

Rutland Local History & Record Society

Registered Charity No. 700273



Greetham Village Walk September 1999 (updated 2020)

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INTRODUCTION

Greetham (derivation - village on gravel) in the past has been known as *Gretham*, *Greteham*, *Greatham* and *Gretam*. The village is at the extreme western end of the parish - the parish boundary with Cottesmore is within a few metres of the first house at that end of the village. The eastern boundary includes *Greetham Inn* and *The Ram Jam Inn* (formerly the *Winchelsea Arms*), both on the Great North Road, and the former *Woolfox Lodge* airfield.



The Ram Jam Inn in 1913. It closed in 2013. (Jack Hart Collection)

The Domesday Survey of 1086 indicated a considerable quantity of woodland here, and some of it remains in the form of Greetham, Ash and Woolfox Woods.

Some 2,200 acres were enclosed in 1763, and shortly afterwards a system of cottage holding was introduced. In 1901 there were 43 smallholders here, each having between 5 and 40 acres. The population in 1801 was 423 from which level it steadily rose to 713 in 1851. In 2019 it was about 850.

The *North Brook*, a tributary of the *River Gwash*, flows from west to east through the village and then south-east to feed the lakes at Horn. Just before Horn are the sites of the former Greetham watermill and windmill.

From 1491 until 1550 the manor of Greetham was in the hands of the Crown. It was then granted to John, Earl of Bedford who was succeeded by his son, Francis. In 1561 it passed into the hands of John Harington from which time it followed the descent of Exton manor.

In 1623 the manor of Greetham was conveyed to George, Marquess of Buckingham. It then descended with

Burley and the Finch family until the land and property was acquired by the Merchant Venturers. All but one cottage is now held by individual owners.

THE VILLAGE MAP

The map attached to this guided walk is based on the 25 inch to one mile Ordnance Survey 1st edition map of 1886. Consequently, later buildings, extensions and demolitions are not shown. Numbers in the text, [12] for example, refer to locations identified on the map.

Please:

Respect private property.

Use pavements and footpaths where available.

Take great care when walking alongside or crossing roads, particularly the busy High Street with narrow pavements.

Remember that you are responsible for your own safety.

THE WALK

The walk starts at the *Community Centre* in Great Lane where there is a large car park.

Leave the Centre site via the footpath onto *Great Lane* near the southern end of the car park and turn right into the lane. On the west side of Great Lane are groups of former labourers' cottages. [1] is a stone cottage which was the former village policeman's house. PC Smith lived here in the 1920s and he was the first policeman in Rutland to have a motorcycle. [2] is a pair of cottages dated 1853 and [3] is a line of cottages known as *Nine-Chimney-Pot Row*. The name is not quite so appropriate today. [4] is *The Arches*, the former home of Mr Munns, a headmaster of the National School.

A little further down on the right is the turn into *Bullfield Close*, a small estate of modern houses built on the northern part of *Bull Field*. This is where the village bull was kept and where Feast Fairs were held.

[5] is *Manor Farm Cottage*, originally a small thatched cottage. It was virtually destroyed in a fire and subsequently rebuilt. The end gable and front elevation show that this building has been extensively altered.

Stop at the junction with *Little Lane* and look down *Great Lane*. To the left, [6] is a group of elderly persons' bungalows built on the site of a line of labourers' cottages.

On the right [7] is *Ivy Farmhouse*, a Grade II listed house of late 17th or early 18th century. Inside are chamfered beams, an inglenook with a cambered beam and a cellar hewn out of the limestone rock below the house.

Further down on the right-hand side are the former farm buildings to *Ivy Farm* [8] which stretch down to the North Brook bridge.

Turn left into *Little Lane*. Immediately facing you is *Holly Cottage Farmhouse* [9], a Grade II listed 17th century cottage of one and a half storeys. The gable on the front is the oldest secular building work in the village and has been featured on calendars and chocolate boxes.

[10], on the right, is *Old Ale House*. Greetham used to have five public houses as well as several beer houses.

