

Burgh to Marsham

A walk in an ancient landscape littered with roman remains. Start outside Burgh-next-Aylsham church for a 5 mile walk across flood plains and rolling fields that link two small villages. We will see a Mermaid, fossil quoins, a shrunken village, an important trade route, a Georgian Country Estate, two churches, a brewery and some hammerbeams. Parking may be limited near the Church, but you should find somewhere in The Street, Burgh. *The walk can be shortened by crossing the road and turning right after step 8, missing out steps 9-12, rejoining at step 13. But you will miss the historic sights of Marsham!*

1. Start at the Church Gates. Opposite the Church, to the North is the site of a Medieval shrunken village where earthworks can still be discerned.
2. Go through the churchyard and cross the bridge to the South of the Church, over the Bure.
3. Go straight on through woods until you come to another small bridge; beyond the bridge up the hill to the left you can see Brampton Hall. Don't cross this bridge but turn right alongside the river.
4. About 50yds along the river there is another bridge which you cross, turning right immediately to walk alongside the brook (the Mermaid); you should now be heading towards a railway bridge on the westward path by the Mermaid.
5. Go under the railway bridge carrying the Bure Valley railway and continue along the bank of the river.
6. At the intersection with a minor road, go straight across and find the continuation of the path, slightly off-set to the left. This field can be quite boggy, but the path continues on, staying close to the left-hand boundary and away from the river.
7. The path continues for about 1.5km, bending slightly right at one point. A chicken farm eventually comes into view- head for the large cattle gate in the corner of the field where you will find a stile.
8. Keeping the chicken farm on the left follow the concrete road out of the farm and onto the main Aylsham Road at Grove Farmhouse. Opposite is "The Grange".
9. *Cross over the main road (care!) and enter the village of Marsham. Turn left to follow the course of the old A140 past the site of the Soame Iron Foundry which manufactured steam machinery and stood on the main road here.*
10. *At the end head right up Croft Lane to the Church.*
11. *Exit the Church through the churchyard past a plaque commemorating the RAF site from the 1914-18 war. Turn right on Le Neve Road towards Marsham High Street and then left, up the High Street past the village hall (formerly the Mutual Improvement Institute) to the school.*
12. *To the right of the school take a set of steps leading to a path to Fengate. At the end turn right and return downhill to the main road. Note the Fengate Brewery, scene of the famous BASSA live broadcast!*
13. At the main road go straight across and follow the track beside the main road until it intersects with the metalled road, where you turn right. This track was a part of the old toll road. The area to the right is Bolwick Park containing Bolwick Hall and Bolwick Hall Farm
14. Follow the by-road, across an intersecting road until you reach the Bure Valley Railway. Join the railway path (you may have to go left about 100yds to cross the railway) and follow it South to return to the railway bridge where you started.

Start at the Church Gates.

St Mary's Church, Burgh

This church has a remarkable Early English chancel with blank arcading with stiff-leafed capitals on freestanding shafts. In the north wall of the chancel a set of **fossil quoins** are visible, suggesting the church may date to the Late Saxon or Norman period. The church roof and nave date to 1877 and many of the windows have Perpendicular tracery. The west tower is also Perpendicular and has flushwork, and fleur-de-lys decorations on the battlements. Inside there are several fine 17th-19th century floor tombs and a carved Perpendicular octagonal font.

Opposite the Church, to the North is the site of:

Medieval shrunken village and multi-period pottery sherds, Church Lane

Aerial photographs taken in 1988 show the earthworks of square enclosure and the remnants of building platforms at this location. These show that Burgh-next-Aylsham was a shrunken medieval village. In 1993 a large number of pottery sherds were recovered from the site of the earthworks and these included pieces of Saxon Ipswich Ware, Roman greyware, medieval Grimston Ware and post medieval Red Glazed Earthenware. A re-evaluation of the shrunken village in 2002 showed the area was heavily overgrown, but local residents remembered the presence of fairly substantial earthworks previously.

Go through the churchyard and cross the bridge to the South of the Church

Part of Bure Navigation, built in 1775 to avoid Burgh Mill.

Still intact in 1993, with a ruined lock at centre.

Bure navigation canal opened in stages from 1775 to 1778 from Aylsham Staithe to Coltishall, partly by improving the existing river, partly by a series of parallel canals most of which have since become the main river course. Burgh Lock Cut was open by 1775. The New Cut east of Oxnead is a later addition of 1851, and Hautbois New Cut is of 1852. It was closed in 1928.

Go straight on through woods until you come to another small bridge; beyond the bridge up the hill to the left you can see Brampton Hall. Don't cross this bridge but turn right alongside the river.

