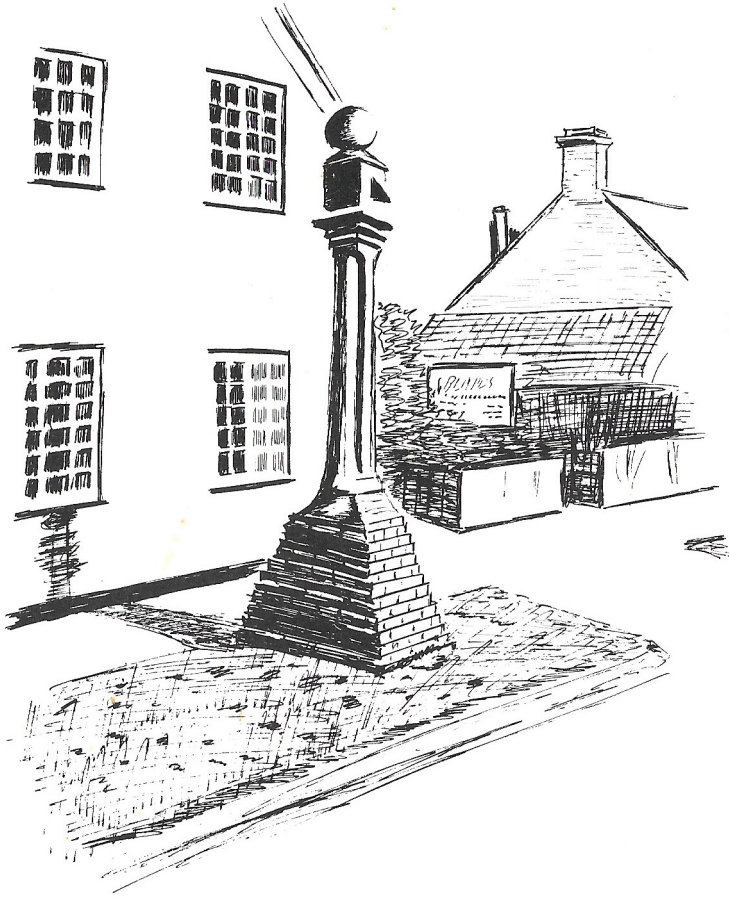


A GUIDE TO THE WALKS  
around  
**GREAT STAUGHTON**

by  
ANTHONY WITHERS



Maps by BARBARA KEEBLE  
Illustrations by PETER MOSSMAN



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## FOREWORD

Many people were involved in creating this new network of rights of way. The idea came from my friend and fellow Parish Councillor, Bob Jewell, who suggested that two redundant farm paths be re-routed to create a pleasant riverside walk. As local interest for such a scheme grew, so the original plan became more ambitious in scope.

The chairman of Great Staughton Parish Council, Hugh Duberly, gave his backing from the start and played a major role in laying out the new rights of way. He was also influential in winning official approval for them. Generous support was given by farmers, farm workers and villagers in marking paths, clearing obstacles and erecting stiles and waymarkers. And, last but not least, ramblers have shown their enthusiasm by actually walking the paths.

Any reorganisation of rights of way involves considerable paperwork and legal procedures: happily, Huntingdon District Council were quick to respond to the challenge by steering the scheme efficiently over the various administrative hurdles. Advice and encouragement came from other quarters: the Rural Group of Cambridgeshire County Council gave practical help with waymarking, the building of stiles and the construction of two bridges for the new rights of way. The Rural Action Group of the Cambridgeshire Community Council generously offered the financial support which made this guide possible.

I must also thank my two friends and fellow Staughtonians for their invaluable contributions. Barbara Keeble coped patiently with my frequent changes of plan to produce the excellent and clearly laid out maps. Peter Mossman took precious time off from running his company to provide the illustrations accompanying the texts. My thanks to them both.

But I must conclude by recording my thanks (and those of all walkers who will enjoy these paths in the future) to Bob Jewell, whose perseverance and persistence over the past few years has brought this fine network of rights of way to fruition.

Any proceeds from the sale of this guide will be donated to the Footpaths and Environment Committee of Great Staughton Parish Council to help them maintain the existing footpaths, and, more importantly, to create new paths in the future.

Anthony Withers  
Great Staughton  
January 1995

## INTRODUCTION

Situated some 12 miles SW of Huntingdon, and 15 miles NE of Bedford, Great Staughton lies on the B645 (formerly the A45) midway between historic Kimbolton and its celebrated castle and the rapidly expanding town of St Neots. Grafham Water, 2 miles to the N, is an important nature reserve, as well as a busy water sports and angling centre.

The countryside around Great Staughton is gently undulating; to the north and south fine ridges make for attractive walking and splendid views. Many of the walks pass by woodland: by contrast Grafham Water is a haven for wild birds in summer and winter. The meandering river Kym features as a pleasant companion to several of the walks.

Great Staughton is divided into three distinct parts. The Highway straddles the B645 and is chiefly noted for the famous sundial, dating from 1637, and the White Hart, a 17C coaching inn. The historic heart of the village is the Town which lies half a mile from the sundial, down the minor road to Little Staughton. The Town is dominated by two celebrated buildings: the Church of St Andrew, which dates from the 13C; and Place House, built in 1539. Finally, there is the new residential estate, developed in the 1970s.

Like many apparently unassuming English villages, Great Staughton conceals a surprisingly rich and varied history, beginning with a settlement in Neolithic times. In more modern times, the village makes a fleeting appearance as a backdrop in Georgette Heyer's historical novel, *Sprig Muslin*. However, it was the Romans who were the first to leave their calling card here. In 1958/9 a substantial Roman villa was excavated to the south of the village. The occupants were probably important officials in the Roman administration, to judge by their lifestyle. In addition to a centrally heated bathhouse, the 150 foot by 100 foot villa was decorated by an elaborate mosaic of a pattern hitherto very rarely found in Romano-British villas. Hoards of coins allowed archaeologists to date the site to between AD 130-370. The elegance of the Roman lifestyle may be judged by the thousands of oyster and mussel shells which littered the site; peacock bones were also found, the first such remains in Britain of a bird which was the object of veneration in the Roman world. Even at this early stage in our history, our love of imported goods is apparent: the pottery, glass and coins nearly all originated in Germany, Central France and Italy. No-one knows why the villa fell into disuse, but the discovery of fire damage, and of some 26 human skeletons, suggest that its end may have been violent.

It was not until some 600 years after the departure of the Romans that Great Staughton appeared in historical documents. By a charter (actually a will) dated October AD 989 Aelfhelm Polga, a loyal knight of King Edgar, donated the church and parish of Stoctune to Ramsey Abbey. The same will is important as it marks the first recorded mention of Westminster Abbey after its rebuilding. Whether the Stoctune referred to was in fact Staughton is a matter of scholarly controversy, but there is no doubt at all about Staughton's appearance in the Domesday Book in 1086. There it appears under the name Tochestone, and was even then a village of some importance. Its ownership was disputed between the Bishop of Lincoln and Ramsey Abbey.

The village, and its knightly landlords, appear in numerous legal documents over the next two centuries. In 1275, Sir Adam de Creting, one of Edward I's knights, was granted land on which he built a motte and bailey castle, subsequently transformed into a fortified stronghold. Walk 6 in this book takes us on a historical tour of this moated site.

Sir Adam's successors, the Wauton or Walton family, were to play an important role not only in village life but in national history. Sir George Wauton, whose impressive memorial, erected and paid for by Sir Henry Cromwell, can be seen in the church, was a staunch patriot who, in 1588, gathered together a troop of 20 Staughton men, and marched them to Tilbury to help defend the country against the Armada. His heir, Valentine Wauton, who married Oliver Cromwell's sister Margaret, evokes perhaps less fond memories. He was one of the signatories of King Charles's death warrant.

The history of Staughton is to a large extent the history of the church, and St Andrew's certainly repays a visit. The superb double monument to the Dyer family is one of the glories of Huntingdonshire, and should be visited. Sir James Dyer was speaker of the House of Commons in 1558 and Lord Chief Justice of the Common Pleas. He died in 1582, and is depicted with his wife Margaret, who died in 1560. The memorial also shows Sir Richard Dyer, who died in 1605, and his wife, Marie.

A booklet on the history of St Andrew's is available in the church.

Next to the church is the Taggart Gallery, once the Robin Hood Inn, behind which stood Murfins brewery. (There used to be no fewer than 7 pubs in Staughton.) The Murfins were notable benefactors of the Church and its associated charities, and the brewery continued to produce beer until the beginning of the century.

Opposite the church is Place (or Palace) House, originally built in 1539 by Oliver Leder; it was in medieval times a substantial moated manor house, but much of it was unfortunately destroyed by fire in the 17C. The house now belongs to the Duberly family who have played an important role in the history of the village since the 18C.

A little way past the church and Place House is the lovely green overlooked by a neat row of cottages.

Staughton's most famous monument is the sundial which stands on the Highway near the White Hart Inn. Underneath the date of 1637, the initials E.I. have been carved into the stone. For many years a mystery (the Victorian County History is silent on what the initials stand for), it now seems fairly clear that the monument was erected by one Edmund Ibbutt, who was a major landowner in the village between the 1630s and the 1660s. His name features regularly in the churchwarden's accounts: quite why he decided to build a sundial will probably always remain a mystery. Appropriately, all our walks start from the sundial.

Great Staughton also has a curious connection with the Romney Hythe and Dymchurch narrow gauge railway. Between 1911 and 1913, Captain J.E.P. Howey, a wealthy railway buff, decided that Staughton Manor was the ideal site for his most ambitious undertaking to date: the construction of a 15" gauge railway complete with a station (Staughton Manor) and a scale model of the Forth railway bridge. Photographs show Capt. Howey on the footplate of the impressive 4-6-2 Class 30 Little Giant locomotive, the only one of its class built by Basset-Lowke in Northampton. In the recent past there were citizens of Staughton who remembered being treated to a ride around the manor on the Great Staughton railway.

The track was something over a mile long but even so did not provide Capt. Howey with the means to indulge his other great love - speed, and after only two years here, he went off to construct his "proper" railway at Romney, which still exists.

Alas, nothing now remains of his handiwork in Staughton. The station ended its life as a refuge for hens, and the bridge was demolished during the war. The locomotive had a better fate, being transported to the Ravenglass railway in the Lake District, where it apparently did stalwart duty for many years.

