date: FEB 95

Scale: N.T.S

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This plan is provided for reference purposes only and its accuracy is not guaranteed. It is expressly excluded from forming any part of a contract.

# CARTER JONAS

CHARTERED SURVEYORS

In association with Mason Philips Chartered Surveyors London W1



6-8 Hills Road, Cambridge CB2 1NH  
Telephone 0223 68771 Fax 0223 69950

## **RATES**

Not yet assessed.

## **PLANNING**

The premises are to be let as offices within Class BI of The Town and Country Planning Act 1987.

## **LEASE**

The premises are available to let on a new lease or leases for a term to be agreed. Leases will be drawn on tenants full repairing and insuring terms. Further details are available on request.

## **RENT**

|              |   |              |             |
|--------------|---|--------------|-------------|
| Ground Floor | - | £11,500 pax. | TO LET      |
| First Floor  | - | £11,750 pax. | UNDER OFFER |
| Second Floor | - | £13,250 pax. | UNDER OFFER |

## **POSSESSION**

Possession will be granted on completion of legal formalities.

## **VAT**

All rents, prices and costs are quoted net of VAT which may be payable.

## **VIEWING**

By prior appointment with the sole agents.

Carter Jonas  
6-8 Hills Road  
CAMBRIDGE  
CB2 1NH

Tel: 01223-368771

Contact : Carol E Clark BA ARICS

6 Grantchester Road,  
CAMBRIDGE,  
CB3 9ED.

28 September 1997

Mr Allan Brigham,  
Clare House,  
17 Romsey Road,  
CAMBRIDGE,  
CB1 3DD.

Dear Allan,

Thank you for your letter of 14 September and the enclosure.

We were very interested in the photograph of Edward Bolton's establishment in Hills Road.

Edward Bolton was responsible for the removal of the Quiggin family's furniture and household effects from Fitzwilliam Road to here in January 1923 - much earlier than Merrilyn Thomas stated in her article. Paul well remembers watching the horse-drawn pantechnicon departing on its journey, wondering if he would ever see his toys again.

Yours sincerely,

---

*Paul Quiggin*  
*Barbara Quiggin*

Paul Quiggin  
Barbara Quiggin

## Reflections

# From des. res. to the Black Tailed Godwit

WHEN people choose to move house there are a number of considerations.

Prospective locations need to be assessed having due consideration for features such as accessibility, type of property available - quaint thatched cottage with an earth floor and single outside tap or stately mansion; are

there roses around the door or robins on the bird-table. For those experiencing such predicaments a number of newly received items might give guidance.

From Thriplow has come a village guide and history emphasizing that although the motorway is only a mile away it is out of sight and out of earshot, that mains sewage has now been

installed and that it has retained the best of its legacies from the past.

Colour photographs capture its charm, especially in springtime when daffodil weekend attracts visitors from near and far.

Visitors flock, too, to a garden of a thatched cottage nestling in the bend of a river with an early Tudor Guild Hall and a Norman church for neighbours.

Here an American novice has constructed his version of an English

country garden and has described the experience in a booklet published in America back in 1987 and finally arriving in the

Collection last week.

*Gardening for fun in England* is illustrated with sketches of sherry with the vicar, flower shows, rabbits and moles and just enough clues to indicate that this rural idyll is based in Linton where the arrival of a blackbird or the birth of thrushes is a major event.

Haddenham folk are somewhat more systematic in their recording of ornithological data and its Conservation Society



The blacksmith's shop at Thriplow in the 1880s

have published an illustrated study listing the Black Tailed Godwits, Green Sandpipers, Redshanks and Hoopoes and other visitors that have been glimpsed by its human residents.

**MIKE PETTY**  
reflects on recent arrivals in the Cambridgeshire Collection

But wherever one chooses to live there is another problem: that of getting your furniture there.

For nearly 100 years one of the firms that would have eased that difficulty was George Bolton.

Established in the early days of the railways its wagons could be loaded on goods trucks. Sized between 12 and 18 feet in length and about 7 foot high they would be tested against the height of the tunnels on the route.

They were constructed with a well in the floor into which crockery could be packed and

covered over before heavier items were positioned on top of it.

Removals were one thing, the storage of furniture another and warehouses were built in Tenison & Glisson Road.

Initially there was plenty of space and one of the floors was hired out for roller skating, but soon the buildings would be packed, each family's possessions kept separated and secure inside hessian shrouds, awaiting the day then they would be reassembled as part of somebody's life.

*"About Thriplow" published by the Thriplow Society.*

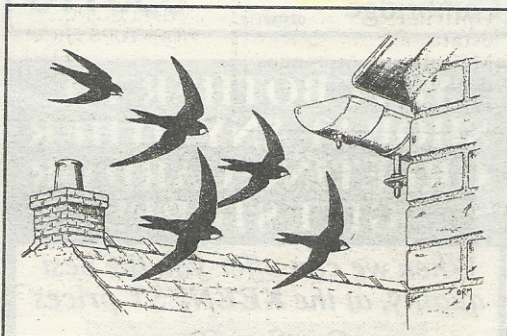
*"Gardening for fun in England" by Charles R. Anderson, published by The Saturday Shop, Clarkesville, Georgia 30523.*

*"The birds of Haddenham" from Wendy Lanman, 1 The Pond, Haddenham £3.*

*"The warehouse, George Bolton's: a family history" by Alan Brigham (unpublished study).*



At Linton, from *Gardening for fun in England*



From the Haddenham Bird Calendar



**Anne Campbell MP**  
Alex Wood Hall, Norfolk Street  
Cambridge CB1 2LD  
tel: 01223 506500 fax: 01223 311315  
e-mail: *anne.campbell.mp@dial.pipex.com*

Allan G Brigham BA  
Clare House  
17 Romsey Road  
Cambridge  
CB1 3DD

26 July 1996

Dear Allan,

Thank you very much for sending me your article from Local History Magazine, about Bolton's warehouse. I was fascinated to read it and felt very pleased to have been associated with the latest reincarnation.

