



Boys on the Riverside at Brundall 1937 –1939

(just before the Second World War)

By the age of eight my cousin Ben Casson would take me fishing down Riverside in *Hobro's dyke* and the main river. From the age of nine to ten I was allowed more freedom and joined in with other Brundall boys in many activities - canoeing, fishing, exploring the marshes and swimming from the quay heading behind the Yare Hotel.

The road from Brundall station to Coldham Hall, which was not much more than a track at this time, had a number of places where one could fish or launch a canoe into the main river – one such space was just as you got to Coldham Hall ferry. My parents would come down at the weekend and we would all walk there and cross the ferry for a family day out.

There was a grassy area for kids like me to play on and there was a huge swing that I can remember well.

One thing that is still very clear in my mind was a thatched barn which was virtually situated in the middle of the marsh and one of the activities the boys enjoyed was to run out to this barn, you had to run otherwise you went through the sedge [*coarse marshland grass*].

There were always barn owls there. Of course it's now long gone, swallowed up by one of the boatyards. The plot behind the Yare Hotel, where Charlie Gibbs' boat shed was, is where I learnt to swim at the age of nine with the aid of an old car inner tube and a bit of encouragement from the more senior boys.

The words of Hubert Buttrum, born in 1929.

He lived in Station New Road, Brundall.

This is a transcript of his spoken memories, recorded on 27th February 2006



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Boys at the Brundall riverside looking towards Coldham Hall in 1919

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By 1940, James Hobrough, a dredging contractor and property developer, had acquired some 43 acres of land near the river. Hobro's Dyke was formed when he cut a half-mile 45ft wide dyke with a yacht basin from the Yare and created bungalow and mooring plots along its length.

After his death in 1946 the plots were sold off to private individuals. An aerial photograph taken in 1959 shows that they had already rapidly developed.

This aerial photograph was taken in 2005 by Mike Page ©