

FROM BLACK BELL TO BREWERY COTTAGE

May 2016

Thanks to one of our loyal supporters in Ipswich, Rowell Bell, our attention was drawn to an article describing the history of Ipswich-based accountants, Scrutton Bland, formerly Scrutton and Goodchild. Their story included this tale:

“The business prospered during the 1920s, and soon needed to move to larger premises on Museum Street. These offices had originally been the Black Bell Inn which was then knocked down to create a new building which opened in 1938, designed by Baker and Burton and built by H Everett and Son. The Black Bell had been a Cobbold’s pub, which sold locally-brewed Tolly Cobbold ale. The Cobbold family were an audit client of Scrutton and Goodchild, and every year a team of auditors would stay in a cottage in the grounds of the brewery, and on their arrival would find several crates of Tolly Cobbold, carefully labelled as ‘auditors’ samples’. Needless to say, this was an auditing job with no shortage of volunteers. One year the audit team were having a quiet afternoon and decided to liven things up by making paper planes. Aerobatics were in full swing when the door opened and one of the Cobbold family directors entered the room. Attempts to cover up what had been going on were futile – would this be the end of their favourite job? Far from it, Mr Cobbold enthusiastically picked up a paper plane and joined in”.

Note: Our picture by David Kindred shows the Black Bell at the junction of Elm St. and Museum St. in around 1930. It closed in 1936 but had been mentioned in the Ipswich Journal as early as 1752. One small correction is necessary; the ales sold at the Black Bell would have been Cobbold ales as the merger with Tollemache’s did not take place until 1957