With best wishes,

*Anne Campbell*

ANNE CAMPBELL  
Member of Parliament for Cambridge



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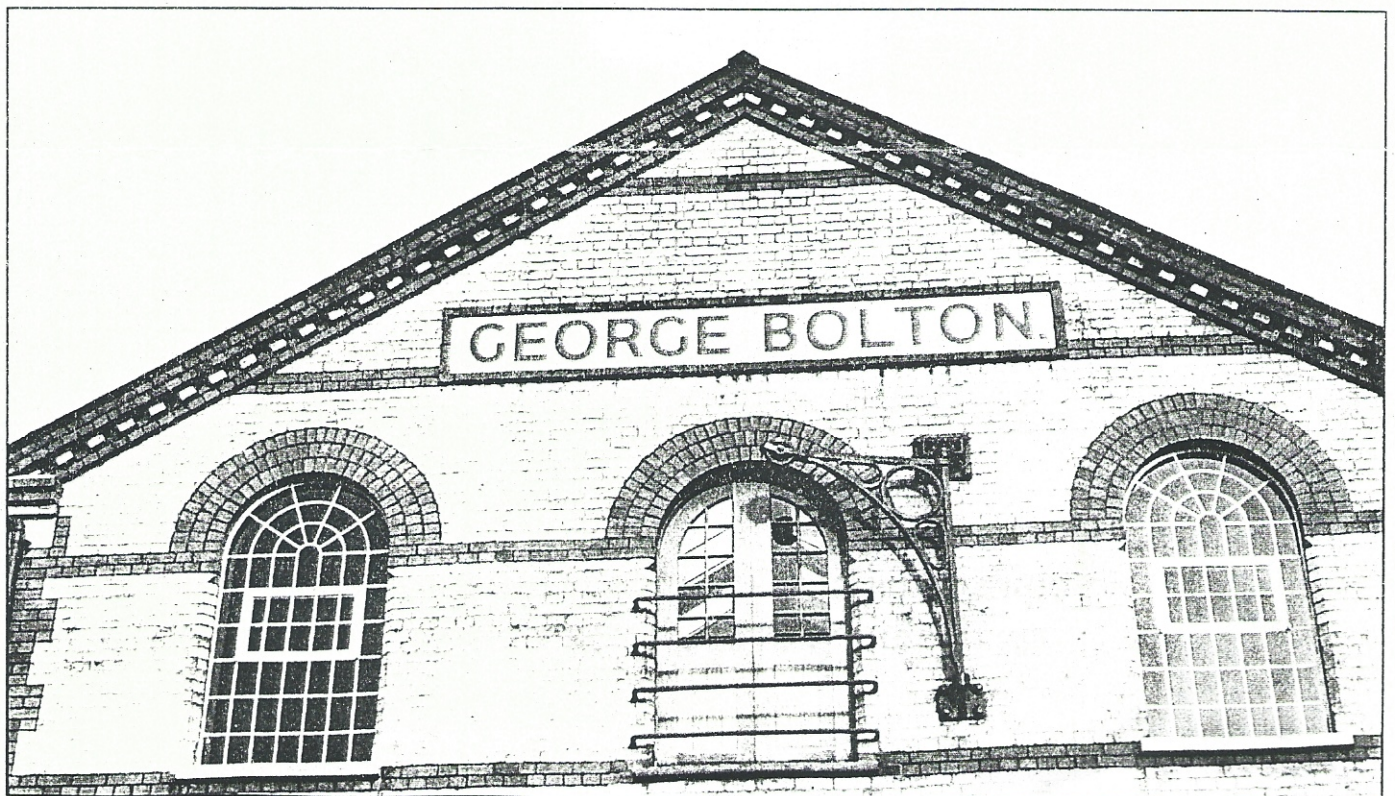
Eastern Touring Agency  
Would like to invite you to our opening  
on  
19th July 1996  
at  
6pm

Boltons Warehouse  
Tenison Road  
Cambridge  
CB1 2DG

To be opened by Anne Campbell MP  
Exhibition of Prints from Gresham Studio Ltd



RSVP Tuesday 16 July (call Neil on 01223 500202)



## **EASTERN TOURING AGENCY**

12D KINGS PARADE, CAMBRIDGE CB2 1SJ TELEPHONE: (01223) 300202 FAX: (01223) 301894  
e-mail: info@eta.eastern-arts.co.uk

**Please note:** from 19/2/96, our address is Boltons Warehouse, Tenison Road, Cambridge CB1 2DG  
Telephone: (01223) 500202 Fax: (01223) 576307

Allan G Brigham  
Clare House  
17 Romsey Road  
Cambridge  
CB1 3DD

25 July 1996

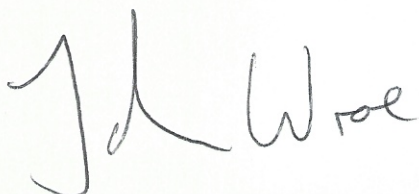
Dear Allan

What a splendid chap you are. I found your talk about the building very stimulating and I have not stopped telling people about it.

I have just moved to the riverside area. Where can I find out about the history of it?

Thanks ever so much for your help and support.