We hope you will enjoy the varied walks in this attractive area. Please observe the countryside code, and remember the watchword of all careful walkers: leave nothing except footprints, take nothing except photographs.

## HISTORICAL SOURCES

- 1) A History of the Parish of Great Staughton, by Rev. H.G. Watson  
(P.C. Thomson, St Neots, 1916)
- 2) Huntingdonshire: from The Victoria History of the Counties of England  
(Dawsons of Pall Mall, 1974)
- 3) The Domesday Book - Huntingdonshire, edited and translated by J. Morris  
(Phillimore, Chichester, 1975)
- 4) The Early Charters of Eastern England, by C.R. Hart  
(University of Leicester Press, 1966)
- 5) Sprig Muslin, by Georgette Heyer  
(Pan Books, 1968)
- 6) Mrs. Duberly's Campaigns, by E. E. P. Tisdall  
(Jarrolds, 1963)
- 7) The Reason Why, by Cecil Woodham-Smith  
(Constable, 1953)
- 8) Journals kept during the Russian War, by Frances Isabella Duberly  
(Longman, Brown, Green and Longman, 1855)
- 9) There are a number of books about Captain Howey and his model railways. Regrettably, they are very difficult to get hold of, but you may find them in second hand bookshops.
  - a) Miniature Railways, Vol. 1 - 15" Gauge  
by H. Clayton, Michael Jacot, Robin Butterell (Oakwood Press)
  - b) One Man's Railway: J.E.P. Howey & the Romney, Hythe and Dymchurch Railway  
by J.B. Snell (David & Charles, 1983)
  - c) The Miniature World of Henry Greenly  
by E.A. & E.H. Steel (Model & Allied Publications, 1973)
  - d) Steam on Britain's Miniature Railways  
by Robin Butterell (D. Bradford Barton Ltd, 1976)

## THE WALKS

Nearly all the paths described in this guide are completely new rights of way, replacing redundant or disused farm paths. All the walks start from the sundial which is located on the B645 near the White Hart public house.

We have tried to grade the walks accordingly to length and difficulty. They can be tackled by any reasonably fit person. Great Staughton is situated in a clay belt, which means that in wet weather some sections can be very heavy going.

Please remember that you are frequently walking through the fields of working farms: respect the Countryside Code, given below.

Visitors are requested to use the official car park in Great Staughton, opposite the Tavern public house (see map). Please do NOT park in the road.

The village has 2 pubs: the Tavern, and the White Hart. Both welcome ramblers, and perhaps more importantly, serve meals.

Great Staughton also has a petrol station and a shop; the petrol station is open on Sundays.

## THE MAPS

With the exception of Walks 1 and 12, there are individual maps for each of the 12 walks. In addition, two introductory maps are included: the first shows the layout of the village and its facilities, whilst the second gives an overview of the walks.

Numbers on the map refer to the Walk numbers in this guide.

## THE COUNTRYSIDE CODE

*Enjoy the countryside and respect its life and work*

*Guard against all risks of fire*

*Fasten all gates*

*Keep your dog under close control*

*Keep to public paths across farmland*

*Use gates and stiles to cross fences, hedges and walls*

*Leave livestock, crops and machinery alone*

*Take your litter home*

*Help to keep all water clean*

*Protect wildlife, plants and trees*

*Take special care on country roads*

*Make no unnecessary noise*

## LIST OF WALKS

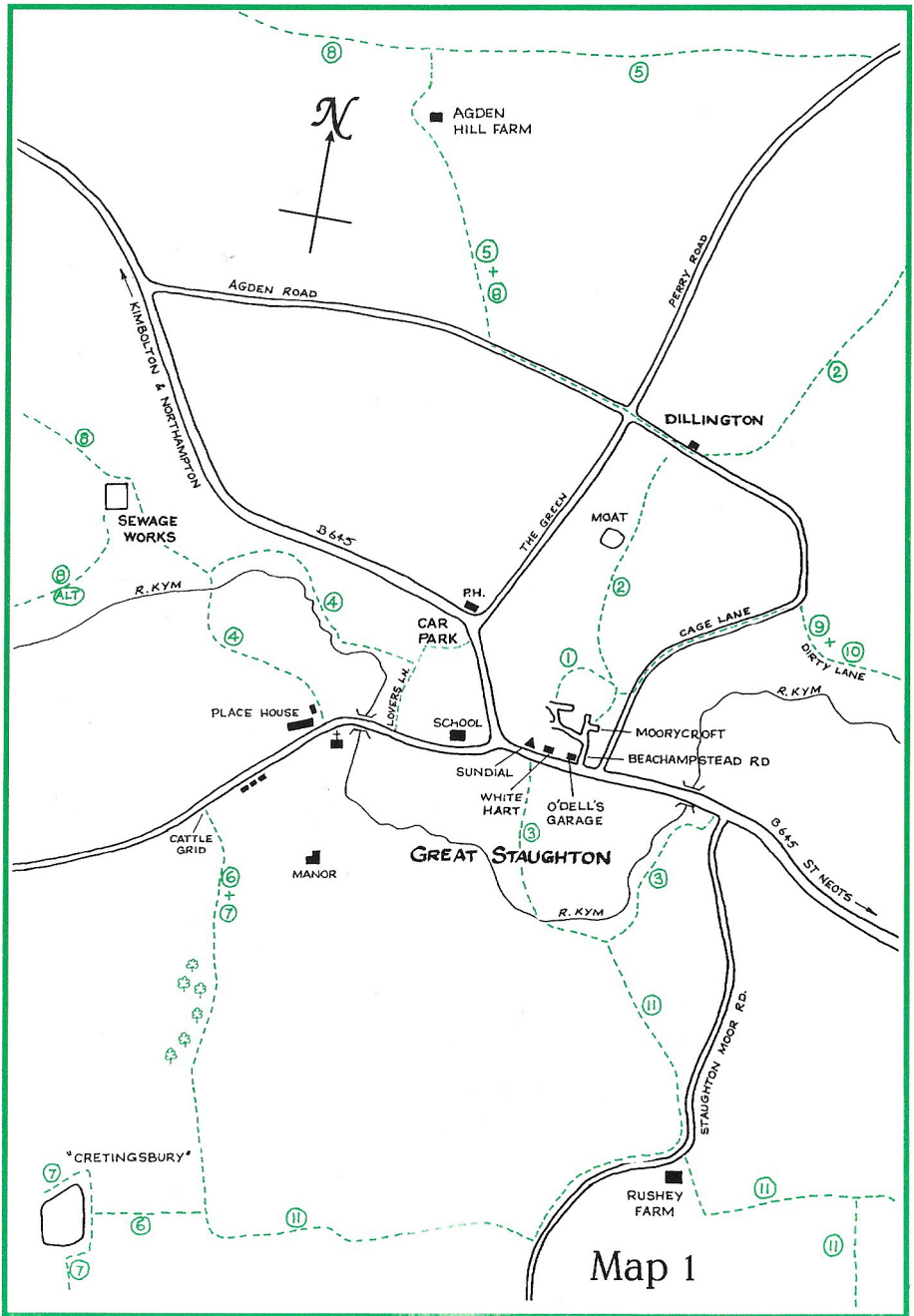
Many of the walks can be combined to create longer and more challenging walks. The final walk in this guide suggests one such route. There are many other possibilities which we hope you will discover for yourselves.

It makes sense to wear boots or other sturdy footwear: in winter and after rain, many of the paths become mud-bound. Timings assume a normal walking pace so allow for children and for refreshments.

All the walks start from the sundial. (See map.)

- WALK 1: A DOGGY WALK!
- WALK 2: A SUMMER STROLL
- WALK 3: DOWN BY THE RIVERSIDE
- WALK 4: THE THREE CHURCHES
- WALK 5: A GLIMPSE OF GRAFHAM WATER
- WALK 6: SIR ADAM de CRETING'S DEMESNE
- WALK 7: THE LITTLE STAUGHTON ROUND
- WALK 8: OVER THE TOPS TO STONELY
- WALK 9: THROUGH THE FIELDS TO HAIL WESTON
- WALK 10: A GREEN ROAD TO GRAFHAM WATER
- WALK 11: THE STAUGHTON MOOR RIDGE PATH
- WALK 12: THE GREAT GREAT STAUGHTON CHALLENGE WALK





## DESCRIPTIONS

### WALK 1: A Doggy Walk!

*[Although originally designed as a convenient and not too strenuous exercise for dogs and their masters, this attractive little promenade is also a pleasant stroll for those who are perhaps not quite so active as they once were. Despite being very near the residential estate, the walk is pleasingly tranquil and undisturbed. Allow 25 minutes. See Map 1.]*

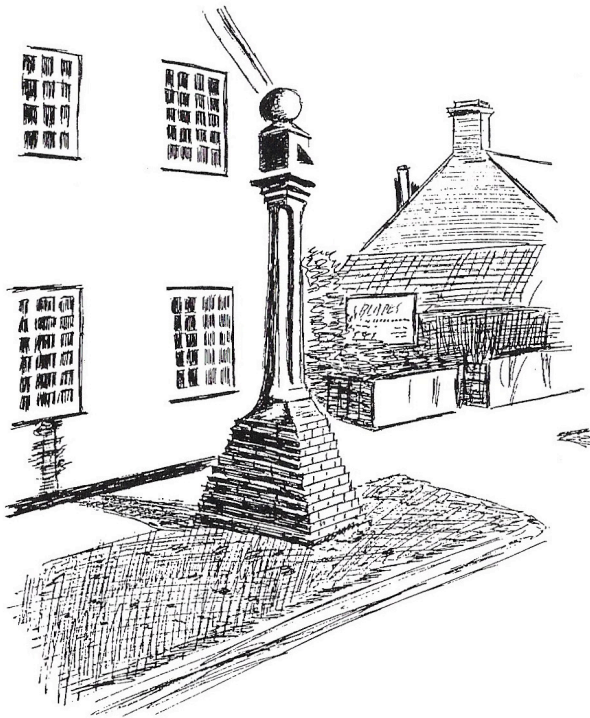
From the sundial, proceed to garage, where turn L into Beachampstead Road then R into Moory Croft and go through the passageway by the lamp post, 20 metres to the R of the street nameplate. The passageway brings you into an open field.

