

## NOTES FROM THORNHAM

In March 2016 I wrote about the Low House in Thwaite\* which in the early 20th century was shipped in 688 crates to the USA and miraculously rebuilt by a team of specially imported English craftsmen as the High Low House. It always seemed likely that clever salesmanship, large amounts of money and vivid



*Low House, Thwaite, 1901*



*High Low House, Greenwich, Connecticut, 1924*

imaginings played a major part in the transformation from a derelict roadside inn to the immaculate “Oldest house in America” featured in *Country Life*.

Recently I found in the *Ipswich Evening Star and Daily Herald* of Friday 22nd January 1910 a report of a major fire in Messrs Girling’s yard in Wellington Street, Ipswich that sheds new light on the transformation:

*“A serious feature in connection with the outbreak is the partial destruction of an old Tudor house, which was formerly known as the ‘Low House,’ Thwaite, and situated in that small village on the Ipswich and Norwich turnpike, almost midway between the Norfolk and Suffolk capitals, forming a well-known landmark at the bottom of two hills. In the days of the stage coach this house was a well-known place of call for travellers, having the Queen’s Head for the sign. It was converted into a parish workhouse and eventually turned into a private residence. The chief feature of the building was its massive chimney stack of ornamental brick-work whilst the interior had some fine old oak beams and staircases. The local authorities condemned the building as unsafe, and it was eventually sold to Mr. F. Tibbenham, of Ipswich, who was having the frame-work reconstructed in Mr. Girling’s yard, previous to removal to a distance, where the completion and restoration of this quaint old house was to be carried out.”*

✱ All Notes from Thornham are now on [www.thornhams.org](http://www.thornhams.org)

**AUGUST EVENTS IN THE THORNHAMS** ● **Thurs 8th:** Mad Hatter’s Tea Party, Beyond the Wall, 11.30-2, see [www.beyondthewall.org.uk](http://www.beyondthewall.org.uk) ● **Thurs 29th to Sun 1st Sept:** Concert weekend, see <http://musicatthornham.org.uk>