Best wishes



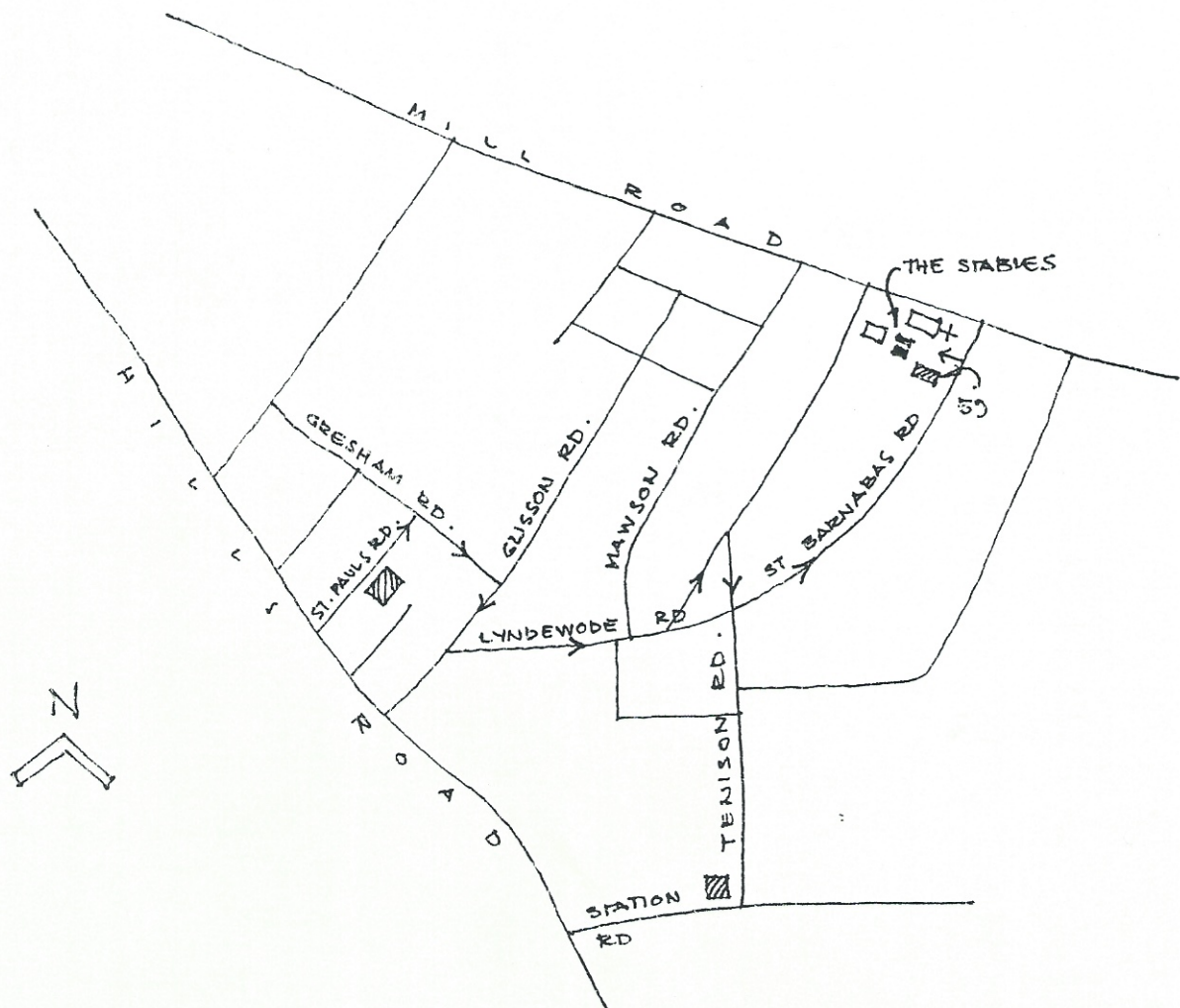
John Wroe  
Business Development Manager

## Cambridge Centre for Sixth-form Studies

The Stables at 59, St. Barnabas Road.

The Stables have in fact only been 'at 59, St. Barnabas Road' for a matter of months. For the first ninety or so years of their existence they had formed part of the Bolton's Warehouse site with access from the parallel Tenison Road. George Bolton had moved with his family into the Tenison Road area in the late nineteenth century and had established a flourishing haulage and removals company in the town. The Warehouse was built on a 'field and garden' site between 1901 and 1904 on the east side of Tenison Road with a stable block and yard to the rear. The stables had room for six horses; there was a harness room (there is still evidence of this use), stores for maize and oats, and in the yard a water pump (still there and about to be repaired). Horses were used for haulage until the 1940s. During good times seven or more people were employed at the yard. In leaner times one floor of the Warehouse was used as a roller skating rink to generate income! The premises were bought in 1955 by the Cambridge and District Co-operative Society as part of their furniture and removals business and sold on in the early '70s to the architect, Barry Gasson, who partially converted the north building into a dwelling and studio (Barry Gasson's other main claim to fame is as the architect for the Burrell Collection in Glasgow!).

The current restoration/conversion project is the work of Rosalind Bird, architect and Andrew Barnes, builder.



5 m 6. Grantchester Road

of its history

A more up-to-date version is contained in an article by Sarah Payne published in the Cambridge Weekly News Dec. 2 1982 in the "Down Your Street: Barton Road" series. Also this series was published in book form. A book has been published on the lake also by Mr. Roach of 77 Barton Road. Please contact him if needed.

## HISTORY OF THE BARCHESTER LAKE

This lake is known locally as Bolton's Pit and starts its history as a rubbish dump.

In the sixteenth century Cambridge citizens disposed of their household refuse, "muck, mire and filth", by scattering it outside their houses in the nearest lane or ditch. But as the result of constant visitations of the plague and the condemnation of their insanitary habits by the energetic Vice Chancellor, Andrew Perne, Master of Peterhouse, the Corporation accepted his recommendation. In 1575, rubbish pits called "dungells" were established just beyond the limits of the town (cf Cooper's Annals).

The rubbish pit in Fulbrooke Field was one of the earliest as it is not included by Cooper, but it cannot have been later, judging by such of the contents as can be dated. These include numerous clay tobacco pipes from the early seventeenth century, Nuremburg and other tokens, and a three handled pot with the date 1612. The earliest legal document relating to this piece of Fulbrooke Field is dated 1737.

This records that Anne Ostlar, widow of Cambridge, "in consequence ..... of the natural love and affection which she had towards William Ostlar (her son, a yeoman of Shelford) and for divers other good and valuable causes and considerations etc did grant bargain sell alien and release quit claim and confirm to the said William Ostlar and to his heirs and assigns for ever all that her Messuage or Tenement with the Barns Stables Yards Gardens Orchards Backsides Hedges Ditches fences ways easements and other appurtenances to the same belonging or in any wise appertaining as the same was situated standing and being in Grantchester and then or of late in the tenure or occupation of the said Anne Ostlar her undertenants or assigns Covenant unto and to the use of the said William Ostlar for quiet enjoyment free of encumbrances".

But William Ostlar did not derive quiet enjoyment for long, for in 1738 he "did grant bargain sell" etc. the land to William Gibbons (yeoman of Newton) in consideration of £24-10-0.