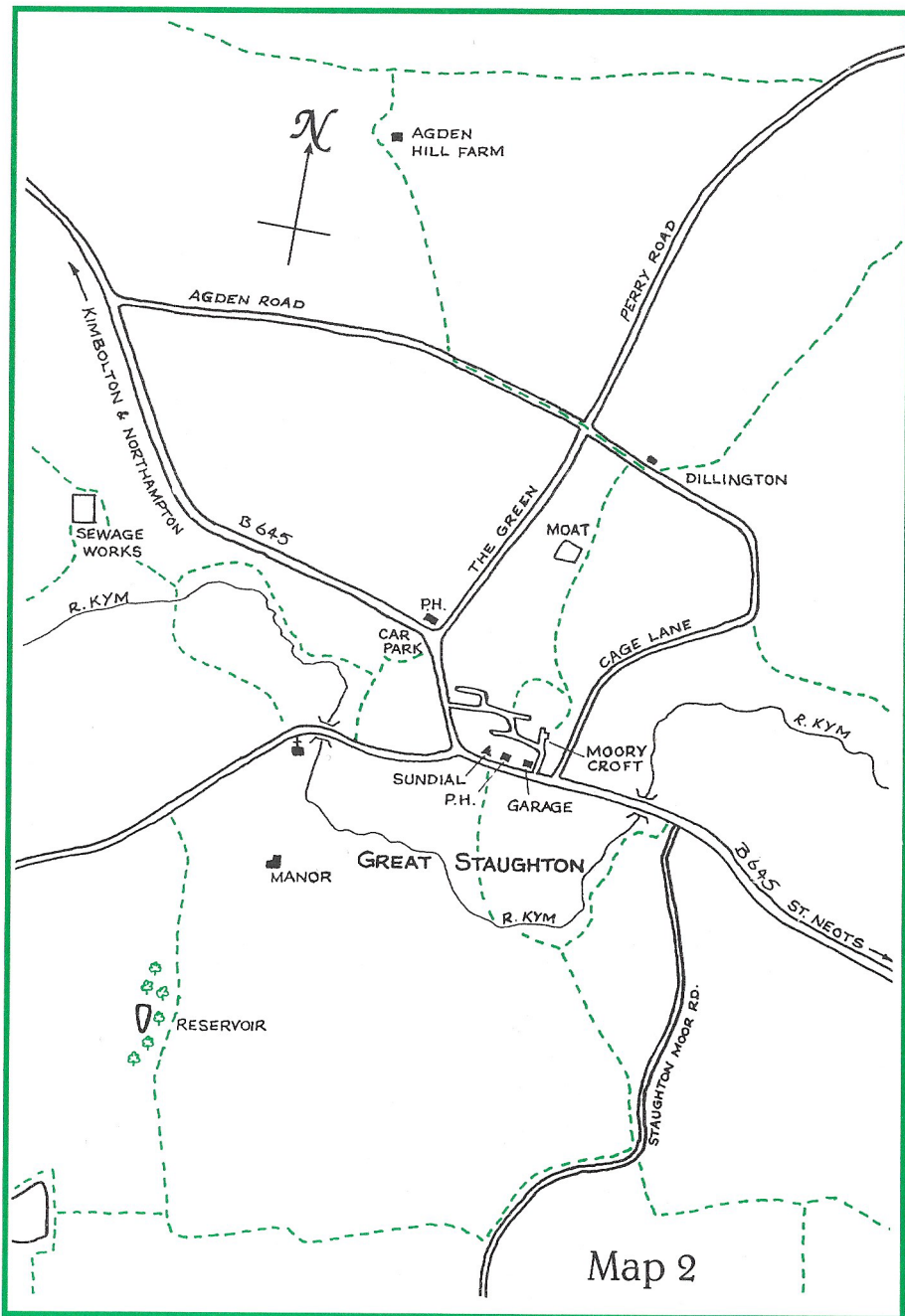
Go straight ahead, and, 50m after the telegraph pole, turn sharp L through a gap in the hedgerow

(signposted) to a field where your dog can wander to its heart's content.

Follow the path through the field to the hedgerow where turn L, cross the bridge over the ditch and head for a gate. Clamber over this gate and emerge in an alleyway between the houses (2 Lye Close and 38 Beachampstead Road). Turn L down Beachampstead Road to bring you back to the B645 where turn R to return to the sundial.

This walk can also be done in the reverse direction, going via Beachampstead Road and taking the passageway between 2 Lye Close and 38 Beachampstead Road.





## WALK 2: A Summer Stroll

*[This is the ideal walk for a perfect English summer evening. Not too long (about 6kms - 4 miles there and back), with a pint of beer as reward for the gentle uphill stroll. Allow 45 minutes each way. Return by the same route or, for those with more energy, via Grafham Water if you feel particularly fit and enthusiastic. Add about an hour if you choose the alternative route.]*

NOTE: The return walk, from the Wheatsheaf back to Staughton, can also be tacked on to Walks 5 and 10.

From the sundial, proceed as for Walk 1, into field via Moory Croft. 75m past the telegraph pole, cross the little ditch to signpost. Here bear L, then R, following the path along the edge of the field for about 500m, heading in a Northerly direction. Ahead you will see the houses in Dillington.

To your L you pass the moat around Beachampstead Manor, of which no trace now remains. Beachampstead was one of four moated manors in the Parish, the others being Cretingsbury, Place House, and Gaynes Hall. It was destroyed by fire in the 14C and never rebuilt. The origin of the name has provoked lively controversy in philological circles but seems to derive from a common Anglo-Saxon name, *Bicca*, and *ham stede*, meaning a fortified farmhouse.

Follow the fence round the moat until you reach a little bridge: a tree-lined path then bears you to Dillington, where you emerge at a house with a distinctive flagpole, formerly the Crown public house.

Turn R along the road for 10 metres and then take path, L, through field. Follow the path, taking care not to damage the crops. Remember that the farmer has taken the trouble to make a path through his crops, so keep to it! Once across the field, a signpost directs you up the hill, towards a telecommunications aerial. Follow path ensuring you keep to L of ditch.

Past the telecommunications aerial, the path turns R after trees, and straight ahead you see Gaynes Hall, owned by the Duberly family, now being restored as a private dwelling. Vitalis Engayne, after whom the property is named, was an important landowner in the area during the 12C.

The path now continues uphill (NW), past a wood on your L, where there is a sumptuous display of bluebells in season.

At the top of the hill, cross stile, turn L, follow fence, cross another stile and turn L to bring you to the Wheatsheaf public house. Return by the same route.

ALTERNATIVE RETURN ROUTE (allow one hour)

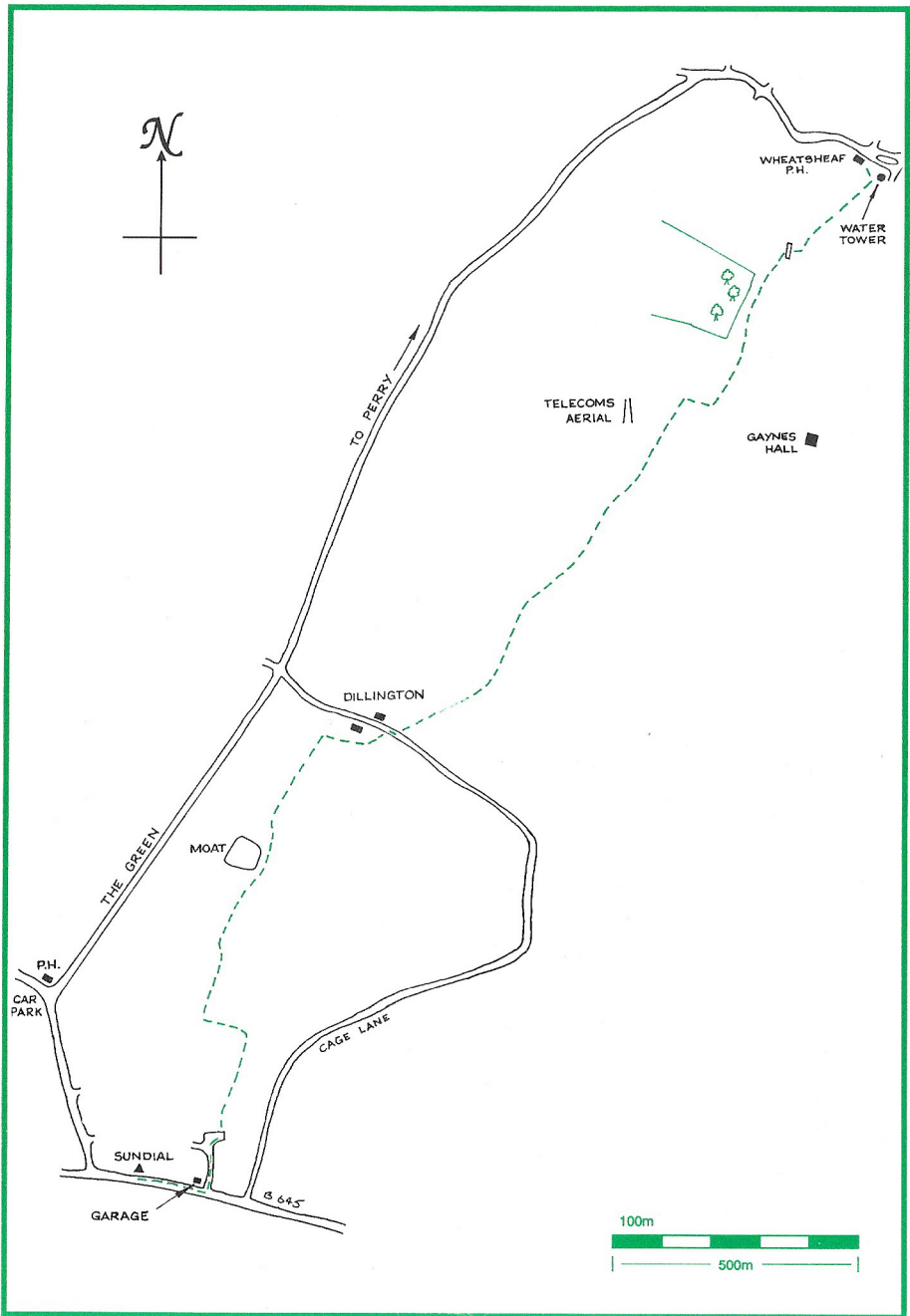
Instead of returning the way you came, you can go back via Grafham Water and Agden Hill Farm, as described in Walk 5, reversing the directions of course.

