

through marriage to the Cornwallis family. The present house was said to be built for the Marquess Cornwallis in the late 1790s to a design by architect James Wyatt. It was altered beyond recognition at the turn of the last century, like so many other fine Suffolk homes. It would be nice to think the amateur artist Sir Nathaniel Cornwallis might have recorded the original hall for the benefit of future Cornwallises.

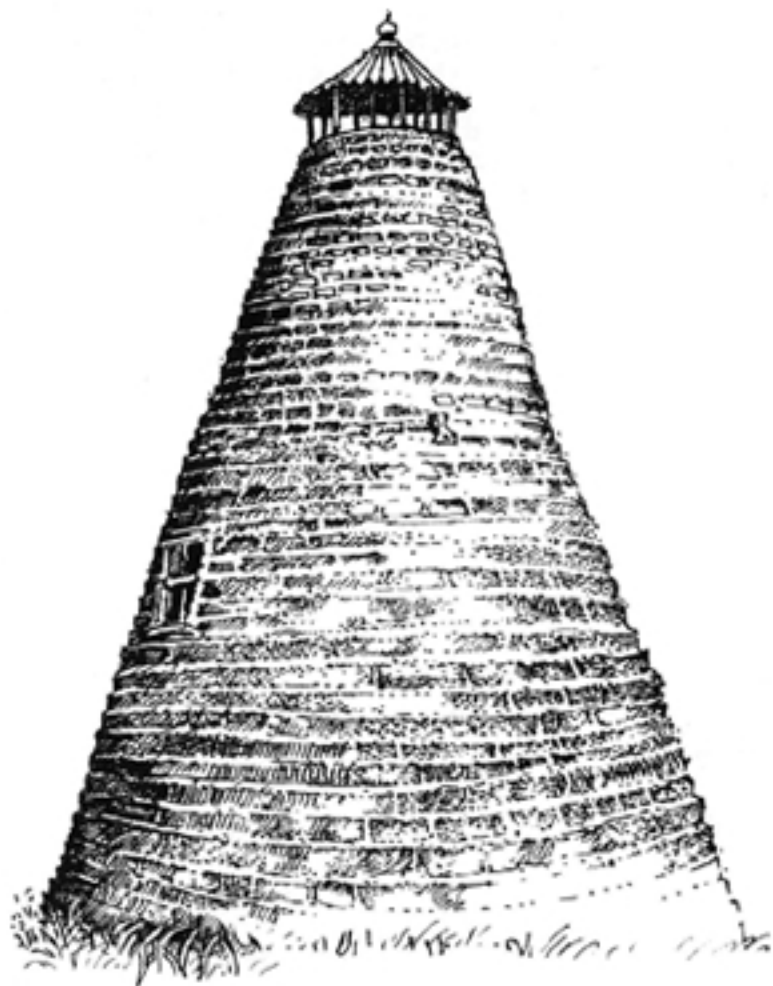
It is doubtful Charles Cornwallis ever crossed its portals. Charles was an army commander of some note. When the American War of Independence broke out he secured a victory at Camden, South Carolina, in 1780 but on 17th October 1781 he was forced to surrender his entire army to the American force at Yorktown, Virginia, sealing the independence of the American colonies. Not to be down-hearted, in 1786 he was appointed Governor-General of India and a decade later joined the viceroyalty of Ireland as Lord Lieutenant, but resigned in 1801 because of the King's refusal to grant Catholic emancipation. He negotiated the Peace of Amiens in 1802, and three years later he returned to India as Governor-General, but died shortly after arriving in the colony.

Around the time India was securing her independence from Britain, Culford Hall was being sold off, with the Forestry Commission purchasing the lion's share. The Methodist Education Committee bought the hall and park, which they converted into a school, which continues today. The church of St Mary, rebuilt in 1857, stands in the hall grounds where Humphry Repton worked his magic. At the base of the tower a bust of Sir Nathaniel, with painter's palette, languishes in the corner. The graceful chimney atop Chimney Mills (so called because it used steam as well as water), on the river Lark, would have made another good subject for him.



## DALHAM

The approach from Gazeley is through a green tunnel of every imaginable tree species, opening into an expanse of thatched and flint cottages with a brook running the entire length of this exquisite hamlet. Newmarket is close by, yet there are more links with brewers than horses. The Oast House standing like a stone beehive at the village centre would seem to prove that point. Turning left at the church sign takes you down another avenue of trees to St Mary's, surely without serious



*The Oast House, Dalham.*

competition in the 'most wonderful of settings' stakes. A memorial to Sir Martin Stuteville (who lived in Dalham in the 17th century) in St Mary's tells how he 'saw the new world with Sir Francis Drake'. When he gained his land legs, Stuteville was also responsible for replacing the 14th century church spire with a tower in 1627, when it fell down.