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THE BOOK OF BLOFIELD AND HEMBLINGTON

REPRINT

PARISHES PORTRAYED

Barbara Pilch

The A47 runs through this pleasant village and leads to the sea. Once a turnpike road, it is lined with attractive villas. The magnificent tower of Blofield's late-medieval church stands as a landmark in the countryside where blue fields of woad once grew and heathland stretched seven miles out from Norwich.

Called at the time of Domesday, 'Blafelda', a site near a river, Blofield parish sits on fertile soil between the River Yare and beautiful areas of broadland, not far from miles of varied coastline. It has long been stewarded by market gardeners and farmers whose names live on across the locality.

The community life of Blofield, Blofield Heath, Hemblington and Pedham has been recorded from mesolithic times to the new millennium. In a valley at Hemblington traces of early potteries, trading posts and a Roman villa have been found. Plague left the round-towered church isolated, the community moving to Pedham where a 10-acre lake was once a popular place to visit for its waterfall and grottoes.

Through stories, photographs and illustrations drawn together from across the parishes, this book explores Blofield through to the twenty-first century and celebrates the past, present and future of a lively community.

Barbara Pilch moved to Blofield in 1978 when her husband became a village doctor. A teacher who has worked with children throughout the parish and been involved with the village church, Barbara has pieced together a picture of how life has changed in this cluster of villages. As she began to collect images and record the memories of older residents an exhibition grew and visitors said 'You should make it into a book'. This is the result. Barbara has also written *Windows on a Life*, a book about Margaret Harker, a remarkable Blofield lady.

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