In 1762 "the said William Gibbons, innkeeper of Cambridge, left in his will" my freehold land tenements and hereditaments in Grantchester to my beloved wife Ann". Fourteen years later "Reciting that a marriage was by God's permission shortly to be had and solemnised by and between John Gibbons (son of William) and Elizabeth Goode the Messuage Tenements etc. were settled and assured to Elizabeth Goode as her jointure.

Towards the end of the 18th century a disturbed situation brought about several changes of ownership. This was largely due to The Enclosure Act "for dividing and enclosing the open and common fields, common meadows and other open and commonable lands and waste grounds in the parishes of Grantchester and Coton", which had been passed in 1779.

The work of the Commissioners is shown on the map of 1802. The land is described as adjoining the "bridle road and footway and private carriage road 20 feet broad from out of the village of Grantchester and extending in a northerly direction along Long Lane into and through and over allotments.....till it joins the turnpike road leading from Arrington to Cambridge near the toll bar".

The lands were allotted to Elizabeth Gibbons (nee Goode) already mentioned. James Forlow (of the Manor of Grantchester) and Edward Wright, yeoman of Grantchester. When Edward Wright died in 1821 he left his property to his sons Edward and Richard. A few years later these two sold the land to James Clabbon, a builder and bricklayer of Cambridge.

This is recorded in a deed of 1825 at the Court of the Manor of Grantchester with Cotton, Edward and Richard Wright making "absolute surrender" of their land in Fulbrooke Field "together with all the Trees Hedges Ditches Fences Ways Paths Passages Waters Watercourses Rights Priveleges and Appurtanences what so ever.....and of all the Estate Right Title Interest Inheritance Use Trust property possession benefit ABSOLUTE USE AND BEHOOF OF James Clabbon his heirs and assigns for ever according to the custom of the said Manor".

It may be presumed that James Clabbon was not a learned man (his son John who disposed of the land later could not sign his name) and having paid £400 of lawful money of Great Britain and paid his several Fines and Fealty for the absolute purchase of the pieces of land he may have assumed from the above legal verbiage that he could do what he liked with his property.

But he soon found out his mistake. since in 1827 he was summoned before the Lords of the Manor in the Special Court Baron and Customary Court of the Right Worshipful George Thackeray D.D., Provost of Kings College, and "It was found by the Homage that the same James Clabbon soon after the pieces of land had been surrendered to him.....commenced digging and converting into bricks the earth found up on the said pieces.....without having first obtained a licence from the said Lords of the Manor.....whereby the said pieces of land.....became forfeited to the said Lords of the Manor. And therefore came into this Court Thomas Bond, yeoman of Cambridge, (who had married Eliza Clabbon) one of the devisees in trust of the said pieces of land named in the last Will and Testament of the said James Clabbon (who hath since departed this life) and in open court admitted and acknowledged the forfeiture and agreed to pay the Lords of the Manor £221-10-0 in satisfaction for the same and for the value of the bricks made upon the premises to this day. In consideration where of the Lords of the Manor dispensed with and waived the said forfeiture so incurred and discharged the said James Clabbon his heirs executors and administration from all claims in respect there of".

The Lords of the Manor seem to have had doubts about the success of the brick-making enterprise and imposed many restrictions, especially enjoining Thomas Bond to replace "the uncallow ground of the depth of 12 inches so that the ground thereafter be converted into any purpose of husbandry". But Thomas Bond was licensed to make bricks, paying to the Lords of the Manor 1/6d for every 1000 bricks yearly.

All did not go well. There were transfers and loans and mortgages. In 1849 Sarah Clabbon went bankrupt and three years later Thomas Bond died. In 1853 the property was put up for auction at the Bull Hotel, Trumpington Street, Cambridge. The property is thus described :-

"A valuable allotment of arable land a large part of which contains Fine Brick Earth situated in the romantic lane leading from the Barton Road to Grantchester being the adjoining field to the present brick kilns containing 7a 2r 0p more or less. Together with the two brick and tile cottages thereon the whole let to Mr Wright at the reduced rent of £25 p.a.....".

Mr William Crowe, Gent. of Gonville House, Cambridge, who was already an owner of a part of Fulbrooke Field, attended the auction and purchased the lot for £546. He died in the same year, leaving his property, brickyard, cottages and land in trust for his wife Eliza.

The surrender to Eliza Crowe is attested by John Clabbon yeoman of Sparham, Norfolk.

Henceforward there is much legal activity with transference of one, two or three portions of the land (some freehold, some copyhold) which are difficult and unprofitable to trace. There are at least 10 title deeds dated 1853 mostly relating to William Crowe and his wife Eliza. Amongst these transactions we first read the name of Edward Bolton, contractor of Newmarket Road who bought pieces of land, one of which is described as a brickyard. This land was purchased from Ada Harriet Coleman daughter of Francis Freeman of Stableford in 1862.

But there is nothing of special interest until 1888 when more land was bought by Bolton from Freeman himself for £822 and described as a brickyard. Brick making started up again and continued for the next 10 years or so as many rows of small houses of pale bricks in the neighbourhood bear witness.

A contemporary map shows brick kilns adjacent to Grantchester Road. The remains of these kilns were discovered when No.6 Grantchester Road was being built in 1922.

Edward Bolton built stables and an office closer to Barton Road. These later became the garage of the Toll Bar house when it was built in 1911.

Bolton enclosed his land with a privet hedge on its eastern boundary (parallel with Grantchester Road) and with a fence, later submerged, along its northern boundary (parallel with Barton Road) and he marked their junction with a boundary stone inscribed 1893.

Possibly the Bolton diggings approached and released underground springs for the water level gradually rose and what had been a damp swamp became a pool. Elderly residents recall how when they were boys they had spent Saturday afternoons hunting water snakes in the reeds. Possibly Bolton dug out all the usable gault. On the whole, Bolton's brickmaking was not financially more successful than Clabbon's more than a half a century earlier for it is only a few years before the land was heavily mortgaged to the Capital and Counties (or Fosters) Bank for £2000 and brick-making came to an end about 1900.