The Grade II listed *Manor House* [11] is on the left, just round the bend. It is late 16th or early 17th century with extensions built in 1800. Originally it was 'L' plan but an extension on the west side of its front produced a

symmetrical front view. The outbuildings have been very much altered and extended to provide living accommodation and garages. Just over the North Brook on the left is the old *Wesleyan Chapel* [12], built, according to its date stone, in 1853. It closed in the 1930s and became a corn store, but is now merely an outbuilding.

Continue to the end of Little Lane and turn left into *Main Street*. The modern bungalow on this corner [13] replaced the stone cottage which was a fish and chip shop just after the war, and there was a fish and chip restaurant in the building behind. It was very popular on a Saturday night when villagers returned from Stamford on the bus.

[14] is *Woodyard Cottage*, a late 17th century Grade II listed building. To the east of this cottage is the entrance to what was *Fountain's Woodyard*. This is where George Henton stood when he took his well-known photograph of the woodyard in 1914.

[15] was formerly an open fronted hovel with a



George Henton's 1914 photograph of Fountain's Woodyard.
(Record Office for Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland)



The east end of Main Street looking east in 1912. The Black Horse public house is on the left with The Wheatsheaf beyond. (Jack Hart Collection)

Collyweston stone slate roof, used for storing farm wagons, probably in turn converted from former cottages.

The *Black Horse* public house is [16] on the map. Beyond and slightly behind the *Black Horse* is a line of cottages [17], all once owned by baker Harry Weston. The right-hand end was his bakery which closed in the 1950s.

Turn left into *Bridge Lane*. [18] is behind Harry Weston's former bakery and this was his flour store.

Attached to this is a stone-built barn with a pan-tile roof which was Halliday's corn store. This is where the performing bear was kept when it visited the village.

[19] is the site of mud walled cottages which had fallen into disuse by the early 1950s and subsequently demolished. When the site was being cleared for a new house the footings and tiled floors were found.

On the east side of *Bridge Lane* is *Bryant's Cottage* [20], an old stone built thatched cottage. It was occupied by the Bryant family from the turn of the century until recently. Behind *Bryant's Cottage* is *Peep-A-Day Cottage* [21]. In the garden, but unseen, is a wooden hut which was the village post office during and just after World War II.

On the other side of *Main Street* is the *Wheatsheaf* [22], a Grade II listed building which is probably a former farmhouse of late 18th century origin, and nearby is the former site of the village pump shown on many of the early village photographs.

[23] was a patch of grass often referred to as the *Village Green*. At one time there was a shed here and this is where



The village pump at the east end of Main Street in 1927.
(Jack Hart Collection)

the Greatham Brass Band practised in the 1930s. This was also the location of the *Village Pinfold*.

[24] is now the site of a modern house but there used to be a small quarry here which was the source of the best Greatham stone - known as *Greatham Rag*. The quarry stretched from here to behind what was the site of a garage and petrol station [25]. The garage, built on the site of a courtyard of old stone cottages, has now been replaced by a group of five detached houses.

The small estate of new houses at [26] is known as *Kirks Close* after a well-known village family. The treble bell in the church, cast in 1949, is dedicated to Annie Kirk who died in 1944.

The Walnuts at [27] is a Grade II listed house. The weathered central date stone reads *SWN 1769*.

[28] is 67 *Main Street*, the old post office, telegraph office and shop. The front entrance was where the window is now and it had steps which protruded into the street. These were removed in World War II to allow the many large American army and air force lorries to pass through the village to and from Cottesmore airfield.

The *Methodist Chapel* [29], which closed in the early 1970s, has a red brick front and stone sides. Also note the date stone high on the gable, the stone plaque which

originally had *Methodist Church*, and the two foundation stones laid by Mr Sharman and Mr Ellingworth, two very well-known names in the village. In its heyday, the chapel very popular probably because both a piano and a violin were played at services.

Next to the chapel is *Old Barn Cottage* [30]. At the rear of this was Daniel Crampton's coal yard at the turn of the century. [31] is *Garfoot's Yard*. John Garfoot was a baker in the early 1900s, closing about 1910. He lived in the cottage higher up the yard with wooden clad dormers. The former bakery beyond is now *The Old Bakery*. His father, also John, was a shoemaker and his old wooden workbench is in Rutland County Museum. It is of interest because a board for the ancient game of nine men's morris, similar to noughts and crosses, is scratched on the surface.

