



4. Ber Street, Lakenham, buses, driving cattle etc

Ber Street was also a main thoroughfare, which did have its disadvantages in that it wasn't a cobbled street as such - I think it was probably granite setts - but it did have a sett surface, you know, made of blocks, which made it noisy and quite slippery at times in the wet. The other thing that used to happen, because at that time the Cattle Market was where Castle Mall is, and I think some of the cattle used to come in by rail to Trowse and the drovers used to herd the cattle through Ber Street on a Saturday morning to the Cattle Market. Cattle, sometimes sheep, they would drive these up the street, and they didn't used to keep them off the paths either, but the thing that used to really get to my dad was, he would have his shop with his display of fruit and veg outside and of course the animals would come along and think, "I'll have some of that!" so you had to fend them off when they came through the morning. But it was pretty much a major road at that time and quite a lot of traffic, almost four lanes, quite a wide road compared with others. **Ray Hannent**

We lived in Lakenham when I was a boy. There were two buses - the Corporation buses were coloured a dark blue and were cheaper than the Eastern Counties buses. My father was unemployed, as so many people were then, and at one time we - mother, father and two children - were living on sixteen shillings a week National Assistance. So if the Corporation bus was a penny and Eastern Counties tuppence, we'd get the blue bus, which came into Norwich via Ber Street, where mother would do a bit of shopping then go in to Woolworths and Peacocks Stores. My mother was absolutely terrified of cattle and

as a small boy I vividly remember her dragging me into shop doorways or dodging into a shop and turning her back, because the cattle were being driven along Ber Street from the cattle market, by two or three men aided by small boys with sticks "bullock-wopping".

Denis Kirkham

We could play in the streets, cricket and so on, because there were no cars no speak of. If you saw a black car that was the police or a doctor and you used to chase it along the street and of course the biggest excitement was when there was a fire engine, like when the Parish Hall caught fire.

Tony Grey

When I was a kid I used to go down and earn thruppence on a Saturday driving cattle through from the Trowse goods yard up Ber Street to the Cattle Market. They used to come up King Street as well; up to the lights in Rose Lane, turn left and you were in the market. Round that area there were also what they called the "4 o'clock houses" - if a pub was within a certain radius of the market they were allowed to stay open longer on Saturday afternoon, for the farmers and so on. There was a whole gang of us who used to go driving the cattle, the dealers would say, "Make sure you keep 'em down the side there, boy, don't let them go there," and so on. There wasn't a lot of other traffic around. I can remember Zaks first opening on the cattle market, in a caravan, and there all these other little tiny stalls, tea and coffee and so on. There was a chicken market too. The sheep market was down near the Shirehall. Sheep were brought in mainly by lorry.

Robert Kent