In 1908 the Bank as mortgagees sold the land to Clement Hobson of Westminster and not long afterwards it passed in two stages into the possession of the Smart family, clothiers, tailors, and woollen drapers and J. Smart, solicitor. The first part was the plot of land at the end of Fulbrooke Road which was bought for £1250 in September 1909. The lake property was subsequently acquired in June 1911 for £1000. The site was used as a country retreat by the Smarts who built a two storeyed summer house at the south-west corner of the lake.

The Smarts were kind and generous landlords and allowed their neighbours access to the lake for bathing, fishing and skating only asking for notice to be given if there were unauthorised fishers and bathers there.

For the next 20 years the lake itself remained much the same but housing development occurred along Grantchester & Barton Road. Ten houses were built in Grantchester Road between 1922 and 1926, occupying the space between "Toll Bar" and "Sunnvend" (No. 26). Almost all the gardens extended as far as the fence and hedge and none of them had access to the water. During the same period houses also appeared on Barton Road, some with gardens extending down to the edge of the lake. As Bolton's original boundary fence had by this time become submerged, some of these houses acquired a small strip of water but the lake as a whole remained Smart property. However it was not until the mid 1950's that Barton Road became completely screened off by houses and gardens.

The earliest reference to skating relates to the Cambridge University Figure Skating Club which leased the pit in 1900. At this time the water level was gradually rising. Not much is known about the activities of this Club which subsequently transferred its attentions to the lake at Madingley Hall. When the water rose to the level of the water table it probably froze less frequently for the ice to be safe. During hard and prolonged frosts however there were periods of good skating. Notable occasions were the winters of 1929-30, 1939-40 and in 1947. One visitor was Mr Fiddian, Headmaster of Kings College Choir School, who used to bring a party of boys. Before he allowed them on the ice he used to drill a hole to determine the thickness. Only if he deemed it safe were his pupils allowed to skate.

Swimming did not become popular until about 1934. Thereafter more people, young and old became regular swimmers during the summer months. Over the years there have been many estimates of the depth of the lake, some wildly exaggerated. In the early 1920's the Misses Cornwell who ran the Grantchester Street Post Office warned one small resident "Don't you go too near that pit, its eighty feet deep, you know!". More recently a local newspaper gave the depth as 40 feet when reporting a skating accident in 1969. Incidentally this would appear to have been the only occasion when skaters actually went through the ice, fortunately without serious consequences. The true depth of the water lies between 12 and 14 feet. This was carefully established by Mr Winship, Estate Agent and Tilemaker who lived at No.93 Barton Road, using a plumb line from his boat. Various people have recorded similar measurements. It was Mr Winship, incidentally, who introduced the water lilies in the NW corner of the lake. These were given by a friend of his from the Botanic Garden.

In the early 1920's the Smarts built a row of tennis courts on the south side of the lake behind the houses in Fulbrooke Road. These courts were used by several local clubs and became very popular. There was one minor hazard however. High balls tended to go over the netting and ended up in the water. Even if they could be retrieved they were seldom suitable for future use. Soon after the outbreak of World War II the courts were converted to vegetable and fruit growing in a "dig for victory" campaign and were never re-established.

The O.S. 25 inches to the mile map dated 1886 shows two windpumps, one at the NW corner and one at the SE corner of the swamp area which subsequently formed the lake. When the next survey was undertaken in 1919, the second pump had disappeared. The first pump is labelled "disused" and a new pump is shown at the SW corner of the lake. This windpump had broken down during the First World War and was never repaired. The sails remained in place until about 1930 when they were blown off in a violent gale. The tower continued to provide a great climbing attraction for children with an excellent view of the lake from the top. The remains of the windpump disappeared early in World War II during a scrap metal drive.

Fairly early during the Smart ownership the lake was stocked with fish, mainly tench and pike. The latter provided excitement for anglers and a nine pounder is on record as having been landed.

The island has always been a source of interest. One hundred years ago there was a tongue of land extending from the eastern (Grantchester Road) edge of the then swamp. At some stage part of this tongue was dug away, leaving the tip to form an island as the water level rose. Before the surface became submerged, as it has been for the past 60 years at least, apple trees were planted. The stumps of some of these trees were visible until recently. The water level remains fairly constant except in times of flood or prolonged drought due to the underground springs and outflow into the Full Brook at the NW corner. The reeds provide a nesting area for swans, mallard, coot, moorhen and occasionally great crested grebe. Starlings, swallows and grey wagtails roost in the reeds at various times of the year. Reed and sedge warblers nest in the reeds surrounding the lake. Kingfishers are occasionally seen and nest in the western bank.

Charles Joel Smart died at the Evelyn Nursing Home in 1953 and the sister to whom the land was left died 9 years later when it passed to a brother, Kenneth Smart in Birmingham, who had no local interest in the property in Cambridge. There was much speculation about its future. There were soon rumours afloat that a developer had ideas of partially filling in the lake and erecting 39 dwellings on the site. Owners of property overlooking the lake felt that something must be done and quickly.

The initiative was taken jointly by Mr W.K.Lacey of Fulbrooke Road and Mr P.R.Quiggin of Grantchester Road who enlisted the help and advice of Messrs Carter Jonas. The latter were authorised to contact Mr K.Smart's solicitors, to make an offer and endeavour to get possession of the land. Negotiations were unsatisfactory. Whatever sum was offered the developers could outbid and the price eventually reached £13,000. The matter became urgent. On 16th July 1963 a meeting was called of those interested. Mr Lacey's drawing room was filled to overflowing with people sitting on the floor and having to stand. There was much discussion and possibly the hostility shown to the developers' plan discouraged them. Soon after the meeting Mr Harry Carter Jonas reported that there was a prospect of £13,500 being accepted. It was, and the conveyance was signed on October 4th 1963.

