DISS

Horseshoe around its mere, Diss is dominated by the church tower. Nothing should be allowed to upset the balance. Inside the town, the remarkable sequence from St. Nicholas's Street to the Market Place, 2 to 6, which falls through a series of squares, is unique.

Diss, Norfolk, is a small market town half way between Ipswich and Norwich. As yet unspoilt, it is something worth going a long way to see. Not so much for its industrial buildings as for its unique townscape. Built round the edge of a small green lake, The Mere (six acres in extent), the town is horseshoe round three-quarters of it and the remaining quarter is a public park (see plan). Not the usual polite municipal park of two flower beds and neat asphalt paths, but a relaxed, undulating meadow with good trees and a neatly uneven bank giving cover for duck and heron. From this park, the heavily battlemented tower of St. Mary's church is the focal point of the composition. It is on the north side of The Mere, where the ground rises steeply; in fact whichever way you look at Diss the church always dominates.

With a population static at around 3,600 for the last hundred years, and this stability...