Briefly, turn L from pub, follow road for 400m, turn into Grafham Water car park. Follow bridlepath past the car park, shortly passing, on R, Valley Creek bird hide (worth a visit if you have the time).

The path then goes past the entrance to the Nature Reserve, which is also worth stopping for but you may have to pay a return visit to enjoy Grafham Water's varied wildlife to the full.

The bridleway now climbs the hill and turns R towards Grafham Water. Do NOT turn R, as this is the cycle track circling Grafham Water, but continue up the hill. The path is signposted.

You go straight ahead up the hill past the triangulation point and on to the end of the hedgerow. Here turn L and follow hedgerow to 3 Shires Way signpost. Here turn L, past Agden Hill farm and continue on down the broad path to the road. Turn L and after 700m cross Staughton-Perry road and return to Dillington. At house with flagpole, turn R, taking the path which skirts Pepper's Cottage to Staughton.



### WALK 3: Down by the Riverside

*[A relaxing 2.5km (1 1/2 mile) afternoon stroll, on the banks of the Kym, just right as an after dinner walk for the whole family. Allow an hour.]*

Cross the road directly opposite the sundial and take the passageway marked Public Footpath. Cross the stile to the R of the gate (remember that, although this is a right of way, it is also someone's garden), and after 5 metres cross stile on your R, and immediately turn L, following the hedgerow to a third stile. Here make for a point slightly to your R about 300 metres away where you will see a fourth stile near the river.

Cross stile and follow river to wooden bridge.

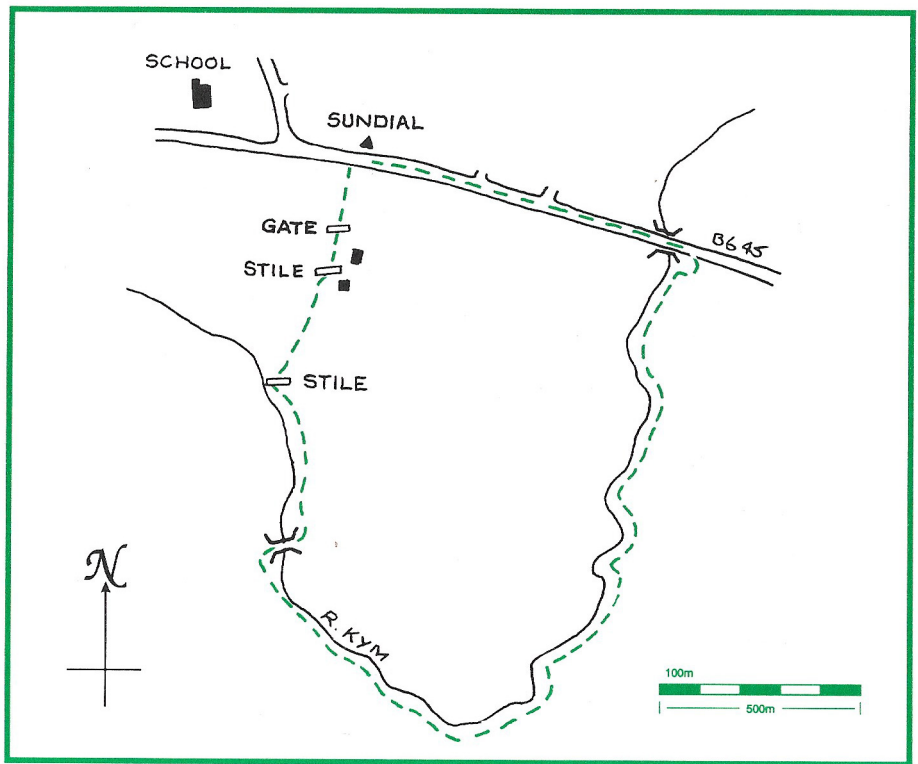
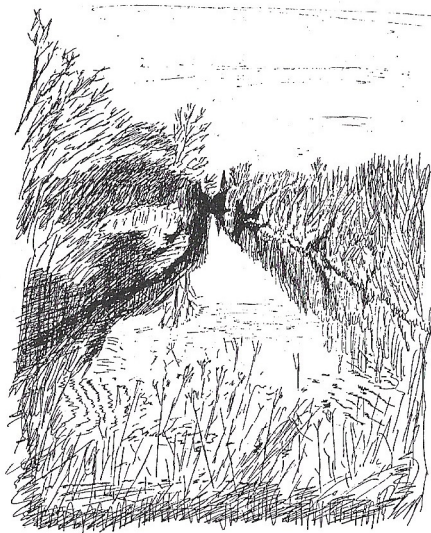
Cross bridge and turn L, reaching a clearing with a number of signposts.

(The alternative route back to Staughton for Walks 9 and 12 starts here.)

To follow the river, turn sharp L, taking the path along the river bank, heading towards Great Staughton. As you approach the main road (B645) the path turns away from the river to the R.

Cross over the ditch, and join the B645 near the bridge. Ahead is the sundial and the White Hart.





## WALK 4: The 3 Churches

*[This pleasant circuit takes you into the historic heart of Staughton, called the Town. The church of St Andrew, with its fine architecture and unique memorials, is worth pausing to visit. A little way past the Taggart gallery is the charming green and its photogenic cottages. The walk offers delightful views of the countryside, and culminates in an agreeable riverside ramble. About 3kms (2 miles). Allow about an hour.]*

From the sundial, take the minor road past the school and down to St Andrew's church. This section of the walk is very photogenic in Spring with the daffodils in bloom. From Staughton Bridge, you might catch sight of a kingfisher or heron. The bridge, with the church in the background, features on many of the historic photographs of Staughton now in the collection of the Staughton Local History Society.

You have now arrived at the Town, (to distinguish it from the Highway, where the sundial is located). Before crossing the road, take a look at the plaque above the West door of the church and the tragic event it records. Next door to the church is the Taggart Gallery (open on Sundays) which was formerly the Robin Hood inn, behind which stood the family brewery of the Murfins.

Opposite the church is the fine Manor House, built in 1539 by Oliver Leder, and known as Place (or Palace) House, residence of the Duberly family. Here you might reflect on two of the more notable Duberlys of history. In the late 18th century, James Duberly was a prosperous army clothier with a well appointed house in Soho Square, and a country estate in Surrey. One day his wife Rebecca happened to meet General John Gunning, a rake and philanderer. The affair between him and Rebecca, followed by their elopement, caused a great scandal and resulted in James being awarded the not inconsiderable sum of £5000 damages. General Gunning and Rebecca found their true level in Naples where they formed part of the circle of friends of Sir William Hamilton and his wife Emma. The circle included Horatio Nelson who was

presumably inspired by Gunning's example in his conduct with Emma.

The story and exploits of Mrs Henry Duberly are altogether more uplifting. During the Indian Mutiny the "daring and vivacious" Mrs Duberly covered 2000 miles in 11 months on horseback, accompanying a detail of her husband's regiment, and winning the admiration of senior officers as an example to the men.

When Major Duberly was posted to the Crimea with the 8th Hussars, Mrs Duberly decided to go with him. Lord Lucan however, "absolutely declined" to allow her to proceed. She eventually managed to smuggle herself aboard ship by disguising herself as a Turkish woman. Lord Lucan, patrolling the quayside to prevent her embarkation, missed her because he was looking for a "lady".

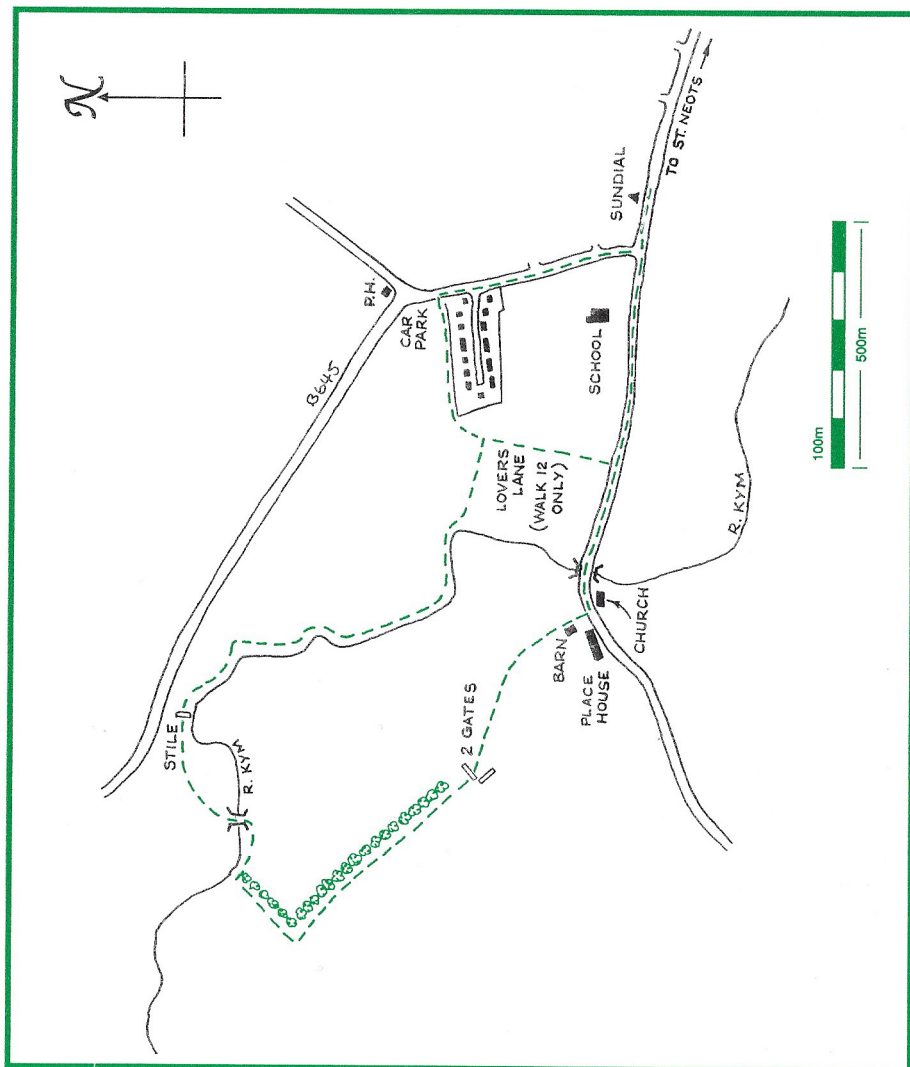
From a vantage point, she watched the famous Charge. "What can those skirmishers be doing?", she asked. "Good God, it is the Light Brigade!" Her husband, fortunately for him, was guarding Lord Raglan and so escaped the slaughter.

