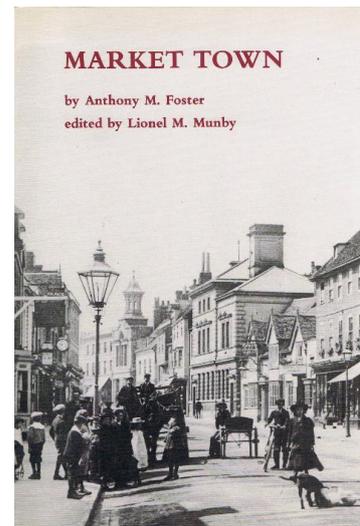


## WHAT WE WOULD HAVE SEEN ...

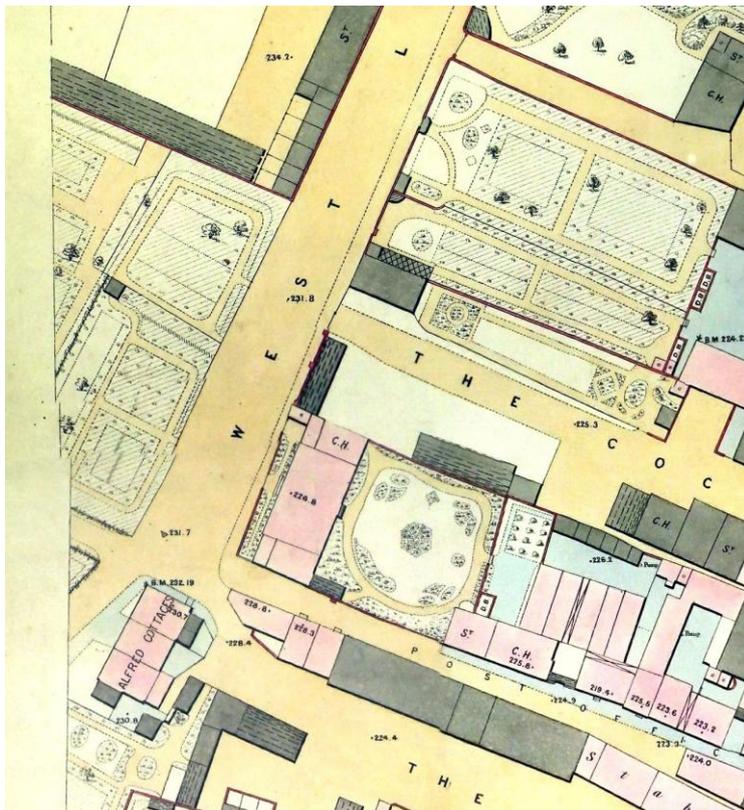
*if we had visited the LOCAL STUDIES ROOM,  
New Town Hall, Brand Street, on 4<sup>th</sup> April*

Hands-on research into Hitchin's history was central in founding the HHS in 1977. Over the previous quarter century Tony Foster, our first Chairman, was an inspiration, beavering away in our local records. Much of the material he used passed into the Hitchin Museum Collection. It was very appropriate, therefore, that the HHS gave a substantial donation to the setting up of the first Students' Room in Charnwood and that this was designated the Tony Foster Room.

Individual research needs end products so its significance can be more widely understood and used by those who follow. Much of Tony's work was encapsulated in his amazing book Market Town: Hitchin in the Nineteenth Century published in 1987. Tony's work boosted a tradition of HHS publishing which continues today.



Sadly, the Tony Foster Room was lost when Hitchin Museum closed in 2012. More positively, a Local Studies Room has recently been opened at the new Museum. This is now responsible for the large collection of Hitchin material which includes a wide range of items from manuscripts, maps and plans, printed reports, photographs and newspapers to intriguing ephemera.



**Extract, Board of Health OS Plans 1850 Paynes Park House  
(Hitchin Collection, North Hertfordshire Museum)**

If we had been able to visit this month the idea was to allow those attending to look at something – such as a building plan, a map or picture of their street or area, or material about an individual or subject of particular interest to them – to encourage them to investigate further and, who knows, write something for the Hitchin Journal - editor Simon Walker is always on the look out for such offerings.

It just remains to thank Keith Fitzpatrick Matthews for agreeing to help with the visit and Alan Fleck for all his long term work on the collection. We hope very much that we will be able to tap their time and enthusiasm in future Programmes. In normal times the Local Studies Room is open on Friday afternoons; please check before visiting.