Pat Lacey and Paul Quiggin went ahead and became joint owners of the site with equal shares. To pay off the considerable amount of money that needed to be borrowed for the purchase, parcels of land were sold to a few local residents so that their gardens could be extended to the edge of the lake. The land at the end of Fulbrooke Road, which had been used as an orchard by the Smarts, was sold at the end of 1963 to St. Catharine's College. It was intended to build a block of flats for graduates, for which planning permission was obtained. For some reason the college abandoned its plans and sold the site to Messrs R and H Wade (of Gamblingay) who erected 9 flats in 1968 (Croftgate). Ten years later, during the freak floods in May 1978 the three ground floor flats were flooded to a depth of about a foot when the Brook overflowed into the lake and the water table rose very rapidly in 48 hours of almost continuous rain.

In 1968 Pat Lacey, a Fellow of St. Catharine's College, emigrated to New Zealand and sold his share of the remaining land and water to Paul Quiggin.

It was the Smarts' wish that the tranquillity of the lake be preserved and to this end the Barton Road Lake Association was formed in 1968. The owners of more than three quarters of the lake banks are bound in accordance with their title deeds while the owners of houses along Barton Road have pledged themselves voluntarily to keep the lake unspoilt. In Sarah Payne's "Down Your Street" article in the Cambridge Weekly News (2 December 1982) this organisation is referred to as the Lake Dwellers' Association. This title has also been used by John Gray in his book about Newnham and by Mr Urwin, the Chief Planning Officer of the City Council. It is not the correct name nor is it clear how it originated.

Unfortunately the aims and objects of the Barton Road Lake Association have not been fully achieved. In one case a 60 foot length of reed bed has been completely destroyed and replaced by a hideous concrete structure, thus damaging the rural aspect of the lake surroundings. This was clearly in breach of the Covenant.

The following is a summary of the main clauses in the Covenant:-

1. That nothing be done on or around the lake that might damage its rural aspect or its surroundings.
2. No trees to be cut down or lopped within 20 feet of the lake, without permission of the lake owners.
3. No buildings to be erected within 30 feet of the water.
4. Nothing must be deposited in the lake and no attempt made to alter its boundaries.
5. Powered craft not permitted.
6. No radios, record players or musical instruments allowed on the lake.
7. No shooting of game or fowl.
8. No permit should be granted to a third party to use a boat or carry out other activities such as bathing, fishing etc.
9. No trade or business whatsoever maybe carried out on land bordering the lake.
10. Nothing should be done which might be a nuisance or cause annoyance to the owners of adjoining property.

712008

CAMBRIDGESHIRE EDUCATION, LIBRARIES & HERITAGE

MEMORANDUM

214 Fri week

To Alan

From Chris Johns

Date 30.1.1999

Subject Bonto's

We have just received this  
among a donation of  
dozens of Temperance photos  
I expect you to be able  
to tell me the name of  
the note!

Chris



# Local History

M A G A Z I N E

No.54 – March/April 1996

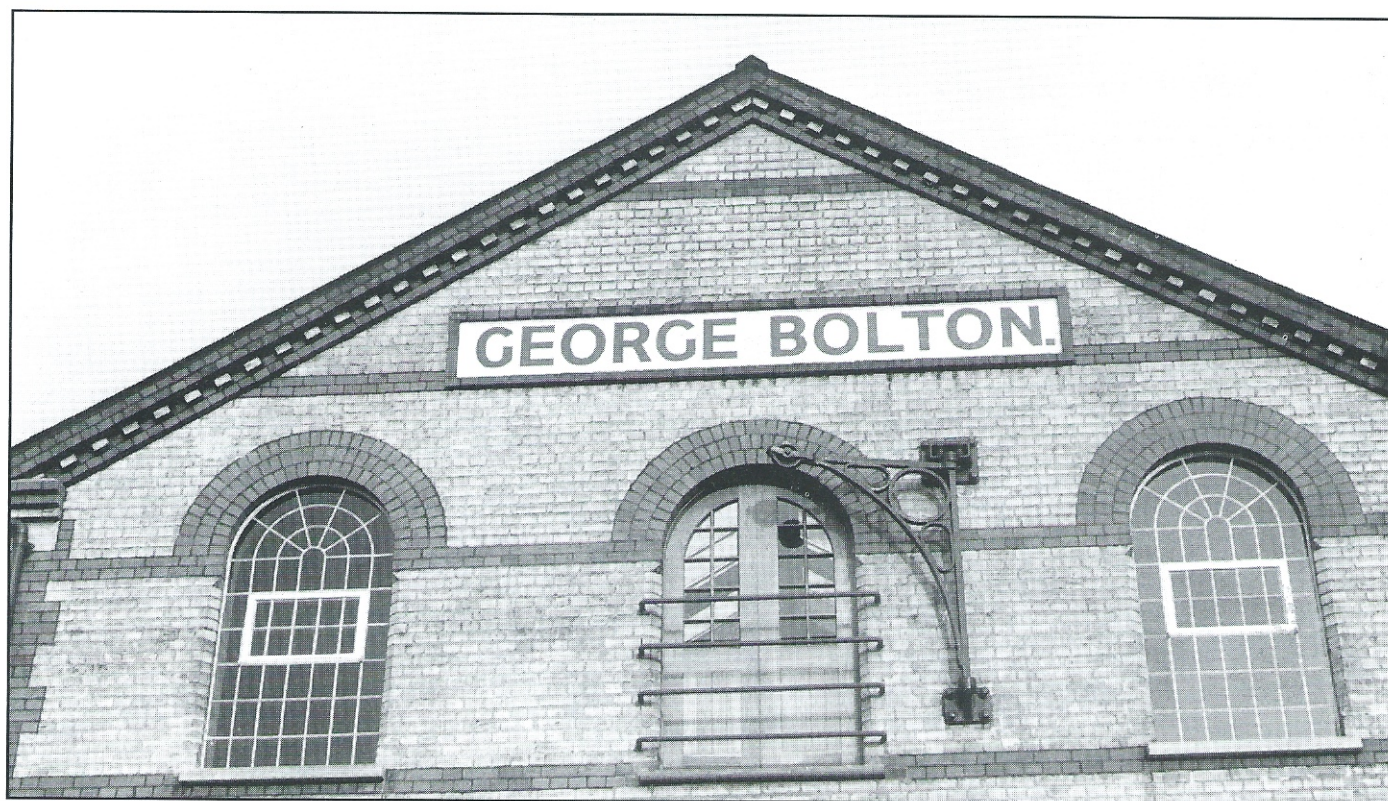
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In search of a 'Pantehnicon'

Surfing the Internet

Tackling Optical Character Recognition



# The pleasures and diversions of local history

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Allan Brigham

One evening last year the telephone rang:

'Mr Brigham? My name is Marcus Johnson. I have bought Bolton's Warehouse in Tenison Road and I am converting it into offices. I understand that you are an expert on the area. Can you tell me when the warehouse was built and what it was used for.'