Her life is commemorated in a book "Mrs Duberly's Campaigns" by E.E.P. Tisdall. She also features in Cecil Woodham-Smith's book on the Crimean War, "The Reason Why".

To continue the walk, take the signposted footpath next to Place House, passing the half-timbered barn. The barn, the tree-lined path and the front of the church are favourite views for local photographers. Follow the path over the stile, across the little brook and into an open field. Here bear slightly L, heading for the two gates in the far corner of the field. Take the R hand gate (signposted) and follow the broad path by the hedgerow from which a good crop of blackberries can be harvested in season.

From this path you get a good view of Staughton church amongst the trees. The two other spires belong to Little Staughton and, further to the R, to Keysoe. At the end of the hedgerow, turn R. After





200 metres, at the river, go R, through a gap in the hedge, to the wooden bridge.

(The following directions also apply to Walk 8).

Cross the bridge, turn R, following the river to new bridge. Cross and turn R to stile. Follow riverside path. Eventually, the river turns R towards the church, whereas you go straight on towards

the houses directly ahead which lie at the western extremity of the village.

After 300m, join a path, L, (marked: No horses) which skirts the houses and brings you out into the car park opposite the Tavern public house.

To return to the sundial simply follow the B645.

## WALK 5: A Glimpse of Grafham Water

*[This is the first of our ridge walks, and covers about 8 kms (5 miles). An invigorating climb to Grafham Water is followed by a pub break at Perry. A relaxing descent to Staughton concludes the walk. Allow 2-3 hours.]*

Note: The section from the Wheatsheaf to Staughton can be tacked on to Walks 2 and 10.

Follow path to Dillington as described in Walk 2.

Emerging at the road in Dillington turn L and after 200 metres, you come to Dillington crossroads. Go straight ahead, across the Staughton - Perry road until after some 700m you reach a farm entrance on your R and a 3 Shires Way signpost. Take the broad path up the hill, passing farm cottage on L, until after 800m you reach on your R Agden Hill farm.

Here, do NOT follow the obvious path to the R but go through the gate (signposted) to the L of the telegraph pole, bear slightly R and take the path straight ahead with the ditch on your right. The path climbs for 300 metres until you reach, at the end of the hedgerow, a 3 Shires Way signpost.

Turn R and follow the hedgerow, at the end of which (approx 200m) you will catch your first glimpse of Grafham Water, a colourful sight in all seasons but especially so in spring and summer with all the sailing boats.

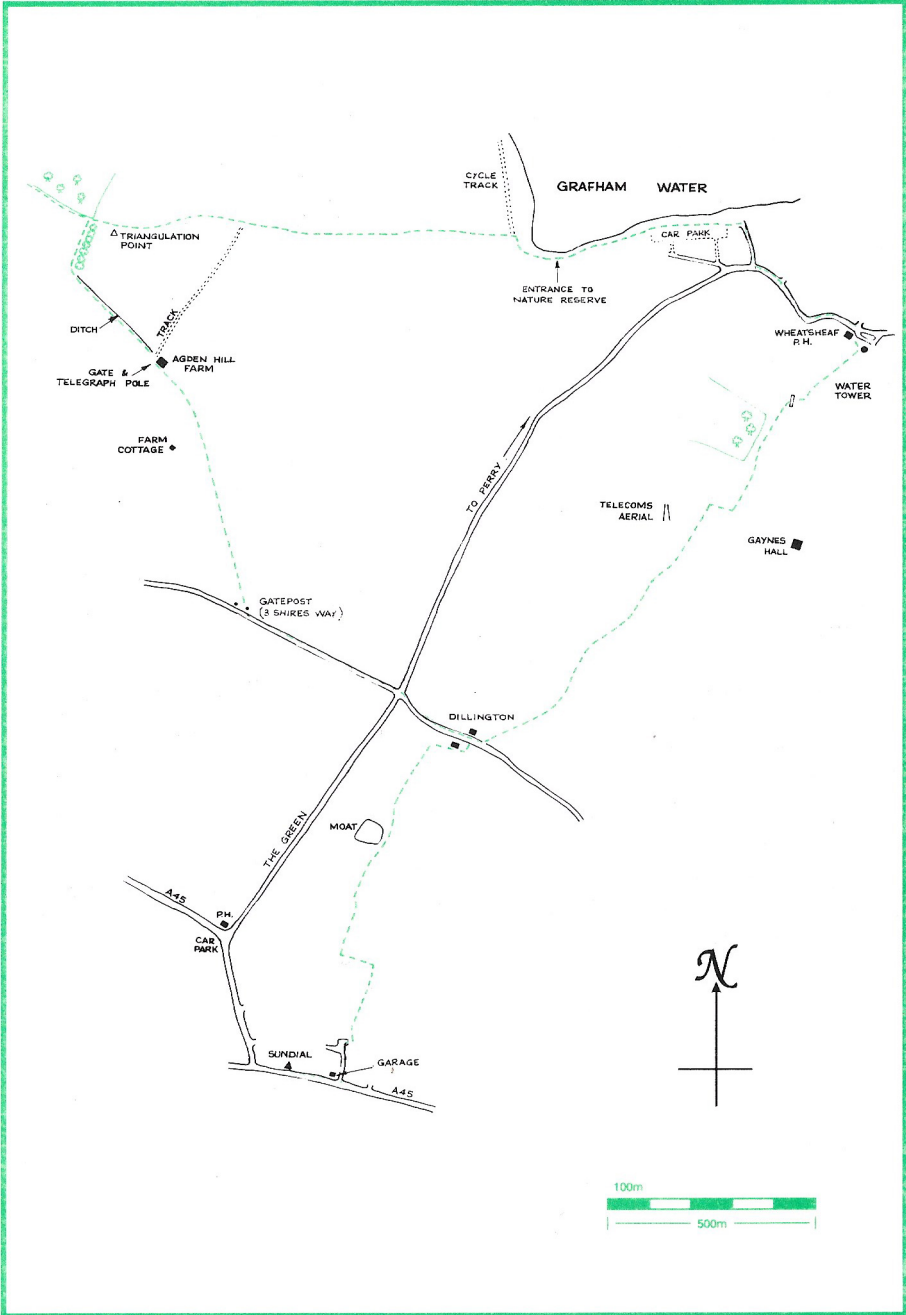
(The description up to this point also applies to Walk 8).

Turn R here, with Grafham Water on your L and follow clear path for approximately 1km, passing a Triangulation Point, after which the path descends to the Nature Reserve on your L. Continue on well-marked path past the car park, emerging at the Perry road. Here turn L and in 400 metres you come to the Wheatsheaf.

To return to Staughton, go through the pub car park and climb over stile. Follow path with the fence on your R. Climb over second stile, and follow path to a third stile. Cross and turn L, heading down hill, past the bluebell wood on your R. The broad path opens out into a field after 75m, and on your L is Gaynes Hall. Head R towards the telecommunications aerial. The path continues down the hill, with a ditch on your L.

Ahead you will see the houses in Dillington. The final field before you reach Dillington can be tricky in winter, when wet conditions sometimes obscure the path. Head half right across the field, and you arrive at the house with the flagpole.

Opposite this house, to the L of Pepper's Cottage, take the signposted footpath back to Staughton, emerging in Moory Croft Close. Go to end of Beachampstead Road and turn R at the garage to bring you back to the sundial.



## WALK 6: Sir Adam de Creting's Demesne

*[With this walk you go back 700 years in time, for a historical glimpse of Staughton, culminating in a visit to the stronghold of Sir Adam de Creting, with its impressive moats. From this ancient manor there are superb views over Staughton and the surrounding countryside. You need to allow a good 3 hours for this exhilarating 11kms (7 miles) walk.]*

Take the road past the church and continue out of the village. On your L admire the charming cottages clustered around the neatly tended green. On your R pass the cemetery, 200m after the row of cottages on your L, and ignoring sign to Manor House, take signposted path across cattle grid and head towards farmhouse, following concrete path. 500 metres past the house you come to a copse on your R and in front of you, one of the few hills in Staughton. (Use the above section, in reverse direction, for Walk 7).

Follow path up the hill, where you will be met by several signposts. Turn R here through a hedgerow, emerging on a path which skirts the edge of a field. Follow this path for some 300m, past a dried up pond, arriving at Adam's stronghold.

Although nothing now remains of the stronghold (called Cretingburgh or Cretingsbury in old documents), the strategic advantages of the location are readily apparent, and the views are impressive. It probably started life as a motte and bailey castle in 1275, and was added to and strengthened over the centuries.

Sir Adam de Creting was a knight of Edward I, and marshal of the English army in Gascony, where he was treacherously killed in 1295, by his wife, it is said. His son John, who fought alongside his father in the French wars, was

created Baron Creting in 1327 by Edward III. The manor subsequently passed to the Wauton (or Walton) family, and it remained in use until 1705. The Wauton family were a notable feature of Staughton's history. Sir George Wauton's memorial can be seen in the church.

Before leaving the moat, you have time to admire a view of the 14C church of Little Staughton.