[32], on the north side of *Main Street* is *Maindy* (from the Welsh *maendy*, meaning *stone house*). When this house was restored a stone dated 1780 was found under the plaster at the top of the stairs.

The Old Reading Room [33] is the original Reading Room for the village, donated by Mrs Finch of Burley-on-the-Hill about 1910. It catered mainly for the recreation of the men of the village. [34] is 38 *Main Street* which was the last remaining property in Greetham belonging to the Merchant Venturers.

45 and 47 *Main Street* [35] is a stone built thatched cottage which was Bill Marshall's house and smallholding, and this is possibly the best surviving example of the many smallholdings in Greetham in the early 1900s. The brick building to the left of the entrance was originally a house but is now used as a barn.

[36] is the former *Crown and Anchor* which closed in the 1930s. This was also a smallholding as well as a public house. The cellar door was under ground floor window on the right and the entrance steps which used to protrude into the road have now been cut back into the building. The building behind the former *Crown & Anchor* was used for meetings, dances and other social functions and the building to the east, fronting on to the street, was a slaughterhouse. Horse sales were held in the pub yard up to the First World War. The stone wall to the right of the former *Crown & Anchor* [37] is the remains of a former thatched cottage. It was demolished in the 1930s and the two red brick semi-detached houses set back from the road were built in its place.

[38] is another former post office. This is where the Halliday family of stonemasons lived. To the side, but set back, is Halliday stonemasons' workshop [39]. This building of unique character, ornamented by Halliday with fragments of medieval church stonework from local churches, is Grade II listed. Built by Halliday about 1850, it was owned until recently by the Merchant Venturers.

Hill Farmhouse [40], opposite to the entrance to *Pond Lane*, is a late 17th century Grade II listed 'T' plan house. It was formerly thatched and many of the thatched stables attached to it were demolished in the 1970s. The Victorian barn [41], with coursed rubble stone walls and fine red brick dressings, now converted into two houses, belonged to *Hill Farm*. It is Grade II listed.

Turn right into *Pond Lane*. [42] is thought to be the site of the village pond which was filled in some 80 years ago. Walk the short distance to the bridge over the stream. On



Halliday's workshop, now a holiday cottage. (RO)

the left, the stone building on the south side of *North Brook* [43] has been rebuilt but it was originally a barn where the Salvation Army had their meetings from the turn of the century to the late 1920s. Across the paddock is *Harry's Cottage* [44], another of the many smallholdings in Greetham. Most of the other properties in *Pond Lane* were labourers' cottages, some of which have been demolished.

Return to *Main Street* and turn right. The property on this corner [45] is *Oak House*, now an elderly peoples' home but formerly the *Royal Oak* public house which closed in the 1920s. Next to it is the only remaining *Village Shop* [46] which has been here since the 1920s. The end cottage [47] of this group was always reserved for the headmaster or one of the teachers at the school. It is now part of *Oak House*. Across the street is *The Plough* public house [48] and behind it there was a bakery and two cottages, now all gone. The baker was a Mr Ailmore who ceased baking about 1940. There was also a blacksmith's workshop here until the 1930s.

The *National School* [49], built in 1848 by George Finch of Burley-on-the-Hill at a cost of £450, and closed in 1971, is now a private house. The brick extension to the school [50] was erected in 1895 to accommodate the infant class which had previously used a converted barn at the vicarage. The lane to the side of this extension and the group of Council houses at the top of this lane are both known as *Tithe Barn Row*, after the tithe barn which stood at [51]. Opposite the entrance to *Church Lane* is *Godfrey's Farmhouse* [52]. Next to it is *Godfrey's Barn* [53], the former farm buildings and crew-yard of Godfrey's farm.

Continue to walk along *Main Street*. On the right, 10 *Main Street* [54] was formerly a village shop belonging to Mr Sensecall and this part of *Main Street* was then known as *Sensecall's Hill*.

At the rear of what was Sensecall's shop and backing onto the grounds of *Greetham House* is a Georgian house [55] which was in its day an important farmhouse, with servants' accommodation in the roof space. Now known as *The Chestnuts*, its entrance is off *Church Lane*.