Brampton Hall

17th century brick house, built on the site of an earlier medieval hall, the foundations of which have been discovered under the present building. The nearby barns date to the 16th century, and were associated with the earlier building. The present hall was remodelled in the 18th century.

Old Hall was pre 15th century and had stained glass, see source. Massive foundations found under stackyard south of present hall, red brick and flint foundations about 3m x 2m visible under lawn east of hall at time of visit. Building material and paving stone ploughed up

nearby. Present hall is brick, long, two storeys but reduced in height when thatched roof removed late 19th century.

West gable shows three blocked windows (fourth removed above) cut by Georgian windows. Three huge chimney stacks at rear. Apparently two main periods of building but both late 17th century. Perhaps a wing of a larger house, but no evidence for this. Plaque with date 1595 and inscription in west wall was brought from elsewhere.

Barns are older than house, and are of 16th century English bond brick, one with blocked moulded two light window, but much damaged by fire 1952 and rebuilt without thatched roofs. In rebuilding an original mason's trowel was found in mortar of wall.

Polished flint axehead found at or near Hall

The west wall of the hall has a flint plinth, as does the south wall at least in part.

It seems improbable that there was ever a fourth storey to the west gable wall, as the third window would have lit the attic.

Go under the railway bridge carrying the Bure Valley railway and continue along the bank of the river.

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The path continues for about 1.5km, bending slightly right at one point. A chicken farm eventually comes into view- head for the large cattle gate in the corner of the field where you will find a stile.

Keeping the chicken farm on the left follow the concrete road out of the farm and onto the main Aylsham Road at Grove Farmhouse. Opposite is "The Grange".

Grove Farmhouse, Norwich Road

An 18th century and later farmhouse. It is built of brick and has a concrete pantile roof.

Farmhouse, mainly 18th century, of red brick with concrete pantiles. Single pile extended with additional two storey pile to south, forming asymmetric gables. Single storey lean-to to west, and single storey wing with hipped roof to east. Façade three bays with central late 19th century half glazed door and porch with Ionic pilasters and cased columns. Projecting entablature with modillion cornice. High brick plinth of narrow bricks laid in English Bond. To the left of the door, two openings to the basement, (one blocked) with segmental brick arches. 20th century top hung casements in original openings with flat brick arches. Parapet gables with brick tumbling in and internal stacks. Flat roofed dormers with 20th century pivot windows with glazing bars. Monogrammed tie irons to west 'H.B.'.

The Grange, formerly the Willows

A 17th or 18th century and later house, formerly a farmhouse. It was built around 1700 and was extended around 1800. The original section is red brick and has two storeys, an attic and

a pantile roof. There is a sundial dated 1651 in the south gable; it may date the construction of the original section or it could come from an earlier building. The extension has two storeys.

Cross over the main road (care!) and enter the village of Marsham. Turn left to follow the course of the old A140 past the site of the Soame Iron Foundry which manufactured steam machinery and stood on the main road here.

Soame Perseverance Works

Ironfounder, engineer and machine sales. Ceased work in 1965. Partially demolished in the 1980s.

The iron smithy was set up here around the 1840s. When Samuel Soame took over the works in 1860 he expanded and developed it into an engineering firm. They are noted in their early years for manufacturing steam powered fairground rides and for pioneering the steam powered organ.

Around 1883 the site was expanded again with workshops for a carpenter and a wheelwright, so that the firm could broaden its range of products. In 1896 the firm finished making its famous steam powered car.

The firm focussed on the repair of steam engines up until 1940, 3 years after Soame Sr. had died, when the company was bought out by the Kent Brothers, who carried on in a similar fashion of work. In 1945 under the ownership of Underwood, the works made fairground engines again and in 1947 made agricultural machinery for Eastern Counties Farmers Ltd until 1965. After this, development at the rear of the site relegated it to storage space and the re-alignment of the main road left it in a cul-de-sac layby. The workshops were demolished some time in the 1980s and are now used as a car park. The original foundry still stands but its purpose is unknown.

Cross over the main road (care!) and enter the village of Marsham. Turn left to follow the course of the old A140 past the site of the Soame Iron Foundry which manufactured steam machinery and stood on the main road here.

At the end head right up Croft Lane to the Church.

All Saints' Church, Marsham

A 13th century and later parish church with a west tower, north aisle, south aisle, south porch, nave, clerestory, vestry and chancel. The south porch has a 13th century door and the north door is medieval. Most of the chancel dates to the 19th century restoration. Inside there is a **15th century hammerbeam roof** with later tie beams and binders, the remains of 15th century screen decorated with sixteen painted saints and a font that dates to about 1460.