I wasn't an expert then. I know a bit more now.

Tenison Road is part of the network of streets where I live. They were built around the railway line in the late 19th century on what was then the outskirts of Cambridge. I had visited the County Record Of-

fice in the past to pester the staff for information about the area. On the basis of these visits the archivist had described me as 'an expert'.

Bolton's Warehouse looms above the surrounding terraces. It has looked unused for the twenty years that I have cycled past it. The long-dead proprietor's name was inscribed on the wall in fading paint and I had frequently made a mental note to discover who 'George Bolton' was. I had assumed that it would be easy — a visit to the Local Studies Library or the Record Office would quickly fill in the details. The new proprietor's request for information acted as a spur to this latent

intention and I agreed to help him.

If I had known what was going to be involved I would probably have turned away the inquiry.

I had thought that a quick look in the Rate Books would identify when the warehouse was built and who had purchased the land. I had hoped to supplement this with information from a series of articles that had been published on the streets of Cambridge in the local newspaper. Both sources had been reliable in the past.

Unfortunately the Rate Books for the years around the turn of the century had not been kept. And although there was an article on



**Bolton Brothers' Tunnel Wagon in Union Road, Cambridge. George Bolton Snr or his son Tom is nearest to the wagon.**

'Tenison Road' in the newspaper files Bolton's Warehouse was not mentioned.

My 'quick' research that I had naively thought would be completed in a Saturday afternoon eventually took six months.

I scoured through old Street Directories. There were advertisements for 'George Bolton: Furniture Remover & Warehouse' — and for 'Edward Bolton', 'Bolton Bros.', and 'Boltons'. All claimed to be 'Carters', 'Carriers' and 'Furniture Removers'.

Who were all these Boltons? Were they related? They certainly did not appear to have much to do with each other. The advertisement for 'Bolton Bros.' firmly stated that they were 'in no way whatever' connected with the nearby office of 'E. Bolton'.

—I wrote to the local newspaper asking readers for help.

Replies came from two elderly ladies whose fathers had worked as horsemen for George Bolton. One remembered feeding the horses stabled at the rear of the warehouse. The other recalled her father borrowing the firm's horse and wagon to move his own family across town.

Another reply came from someone who had been at school with George Bolton's grandson seventy years earlier. Letters around the country following that lead eventu-

ally led me back to Cambridge with the discovery of George Bolton's granddaughter, at 80 still living in a nearby village. She was very hesitant when first approached but, once confident that I wasn't really trying to sell double-glazing, invited me to her home to talk about her family and to produce some faded photos of removals men and vehicles. With this information I went back to the Record Officer to search the 19th century Census returns.

I eventually discovered that George Bolton was part of a local dynasty of Carters and Furniture Removers. His father, Thomas Bolton, had moved to Cambridge from Hertfordshire in the 1840s, probably attracted by the opportunity of employment on the railways with whom he became a porter. The family settled in the newly built streets around the Railway Station, and remained associated with this area for one hundred years.

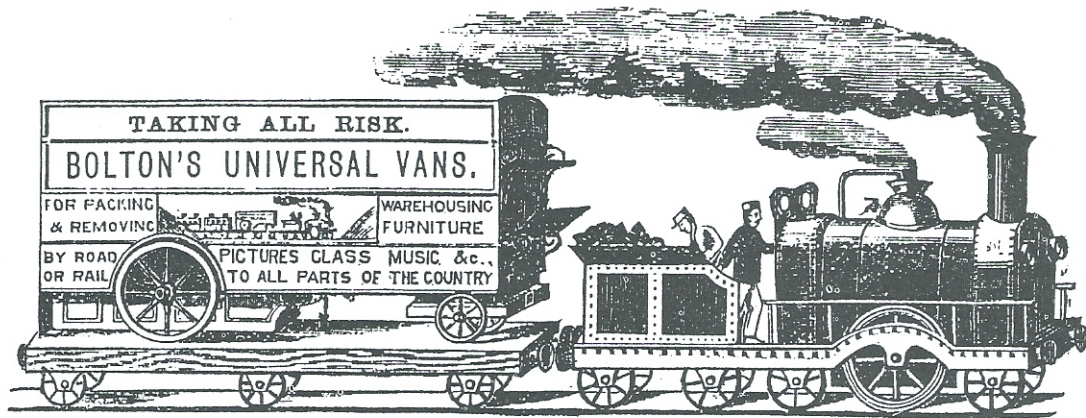
At sometime in the 1860s or 1870s Thomas left the railway company and set up business on his own, carting for the Corporation and moving and storing furniture. One of his four sons established himself in the same trade independently while the others worked with their father. For unknown reasons George Bolton, already 50, dissolved the partnership with his brothers in the early 1900s and started afresh. 'Edward Bolton', 'George Bolton', 'Bolton Bros.' and 'Boltons' were all members of the same family.

There were no surviving business accounts or family papers but I had discovered a little about who the Bolton's were, and a little about how the business had operated. The recollections of the now elderly children of those who had last worked at the warehouse combined pride at parental virtues with hints of some of the drawbacks involved in working for a small business.

It was a family affair. Fathers worked with sons, wives helped to manage the paper work. Office and home were frequently the same building. This provided a strong sense of involvement. It could also lead to tensions. It could be hard for the women, expected to organise the family and to run the office. Personal tensions might erupt. Money was always an issue. The family assets were those of the firm and sons, daughters needed to be provided for. What was established by one generation could very easily be divided by the next.