Across the street, there used to be a cottage and out-buildings at [56], known as *Chapman's Yard*. The cottage was a large thatched property with its gable end at the edge

of the road. There was also smithy and a timber yard with logging pits for cutting timber here.

Walk further along *Main Street* and turn right into *Church Lane*. The first property on the left [57] was originally one of the oldest surviving cottages in the village, but it has now been heavily restored. The datestone, now lost, indicated that it was built in the late 1600s. This was the home of the Sharman family.

Continue to walk along *Church Lane*. [58] is the site of the former *Sheepwash*. This part of *Church Lane* was formerly known as *Sheepdyke Lane*.



On the left, the late 1600s cottage at the south end of *Church Lane*, in 1910. (Jack Hart Collection)

On the left, *Springside*, 20 *Church Lane* [59], was built on the site of an old cottage which is reputed to have been destroyed when a Zeppelin airship dropped its bombs in this area in the First World War.

At the tee junction, turn right. The lane to the left, but not part of this walk, leads to the cemetery and to old lime kilns which closed before 1900. Many of the pits have been filled in.

The site of the former medieval *Manor House* [60] is on private land. Some of the site has now been built over, but the western end still exists. The remains of stone walls could be seen here in 1900 but the area is now level and used for grazing.

Continue along *Church Lane* to the *St Mary's Church* [61] which is normally open. The church is basically 13th to 15th century with Norman remains. It was restored 1897 by J A Cousins of Birmingham.

There is a guide to St. Mary's available in the church, but the following may be of particular interest:

- The south porch rebuilt in 1673 using materials from the old porch. Note the sundial over the entrance and the medieval mass dials scratched on the east face.
- The wall monuments and frieze of small heads on the outside wall of the nave.
- The *circa* 1200 font, restored in 1840.
- The early 19th century painted Royal Arms hatchment in the north aisle.
- The carved panels in the chancel depicting biblical scenes including The Garden of Eden, The Ark, Daniel in the Lion's Den and The Golden Calf.

Opposite the church is the former grooms house and stabling [62] to *Greetham House* known as the *Nags Stable*.



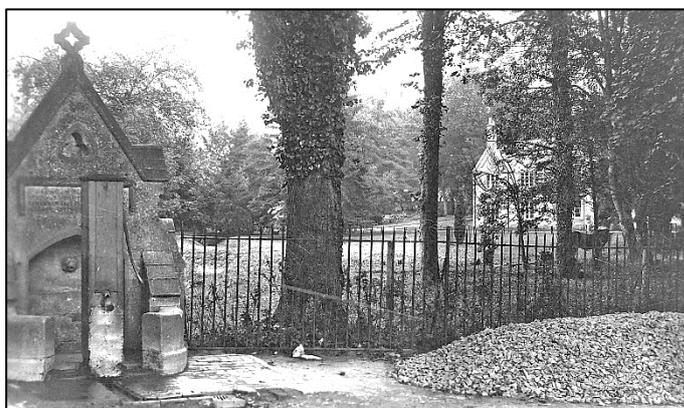
St Mary's Church in 1797 by John Feilding. (Rutland County Museum)

Apple Cross and *Beech House* are new properties built on part of the gardens to *Greetham House*.

On leaving the church, turn left and walk down *Church Lane*. On the left is [63], the new vicarage which was built on the site of the former stone-built vicarage.

A little further down, on the right are the entrance gates [65] to *Greetham House* [64], the only location from which to see the house. It is a Grade II listed mid-19th century three storey house, built of coursed rubble stone and ashlar, with a Collyweston stone slate roof.

On the right, just inside *Church Lane* is the 19th century Grade II listed *Jacob's Well* [66], the former site of another village pump. Note the inscription.



The Grade II listed Jacob's Well and the village pump, with Greetham House just visible in the background, in 1910. (Jack Hart Collection)

This is the end of the walk. Return to the Community Centre via *Main Street* and *Great Lane*.

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Robert Ovens

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Based on the Ordnance Survey 2nd edition 25" to 1 mile map of 1904

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