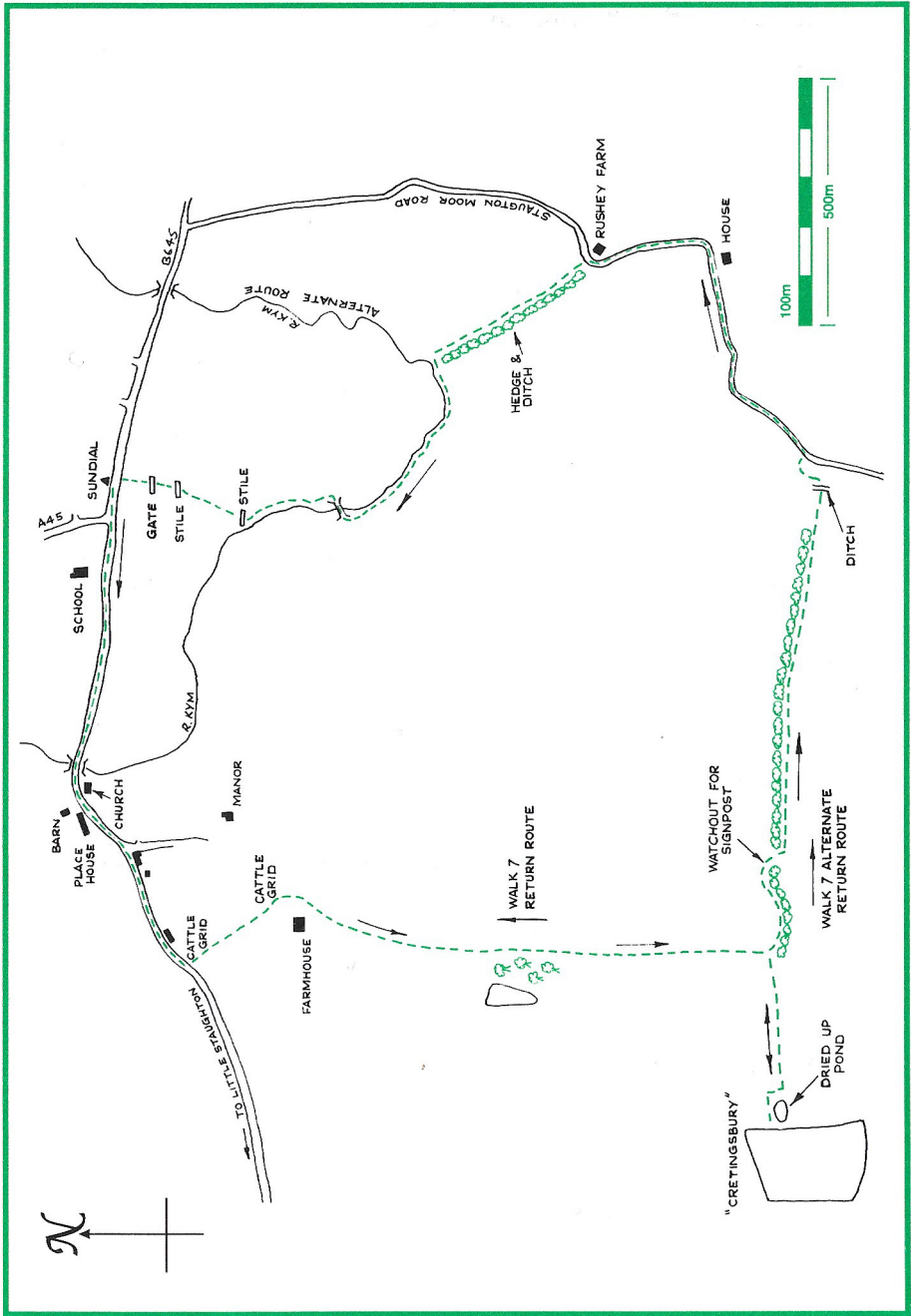
To continue the walk, retrace your steps back to the top of the hill. Continue straight ahead (E) for about 300 metres along the ridge, hedgerow to your R. To your L splendid views of Staughton and the Manor House, where Captain Howey constructed his model railway earlier this century. Care is needed here. Look for signposted gap, R, through hedgerow. Go through the gap and turn sharp L. You are still heading in the same direction (E), but you are now on the other side of the hedgerow.

(Note: If you are doing Walks 7 or 11, follow the directions below for an alternative route back to Staughton.).

The path descends the hill towards Staughton Moor. At the bottom of the hill (800m) cross, L, a little ditch and after 25m turn R and emerge on to Staughton Moor road. Turn L and follow the road L round a sharp bend, (past the house) to signpost opposite the second house.

Follow hedgerow to the river, where bear L, following river, to the wooden bridge.

Across the bridge turn L, following path to stile. Cross and take path across field, heading slightly to L of house. Cross stile and follow path alongside hedgerow to stile on your R. Cross and turn L through garden, over stile, through gate to return to sundial.



## WALK 7: The Little Staughton Round

*[This walk offers a variety of landscapes, including the ridge that takes you over to Sir Adam's moat, followed by a pleasant diversion alongside a meandering stream, and a chance to top up with drinks and ice-cream at the shop in Little Staughton (open on Sundays). A detour is recommended to Little Staughton church, with its commanding views over the countryside. Sir Adam's moat is viewed from a different perspective and the walk concludes with a gentle descent into Staughton. Allow 3-4 hours for this 11kms (7 miles) walk.]*

Follow the route to Sir Adam de Creting's (Walk 6). At the moat turn L (signpost); after 100m (end of moat), descend hill to signpost. Turn R, and proceed to stream which you follow to bridge. The spire of Little Staughton church is to your R.

Cross bridge and turn R, following a pleasant path for some 800m. Ignoring broad path on L and bridge on R, continue straight ahead, bearing L following the hedgerow, until you emerge at Staughton Moor Road.

Here turn R past the cemetery and R again at main road. Continue for approximately 1km,

along the road, through Little Staughton where you will find that the shop is open Sunday mornings for refreshments and energy boosters.

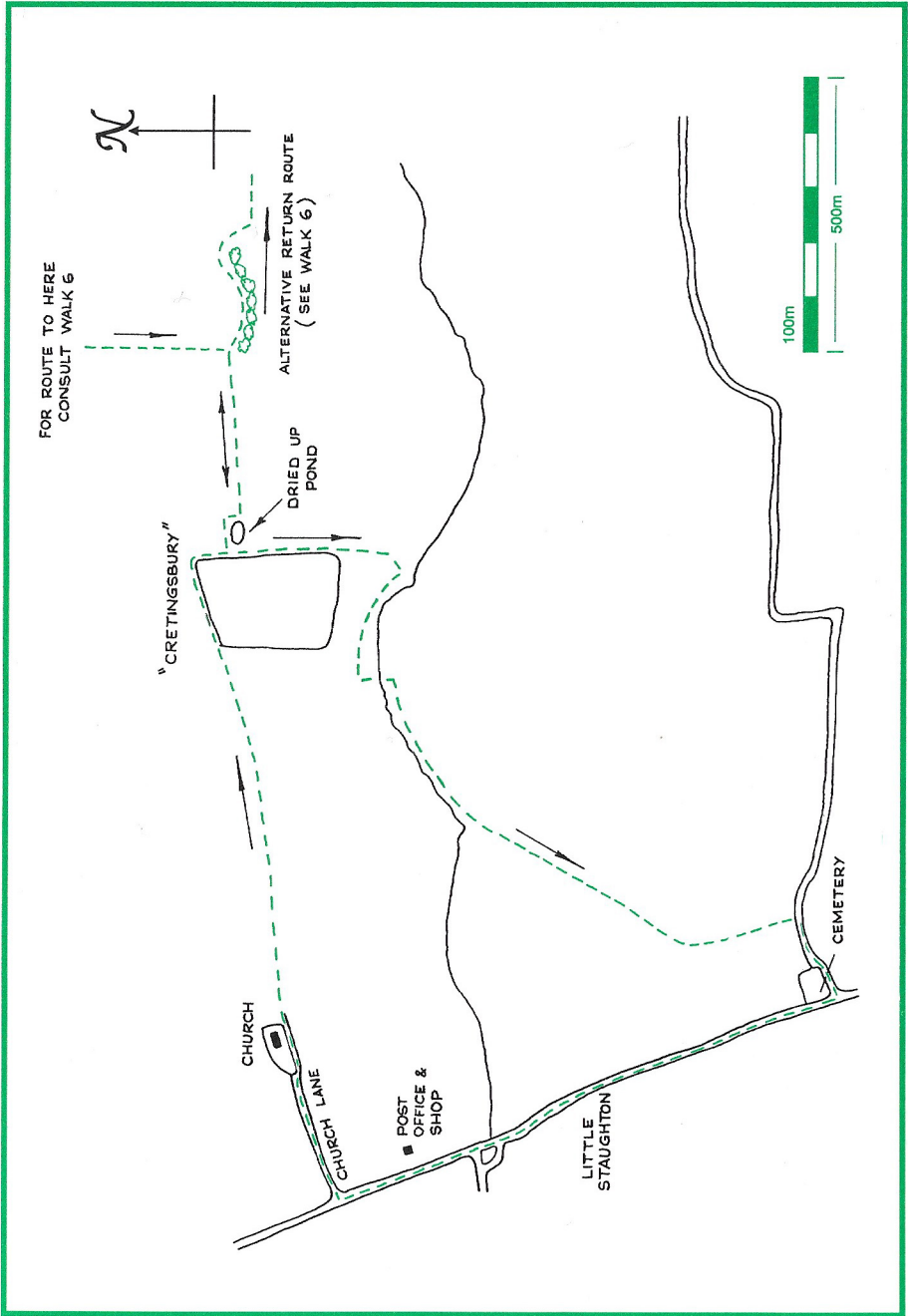
Go through village. Turn R at Church Lane, passing Little Staughton church and continue along the path until you come to Sir Adam's lair once more. A good prospect of Staughton, with the Manor House prominent.

Once past the moat, head E, along the signposted path, past the dried-up pond, emerging at the top of the hill. Here you have two choices: continue E along the ridge, returning to Staughton via Staughton Moor road and the river. See note in Walk 6. Alternatively, turn L at the top of the hill, where the path from the moat emerges. Go down the hill, joining the broad farm track which takes you past first the copse and then the farmhouse.

Follow the path across the cattle grid, emerging on the road. Here turn R and go down past the church, over the bridge and up past the school to rejoin the B645.

Here turn R and in 200m return to the sundial.





## WALK 8: Over The Tops to Stonely

*[Another varied walk of around 10 kms (6 miles), which takes you up to Grafham Water for a sight of the yachts, windsurfers, and other wildlife, after which you cross the ridge to Stonely. The walk concludes with a delightful ramble which follows the river Kym back to Staughton. Allow 3 hours. For many years this has been one of the traditional New Year's day rambles for Staughtonians.]*

Follow the route described in Walk 5, until you get your first view of Grafham Water, to your R.