Beneath the family were the staff. Their wages only allowed for a very modest standard of living. It was heavy work. What happened to someone who sprained his back? How long would his job be kept open, and what would he live on if he became unemployed? The fathers of two of my informants had been horsemen. They obviously loved the animals and were not happy with the new 'motors'. Changing technology may make a task more economically efficient but there are always conse-

ESTIMATES FREE.



## BOLTONS, CARRIERS AND CONTRACTORS

For the removal of all kinds of Furniture, Machinery, Corn, Coal and Property of every description by Road, Rail or Sea to any part of the World.

VANS LENT TO THE TRADE BY DAY, HOUR, OR OTHERWISE.

Nos. 11 & 26, UNION ROAD, CAMBRIDGE.

quences for people. A skilled worker in one field may not be able to adapt to another.

Then I received in the post an old press cutting from the 1970s. It recorded how one of Bolton's horse-drawn Pantehnicons had been discovered in a barn near Cambridge and bought by a Mr William Hamilton of Leeds, who still used horses for his removals business. There were pictures of the wagon being hauled up the A1 by two giant Clydesdales. The journey took seven days.

A phone call to William Hamilton's 1973 address found him still living there. He was delighted to talk about the wagon and welcomed me when I went up to Leeds to see him. He has now retired but the wagon still stands in his yard in a street of semi-detached houses, full of straw for his remaining horses. He lovingly explained the details of its construction.

Called a 'Pantehnicon' or 'Tunnel Wagon' the design dated to the 1870s. It was developed to take advantage of the new railway system, and derived its name from the tunnels that it had to pass through. Instead of long journeys over badly surfaced roads furniture was loaded onto these specially designed wagons and hauled to the nearest railway station by horse. It was then run-off an end platform onto a goods-truck, before being tested un-

der a loading gauge equipped with bells adjusted to the height of the tunnels on the route. If the bells rang when the waggon passed through then the load was too high and the wagon would be pulled down onto its springs. The first Containers?

Under layers of rust and paint Hamilton had found on the axles:

'Kirkstall Forge, Leeds

August 1877'

This particular wagon had come home.

We talked all day about the logistics of moving furniture and about how Hamilton had become involved in the business. He had originally delivered firewood by horse and cart in the late 1940s when everyone still used open fires. As the trade slowly diminished he looked for other openings, eventually deciding that furniture removals in an urban setting would be as cost effective with horses as with 'motors':

'I've stuck up for the horses, you see, I've been on the side of the horses. I got hooked on them when I was only 14, and I could see them in 1944, 1945, going, they were disappearing, everybody was getting motors. And I liked the horses you see.

'I wouldn't be interested in carrying on if it wasn't for the horse. I've tried it with motors. Oh it's dull! Its a right uninteresting job is carrying on! But the horse just puts the top on it, like the icing on the cake.'

Coming from Cambridge with its

Advert for Bolttons in the *Spalding Cambridge Almanack* for 1879.

High-Tech industries it was difficult to believe that William Hamilton had nearly made it into the 21st century using horse-drawn transport.

When I returned from Leeds the builders at last considered it safe to let me into the warehouse.

It was a sympathetic conversion. On the three floors where 'homes' of furniture had once been stored were now three large open-plan offices equipped for the latest computers. And at the rear of the warehouse was the stables where the horses and Pantehnicons had once been kept. These had been converted into accommodation by an architect who had used the warehouse in the 1970s as a design studio. His wife still lived there. We discussed how her husband had designed one of Scotland's major museums in this Cambridge backstreet — The Burrell Gallery in Glasgow.

I never did discover in what year the warehouse was built, although I placed it between 1904 and 1906. The builder remains unknown. But from all the fragments that I had discovered I did write a brief 'Record' of the Warehouse and its occupants.

What had I achieved? I had discovered who George Bolton was, and a little about his family. I had discovered what the Warehouse had been built to store.



Left: William Hamilton driving George Bolton's Pantechnicon from Babraham to Leeds in 1979. Photograph courtesy of Cambridge Newspapers Ltd.  
Below left: George Bolton's Tunnel Wagon during restoration by William Hamilton.



I had discovered in the Pantechnicon the link between furniture removals and the railway. This probably explained why the warehouse was sited in these streets near the railway station. And the link between 'Carriers' and the railways probably explains the impulse that led Thomas Bolton, railway porter, to establish his own business.

Along the way I had connected three surviving local features to the Boltons — my warehouse, another nearby whose origins were long forgotten and a lake that had once been a pit where one of the brothers made bricks.

But perhaps the most interesting

part of the research was meeting William Hamilton in Leeds. His practical experience had provided insights into how the pantechnicon had been used. As absorbing had been his description of the logistics of running a business delivering firewood in the post war years. His entire working life had been at the margins of the formal economy. But he had survived. With horse-drawn transport. He deserves a fuller record. And he made me wonder how many others there were like him in the past whom we might easily never notice.

The deadline for the opening of the warehouse as offices led me to

put all these fragments together. Without that deadline I would probably still be following-up connections — the Boltons; Removal Firms; Brick Making; working conditions of the staff; the architect of The Burrell; Leeds in the 1940s and 1950s.

A proper history would have placed the Boltons in the broader context of the local haulage business and the community that they lived in. It would have compared the design of the warehouse with others being built elsewhere at the time. It would have assessed the Pantechnicon in relation to what it replaced and what it was replaced by. I haven't written a history but perhaps it will be of use to a future local historian.

If I had not had that phone-call six months earlier I would never have been prompted to at last discover who 'George Bolton' was. In a few more years no-one would have been left alive who could remember and the old photographs would have been discarded.

I enjoyed my research. The new proprietor of the warehouse was pleased. His tenants now have copies to display to visitors. George Bolton's grandchildren were pleased — the past is quickly forgotten, even within families. I hope that I have placed a little piece of Cambridge in its context. Perhaps someone else will find my fragments and use them as a footnote in a fuller picture of Cambridge in these years.

And lessons? You have to 'make' time. The records that you think will be available invariably are missing. People don't live for ever. Talk to them while they are still alive. Conversation can give you a flavour of how people felt about their lives that you will not find elsewhere. You can verify the facts later.

I am still not an 'expert'. But I have learnt a little more than I knew this time last year. And the knowledge makes living in these streets a little more interesting.

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