Listing Description: Parish Church. 13th century and later, of flint with stone dressings and slate roof. West tower, north aisle, south aisle, south porch, nave, clerestorey, vestry and chancel. Two-stage tower with diagonal buttresses, 14th-century two-light windows, one-

light sound hole, two-light belfry openings with flowing tracery to north, and decayed or debased, to east, west and south. Chequered flint parapet. Five-bay north aisle with blocked western door, stepped buttresses and late 15th-century three-light Perpendicular windows. Five-bay south aisle with four late Perpendicular three-light windows with three centred stilted arches. South porch with diagonal buttresses with tall 14th-century doorway, one light windows and within 13th-century door to church. Five-bay clerestorey, with three-light Perpendicular windows with quatrefoil in shallow two-centred arch. Chancel with diagonal and angle buttresses, mainly 19th-century restoration with 19th-century windows. Lean-to vestry on north side with squint to west, and three-light window. Medieval north and south oak doors. North aisle with niche, piscina and doorway to Rood Loft stairs. Five-bay arcade with octagonal piers with base and capitals, possibly 14th century to south and 15th century to north. Fine 15th-century single hammerbeam roof with later tie beams and binders, reinforcing alternate trusses. Octagonal wall timber posts with bases capitals and arch braces, supported on carved stone corbels. Spandrels of some arch braces have tracery carved angels at the ends of the hammerbeams. South aisle with piscina at east end. Chancel arch with the remains of 15th-century screen, decorated with sixteen painted saints. Font on two steps, the upper decorated with pointed quatrefoils. Bowl with seven sacraments and last judgement. Poppyhead ends to restored benches. Chancel stained glass by Kempe.

Exit the Church through the churchyard past a plaque commemorating the RAF site from the 1914-18 war. Turn right on Le Neve Road towards Marsham High Street and then left, up the High Street past the village hall (formerly the Mutual Improvement Institute) to the school.

Village Hall

A mid 19th century improvement institute, now Marsham village hall. It was built in 1857 of red brick and has one storey and a black pantile roof. Extensions were added at the rear during the 19th and 20th centuries. Inscribed panels describe its former use and mention personalities involved with the institute.

Improvement Institute, now village hall, built 1857 of red brick and black pantiles. Single storey L-shaped plan. Façade three windows with central porch. Brick rusticated to corners and corbelled brick eaves. Three light casement windows with flat gauged brick arches with projecting key blocks. Rusticated brick quoins on porch with semi-circular gauged brick arch over entrance with blocked oculus above. Over the entrance an inscribed stone panel. End gable stacks. 19th and 20th century extensions at rear not of special interest. Inscription over the entrance door 'Mutual Improvement Institution'. To the left of the door tablets inscribed 'J. H. Warnes, May 10th 1859' and 'This Institute was established by George Shreeve, November 2nd 1857'. Bricks on porch variously inscribed, including 'Miss L. Warnes'.

To the right of the school take a set of steps leading to a path to Fengate. At the end turn right and return downhill to the main road. Note the Fengate Brewery, scene of the famous BASSA live broadcast!

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Medieval or post medieval road and post medieval tollhouse

The earthworks of an old road can be seen at this spot. There is also a post medieval toll house. This is an interesting case as the present road was made after (S1) was issued in 1838, is not part of the turnpike system yet appears to have its own little tollhouse in the middle. Diverted to extend park?

Bolwick Park

A small landscape park surrounding Bolwick Hall (NHER 7523) is shown on Bryant's map of 1826 (S1) and the Ordnance Survey 1st edition 1 inch map (S2) (although (S1) calls the hall 'Balwick Hall'). Both show that it was located between two streams (one or both are known as 'The Mermaid').

The park is shown in more detail on the 1880s Ordnance Survey 1st edition 6 inch map (S3). It included open parkland, a number of plantations (including Nut Plantation and Pond Plantation) and a large lake (called Mill Pond). By the 1880s it had grown in size and had spread to the north of the northern stream.

The extent of the landscape park in 1988 (see (S4)) was more or less the same as in the 1880s; compare (S4) with (S3). Two mounds (NHER 7485 and 11276) to the south of the Hall may be landscape features, although alternatively they could be Bronze Age round barrows.

The park is not shown on Faden's 1797 map (S5).

Bolwick Hall

This early 19th century grey brick house has three storeys and two storeys-and-attics. There is a central projecting porch with a moulded brick parapet. To the southeast is a later projecting wing. The one storey north wing has a castellated grey brick parapet. Inside is some late 15th century stained glass of the Norwich School. There is also a contemporary garden house and stable. The house is surrounded by Bolwick Park

Bolwick Hall Farm

An early 19th century red brick two storey farmhouse with a low-pitched slate roof and sash windows.

Follow the by-road, across an intersecting road until you reach the Bure Valley Railway. Join the railway path (you may have to go left about 100yds to cross the railway) and follow it South to return to the railway bridge and the path into Burgh where you started.