Instead of turning R, (as in Walk 5), turn L, away from Grafham Water, and follow the bridle path, passing a pleasant copse. Follow, after 200m, a 3 Shires Way signpost, which takes you slightly L skirting the edge of a field. After approximately 1 km emerge at road where turn L, descending the hill to Stonely, 1 km distant.

At Stonely, cross the road (B645) turn R, and then L into Old Ford Lane. Just after last house on L, cross ditch and then (ignoring signpost directing you across field) turn R following fence along the bank of the stream.

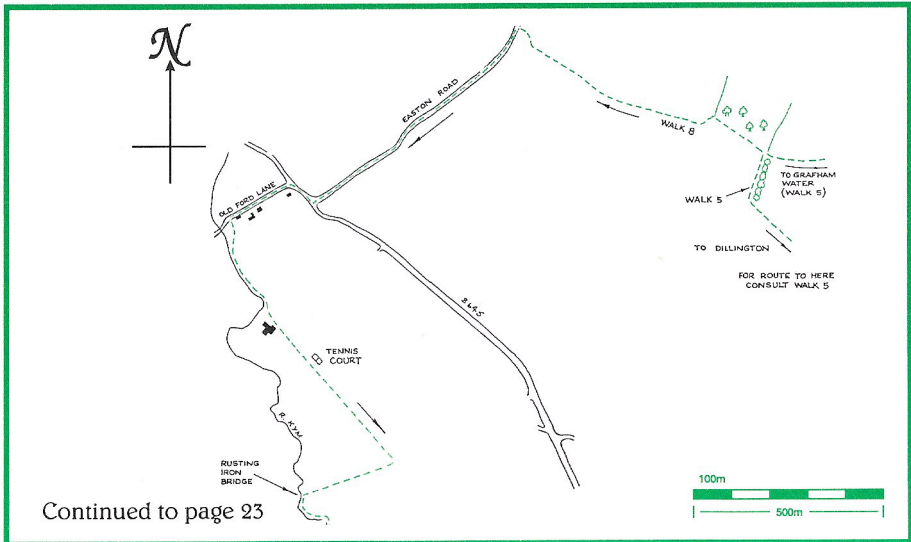
Follow path past farmhouse and, 300m further on, past a tennis court.

400m after tennis court the broad path turns R towards the river, and crosses the ditch. Join river at rusting iron bridge. Turn L following the river Kym for a pleasant stroll of 2 kms which will probably take you 25-30 minutes. The original name of the river was the Hail (hence Hail Weston) but in the early Middle Ages it took its present name, after Kimbolton.

The path is well signposted. At third signpost turn L across field, making for the hedgerow directly ahead. The path then turns R to the sewage works. Now visible across the fields, the tower of Staughton church will act as guide for the rest of the walk.

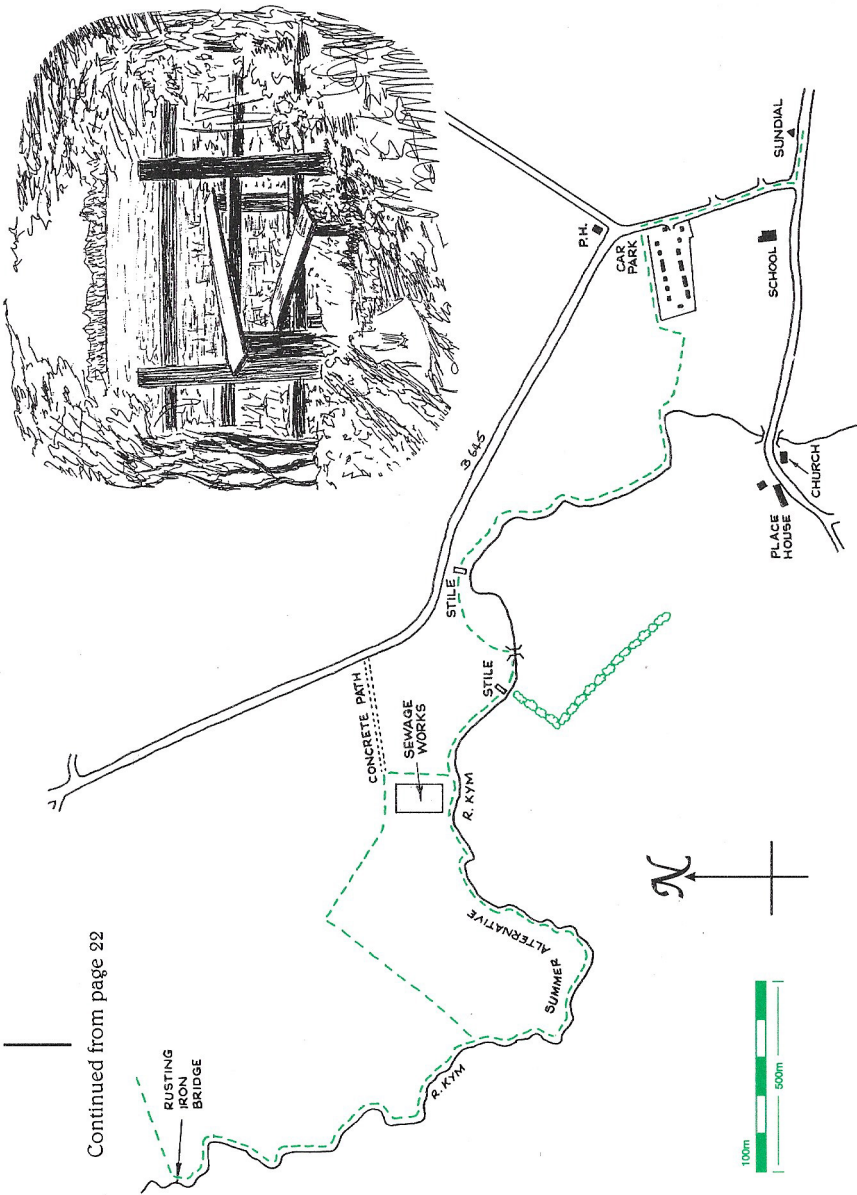
At the sewage works do not take concrete path (which leads to the B645) but turn sharp R skirting the perimeter fence to rejoin the river path.

Cross the stile into field where, R, you come to wooden bridge. From this point you return to Staughton as described in Walk 4.





Continued from page 22



## WALK 9: Through The Fields to Hail Weston

*[This bracing walk starts with perhaps the nearest we have here to a green road, a lovely wide path through the fields that takes you via a pleasant woodland to Hail Weston, where a choice of pubs offers the opportunity for a comfort break. The return path, to the South of Staughton, offers excellent views of the village. Allow 3 hours for this 11kms (7 miles) walk.]*

From the sundial, proceed as for Walk 1 via Moory Croft to field. 75m past the telegraph pole, cross ditch and turn R along the edge of the field, emerging after 100m at Cage Lane.

Turn L and follow the road to the sharp bend. Here a 3 Shires Way signpost takes you down the bridleway. Locally, this excellent path goes by the quaint name of Dirty Lane. In the 12C, an important local landowner, Vitalis Engayne (his name means engineer) built a chapel which he dedicated to Mary. The path to it was called St Mary's Way. The chapel has long since disappeared but the name of its builder survives in Gaynes Hall.

Follow this path for approximately 2.5kms (1.5 miles), heading East. The path, signposted with the distinctive 3 horseshoes logo of the 3 Shires Way, turns L then R skirting the fields, and then climbs gently, through a gate, reaching a farmhouse on your L. 300m further on look out for a 3 Shires Way signpost.

(Up to this point the above description also applies to Walk 10).

At the signpost turn R (do NOT follow 3 Shires

Way) and take the obvious path S towards the wood for approximately 1.5 kms (1 mile). Skirt the wood for a further few hundred metres until you emerge at a field. Ahead you will see the bridge over the ford. Care is needed here because you do NOT follow the path to the bridge but turn sharp R, almost doubling back on yourself, heading W, along a path with a hedgerow to your R.

After 200 metres on this path, with Hail Weston clearly visible on your L, turn L and follow the obvious path which leads across the river to Hail Weston. Follow road to centre of village. Here there is a choice of pubs - the Royal Oak, in the centre of the village, and a little bit further along, on the B645, the Crown. Both serve meals.

At the B645, turn R and follow the road for about 300 metres until you reach a house, the Elms. Next to the house there is a bridleway which you follow to Great Staughton. The well marked path goes through Kidman's farm. To the R there is a view of Great Staughton. Emerge at Staughton Moor road.

Here turn R and proceed along the road for 150m until you come to a sign post opposite the second house. Turn L into the field following the hedge reaching a clearing near the river where there is a choice of paths. The quickest way back to the village from here is to go R following the river as it curves towards the bridge on the B645.

For a fuller description see Walk 3.



## WALK 10: A Green Road to Grafham Water

*[A superb and challenging walk of some 12 kms (8 miles) with consistently fine views of the Huntingdonshire landscape. After skirting Grafham Water, a pub break at Perry provides welcome refreshment. A choice of routes from Perry brings you back to Staughton. Allow 4 hours.]*

Follow the directions in Walk 9 until you reach the signpost some 300m past the farmhouse.

Instead of turning R, towards Hail Weston, carry straight on, following the 3 Shires Way.

After 50m the path turns L crossing a farm road. Follow path North and after 300m turn L, skirting field. All around you have fine views of the Huntingdonshire countryside.

