



Northrepps Airfield

This begins from Northrepps airfield for a 5 mile walk around the quiet lanes of Northrepps. you may experience fly-pasts on the way as part of the walk follows the runway. On the walk itself you will experience mild peril, take in the charm of an old iron-working village, learn about Esmarelda and her shrieking pit, pass through cornfields and shaded glens and see many fine houses. There is parking at the airfield and also a cafe (check opening times).

1. Begin at Northrepps aerodrome, just off the A149. Although a private field you should be able to park here is you are using the café!
2. Take the path to the left of the airfield, down a well-marked track and head towards Northrepps Church in the distance.
3. Cross the railway line at the designated crossing point. This is the mainline to Cromer, so extra care must be taken.
4. The track carries straight on across a field until it comes to a small track. Turn right here and follow the track..
5. At the junction turn left into the village and pass the church (A), noting the war memorial in the churchyard (B), and Church Farm (C). Just passed (C) was a foundry (D)
6. At the junction you will find many fine buildings including the Old Manor House (F) and a row of flint cottages (G). Turn right to pass the Foundry Arms (an alternative start/finish point for this walk).

7. Carry on out of the village ignoring turns to left and right, up Hungry Hill until you reach No 26 . Soon after this take a track beside a barn and through a farmyard on the right and follow this down. Soon you will encounter the Shrieking Pits (I).
8. After the Shrieking pits the path forks; take the right-hand fork towards a wood.
9. At the wood go straight ahead (not right) and through the wood. The path soon joins a track and heads down to Froghall.
10. At the road turn left. At a right-angled bend in the road a private drive heads into the Templewood estate (J) but you follow the road and pass Froghall Farmhouse (K) in the slight dip where you leave the road and turn right to follow a track.
11. The track meets a T-junction where you turn left, but be sure to take a slight detour to vie the fine Rectory (L), on your right.
12. Follow the track until it reaches a crossroads; go straight on and cross over the railway (a safer way back!). After the crossing turn right onto a track beside Southrepps Hall (M).
13. Follow this track beside a field which will lead you back to the airfield; just before you reach the end there is a path to the right which avoids going onto the main A148. The buildings ahead are Winspurs Farm (N)

Historical notes taken from the North Heritage Explorer website, unless otherwise stated

<https://www.heritage.norfolk.gov.uk/home>

A. St Mary's Church, Northrepps

A predominantly late medieval church, St Mary's underwent significant restoration in the 19th century. Inside, a splendid stained glass window in the south aisle depicts a host of angels and dates from the 20th century, and the remains of a 15th century roodscreen can be seen. Outside, the great church tower rises above the gentle valleys of northeast Norfolk.

B. World War One memorial with World War Two additions, Northrepps

World War One memorial with World War Two additions, constructed from grey granite, in the form of a freestanding wheel cross. This memorial was erected around 1920 to commemorate twenty-three local men who died during World War One, and latterly seven local men who died during World War Two. The memorial was Listed Grade II in February 2018.

C. Church Farm Also known as Toad House

With a date stone of 1681, this house has four bays and two storeys, and is constructed from flint with brick dressings. Altered in the 18th and 19th centuries, the house has a thatched roof and is rectangular in plan and has two groups of octagonal brick chimneys.

South gable is dated 1681 with 'WSD', the north gable has a dummy chimney.

Date plaque cannot now be read from ground owing to adjacent tree, but date would fit building. This gable has two blocked windows and brick moulded string course in flint wall. Facade to west has 18th century windows and doors. Thatched roof. Two groups of three octagonal brick chimneys, each group having only two modern pots. Presumably the potless one on the gable is the dummy. Good large 19th century brick barns to north. Listed Grade II.

House. Datestone inscribed '1681 WSD' on south gable. Flint with brick dressings, some rendering. Thatched roof. Rectangular in plan with two parallel ranges to rear. Rendered facade of four bays and two storeys. Three-light 19th century casements with diamond leaded panes, hood moulds. 18th century doorway to third bay having flat hood on consoles, 19th century door. Kneelered gables. Off-centre axial stack and right hand gable end stack both with clustered polygonal shafts. Left hand gable wall has two blocked windows to first floor, a platband and large opening to attic with brick reveals, now partly blocked. Datestone.

D. Northrepps Foundry

Iron founders, smithy and wheelwright from 1820 and agricultural implement manufacturer from the late 1800s to 1900s. Originally powered by steam, being replaced by an oil engine later on. Structural drawings and plans indicate the presence of a forge, saw pit and wheelwrights shop. The foundry is noted in several directories including White's (S1) and Kelly's (S2) from 1836 to 1937. According to these, the firm expanded into general engineering at the beginning of the 20th century. The site is also marked as "Iron Foundry" on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map (S3) and as the same on the 25 inch Ordnance Survey map (S4).

E. Northrepps School

A small flint and brick school built in 1870 with later additions, including the enlarging of one of the school room windows to meet later standards.

F. Old Manor House, 21-22 Church Street

This building, once divided into two, is of Tudor origins and constructed of flint and brick with a thatched roof. Some 17th century details remain in the polygonal chimney stack, but the majority of the external details are 19th century.

Building to right, three bays, two storeys, knapped flint with 20th century porch; right of which has a five-light mullioned and transformed window with painted masonry, and a smaller two-light window on both floors beside stack, all in rendered surrounds. Left of porch are 19th century windows.

Building to left, three bays and two storeys of galletted flint with 20th century porch, 19th century ground floor windows and wooden casements to first floor. Stepped gable at junction of builds and at ends. 17th century clustered polygonal shafts to right hand end, axial and left stacks are 19th century. Right hand gable wall with diaper work and two blocked hoodmoulded lights. Left hand gable has platband.

G. 18, 19 and 20 Church Street

A row of three cottages from the mid 19th century, with two storeys and six bays. Built in Tudor style with clustered octagonal stacks, they are constructed of flintwork and brick, with crow stepped gables and thatched roof.

Row of cottages from the middle 19th century in Tudor style. Flint with brick dressings and thatched roof. Rectangular in plan, with facade of two storeys and six bays. Each cottage has a 19th century three-light casement and doorway to ground floor, two 19th century cross casements to the first floor, and all openings having hood moulds. The left hand cottage has a six-panel door, the other

two cottages have plank and muntin doors. Two bands of brick between floors. Crow stepped gables. Axial stack and gable end stacks with clustered octagonal shafts.

H. 26 Hungry Hill

Two storey house built in the late 17th century, extended in the 19th century and restored in the 20th century. Exterior details largely 19th century, interior predominantly 20th century, though the 17th century roof rafters and some beams are retained.

House, built around the late 17th century, extended in the 19th century, and restored in late 20th century. Flint rubble with red brick dressings, brick dentil eaves and moulded brick plinth. Pantile roof with gabled ends. Brick gable end stacks.

Two room plan house facing east. The large left hand south room is heated from a large gable end fireplace, the smaller right hand north room also has a gable end stack but this might be a later insertion. The present 20th century straight staircase between the two rooms has an entrance lobby at the front. There is said to have been a winder staircase at the side of the large left end stack. The single storey wing behind the left hand room and the pair of cottages not included in the listing adjoining at the right northern end, are 19th century additions.

The exterior has two storeys. Asymmetrical two window east front. Two 19th century 16-pane sashes on first floor and two large twentieth century 16-pane sashes on the ground floor in openings with segmental brick arches. 20th century flint end brick porch at centre. Broad buttress on right hand corner with weathered brick set offs. The rear west elevation has three 20th century casements, some blocked openings, brick buttress to left and single storey, flint and brick wing to right with gable ended black pantile roof. The south gable end has diaper brickwork high up in gable, 20th century casements and 20th century conservatory. On the opposite north end there is a 19th century pair of cottages with a lower roofline.

The interior was altered in the 20th century but the large left hand south room has a chamfered axial beam with bar-fluted stops, a stopped chamfer half beam over the brick fireplace which has a large oak lintel with a scratch moulding on the lower edge. Chamfered ceiling beam in the chamber above and reused timbers used as joists. Original late 17th century 4-bay principal rafter roof structure, the straight collars with halved lapped dovetail joints to the principals which are morticed and tenoned at their apices and two tiers of tenoned purlins. The principals and common rafters are set on large timber wall-plates. Some of the original common rafters survive but are reused and there is now a ridgeboard.

I. Shrieking Pits

Name usually associated with ancient iron works, supposed to be due to sounds emitted by the gravels. The pits here are flooded and surrounded by mature trees; evidently quarries of some sort but dating is not possible.

The Shrieking Pit

Along a track just south of Hungry Hill, east of the village, are several tree-shrouded, water-filled hollows known locally as the Shrieking Pits. These are very similar to the ones in the Aylmerton area,

and like them, are thought to be the remnants of medieval quarrying for iron ore. Some have supposed the name to derive from sounds made by the once-exposed gravels. But the largest, at TG253391, is known as the Shrieking Pit, and is named for a wailing suicidal woman whose spirit might haunt the spot.

A board posted beside the footpath tells the long, elaborate, and undoubtedly invented tale of an 18th century girl named Esmerelda - but to cut the long story short, she was thwarted in her attempts to be with a young man, and tortured and lovesick, threw herself into the watery pit. Changing her mind too late, her shrieking as she called vainly for help gave birth to the legend. Supposedly something unwholesome haunts the pit at midnight each February 24th. As is common with such pools, it is said to be bottomless, an entire horse and cart - sent to clear out mud - was also said to have been swallowed without trace in its waters.

Another source claimed that the Shrieking Pits were in fact to the west of the village, in a wooded area known as Grave Holes (TG236394 area). Wailing could be heard coming from the pits on certain nights, it being "where the old sea kings [the Vikings] buried their heroes" Pits do exist within this wood, with traces of others in fields to the south and east, but it's unknown whether these are man-made or geological in origin.

J. Templewood

Built 1938 as shooting box for Lord Templewood by Seely and Paget. Incorporates fragments from Nuthall Temple, Nottinghamshire 1754, and old Bank of England by Soane. From Nuthall Temple are sphinxes on west approach, stone staircase to south, a shortened wrought iron balcony rail, stands which derive from the interior gallery of the dome, the east terrace, and plaques of hanging garlands. From the Bank derive the columns on west and south. The house itself is in Palladian style. Excellent condition.

Possible medieval moat visible as earthwork

A possible moat, presumably dating to the medieval period, is visible as an earthwork on aerial photographs. It occupies a valley bottom location on the southwest bank of a tributary of Mundesley Beck. The most prominent part of the site is its western side, which is defined by a substantial ditch. While it is possible that this feature is merely a drainage ditch, its width suggests a less mundane function. A number of smaller ditches are also visible as earthworks on the same photographs, some of which may define internal subdivisions and external ancillary enclosures or features. They include a possible track to the south of the postulated moat which may form part of the same complex. At the same time, however, the possibility that all the mapped features are drainage or garden features associated with The Rectory to the west cannot be ruled out.

K. Frogshall Farmhouse

A two storey 18th century house with an earlier core, constructed with flint and brick rubble encased in a brick core, and roofed with slate. Having three bays, there is evidence of an earlier opening between the ground floor and the upper floor of the first bay.

L. The Rectory

Built around 1815, this house is rectangular in plan with five bays and two storeys. Constructed in brick with a pantile roof, the central portico has fluted Doric columns and pilasters, and the interior has reeded surrounds to the doors.

M. Southrepps Hall

Southrepps Hall is a very fine mansion of 1722, which has been highlighted by English Heritage for its interior fittings and brick facade. Records of Tudor windows and beams not now visible may refer to features which were in the north wing. This wing, which may have been the original house, was refaced as a stables in 1722, and demolished in the mid 20th century.

Listing Description:

House. Early C18. Brick and flint; smut pantile roof. Rectangular in plan, originally with rear stair bay under catslide roof, now a continuous extension with further C19 and C20 additions to rear and single storey C20 extension to side. Facade of 7 bays, 2 storeys and attic. Rusticated quoins. Centre 3 bays project slightly. Central double-leaved doors each of 3 raised panels; surround with rusticated pilasters, keystone and moulded pediment all of painted brick. Sash windows with glazing bars under flat rubbed brick arches. Central window to first floor has rusticated surround; the two flanking windows have a moulded arch. All first floor windows have a flat wooden hood on brackets. Moulded brick modillions to eaves cornice. 3 attic sashes with moulded timber pediments. Parapet gables. 2 gable end stacks. Lefthand gable has 2 C20 semi-circular headed openings to the ground floor; 2 original oval openings to first floor with central oval glazing bars and 4 radial bars. Rusticated quoins. Returns of front and rear cornices continue into moulded brick platband. Small attic light. Right hand gable wall rendered below platband; flint above. Interior. Entrance hall with stone flagging. Stone fireplace with shouldered architrave and pulvinated frieze; plasterwork panel to overmantle. Door surrounds with shouldered architraves; doors of 6 raised and fielded panels with a beaded muntin. Ceiling cornice with egg-and-dart moulding. Rear stair hall now with passage running axially from it. Open-well stair; open string with decorative tread ends. Pine balusters, alternating fluted and plain columns, a pair per tread. Ramped and wreathed pine handrail. Egg-and-dart cornice to stair well with modillions supporting coved ceiling with decorative plaster panels. Archways from upper hall with panelled pine reveals and elliptical heads. Beechlands Farmhouse item No.10/42 q.v.

Very fine mansion of 1722, listed for interior fittings and brick facade. Ref (S2) speaks of Tudor windows and beams not now visible which may have been in a now-rebuilt north wing. Commercial excavations in 1994 suggested that this may have been the original house, refaced as stables in 1722, demolished mid 20th century.

N. Winspurs Farm barns

Two grand threshing barns dated to the period before 1780, and a later south projection. It has been suggested that the name is connected with smuggling.

Three barns. Brick and flint, thatched roofs, forming L-shaped group. Small late 17th century barn, flint plinth, brick gables with various altered openings. Large barn added at right angles, five bays,

tiebeams on arched braces, collar beams, two tiers butt purlins with windbraces to upper tier. Large central doorway. Gable shared with third barn; roof of this has tiebeams with some arched braces, two tiers of butt purlins, upper with windbraces (S1). Farmhouse not listed. Detailed inspection confirms that there are two grand 18th century barns end to end with original roofs, but the smaller projection listed as 17th century is clearly an addition. Its brickwork must therefore be of misleading appearance.

According to source the farm was a centre for smugglers in the Napoleonic period, the name coming from smugglers 'winning their spurs' after two successful missions. [1]. (S2) reads 'Winsper F.'