The path follows the edge of the field, until you reach a signpost. Ignoring broad track on R, turn

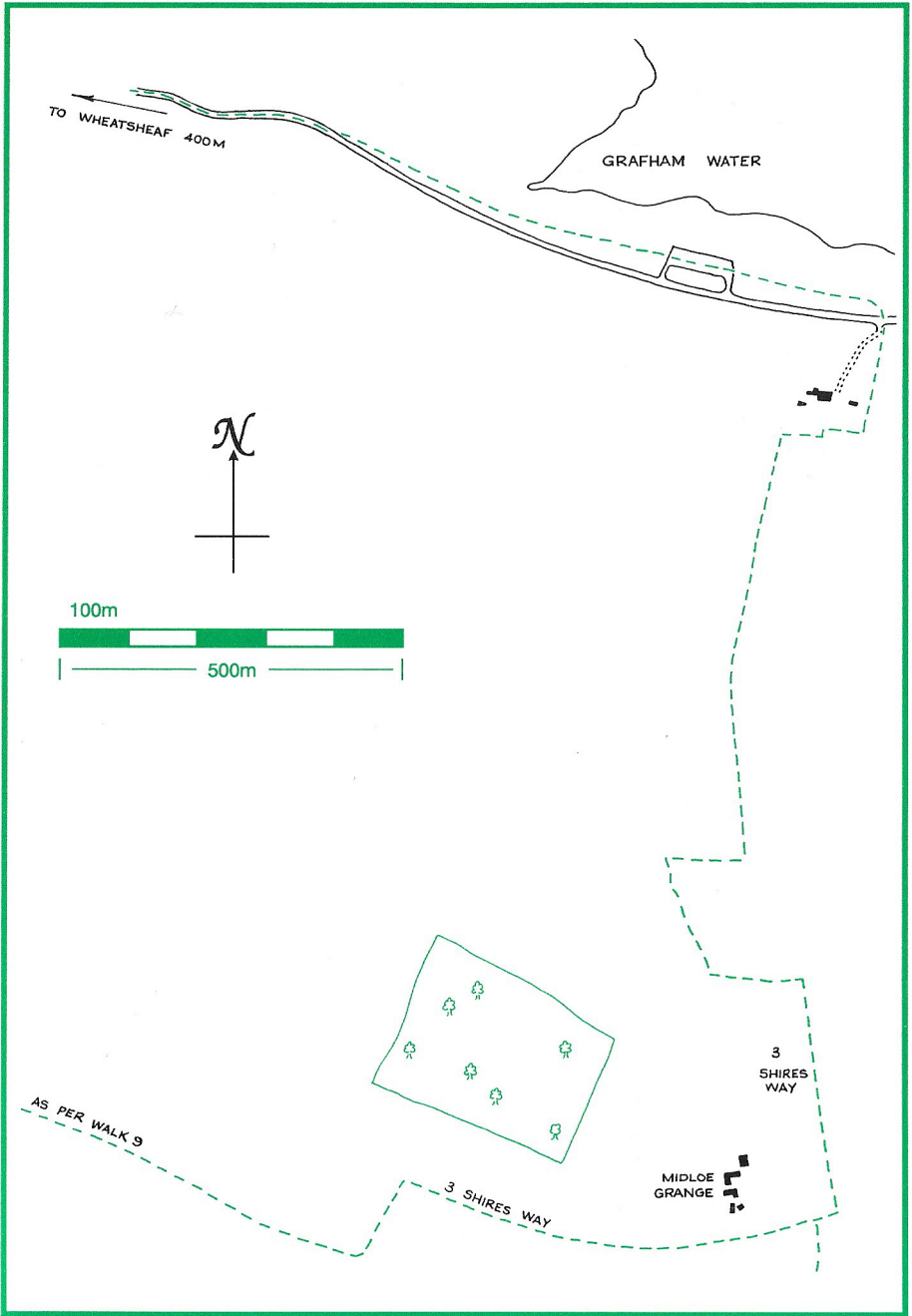
L at this signpost and head N towards the cluster of farm buildings in the distance, still following the 3 Shires Way.

The path turns R at the farmhouse, following the hedge past a small pond on your L.

After 20m, at the end of the hedge, you reach a 3 Shires Way signpost. Care is needed here. Do NOT follow the 3 Shires Way SE but turn L, and continue for 200m, reaching the road at Grafham Water.

Cross the road and turn L, walking on the grassy area. After approximately 1km (3/4 mile), you arrive gratefully at the Wheatsheaf, from which you can return to Great Staughton as described in walk 2, or, for a slightly longer variant, via Agden Hill, following the route described in Walk 5.





## WALK 11: Staughton Moor Ridge Path

*[The walk begins with a gentle amble by the Kym, before climbing up the Southern ridge across Staughton Moor, with its excellent panorama. A descent into the valley followed by a stiff uphill climb takes us to the ridge overlooking Staughton, not far away from Sir Adam's moat. From here a choice of return routes. 3-4 hours is needed for this 12 kms (8 mile) walk.]*

Take the path opposite the Sundial and proceed to the wooden bridge over the river as in Walk 3. Cross the bridge, turn L and in 300 metres you come to a clearing, with numerous signposts. Avoid the broad footpath straight ahead, as this is private land. Instead turn R, following the little brook, with hedgerow on R. You are heading SE towards a group of farm buildings. In wet weather the path might be a little difficult.

After some 300m you emerge at Staughton Moor Road. Here turn R, and follow road for 150m, to the house on the corner. Here, ignoring "Private" notice take obvious path to the L of the house and follow for approx 500m to the electricity pylon.

Just after the pylon turn R up broad path. After 800m cross a small wooden bridge. To your R up a little bank is a reservoir. Continue on the well-marked path for about 200m. Here make sure you do NOT continue along the now tarmaced path but turn sharp R following a wide track heading W between fields.

200m further on the path crosses a brook and bears L then, after 40m, sharp R between fields. Proceed for about 400m to a white fence post.

IGNORE the tempting farm path which bears to the L, but go straight ahead, alongside a ditch, still heading W towards a farm house. The large buildings directly ahead are on Little Staughton airfield. The rough path now joins a farm track which brings you out at the road. Here carry on along the road in the same direction, heading W. Ignore, after 150m, the road to your R. (Staughton Moor road.) Enjoy the panoramic view of Staughton below.

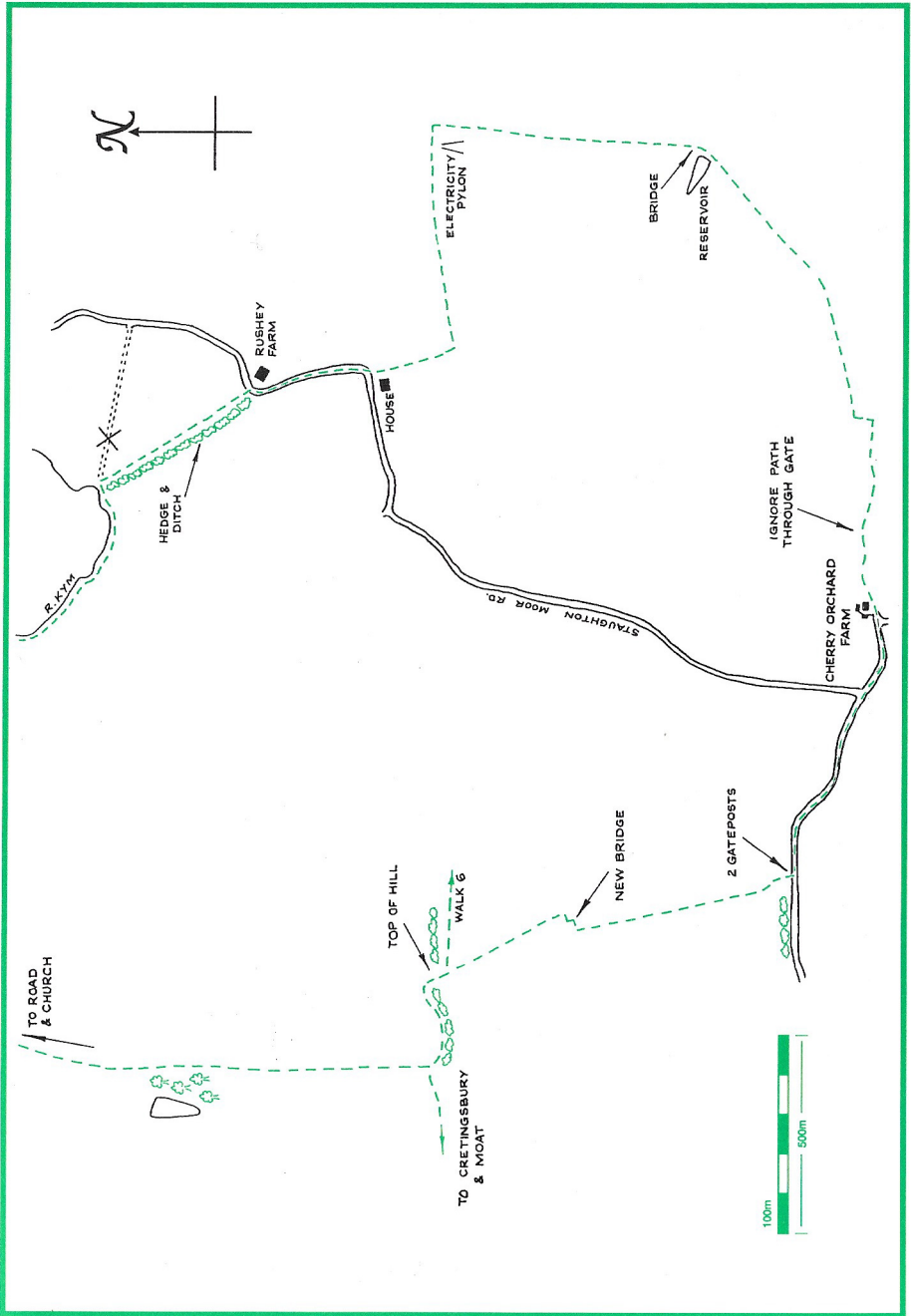
After approximately 500m, turn R through two gate posts (no gate), passing, after 25 yards, a signpost, difficult to see from the road, which indicates the route downhill towards a new bridge over the brook. Cross the bridge and turn R, reaching a hedgerow. Here turn L and walk uphill, taking the path on the R of the hedgerow.

At the top of the hill, you have a choice.

1. Go through hedgerow, to bring you on to the ridge overlooking Staughton. Here, turn L, following the hedgerow which bears R after some 300m, heading down the hill.

Pass, L, entrance to Sir Adam's moat, and continue downhill to concrete path. Follow path past the farmhouse, cross the cattle grid and emerge at road. Turn R for Staughton, pass church, cross river bridge and on up to B645 where turn R for sundial.

2. Do NOT go through the hedgerow but turn R and proceed down the hill, heading in an Easterly direction, with the hedgerow on your L, emerging eventually at Staughton Moor Road. (See Walk 6 for full description.)



## WALK 12: The Great Great Staughton Challenge Walk

*[The final walk is a tour of Staughton, linking together sections of some of the walks described in this guide. The total length is approximately 30kms (20 miles), and the walk takes in the ridges to the N and S of the village, going as far as Stonely in the W and Hail Weston in the E. It is a test of stamina and map reading ability, but with careful planning you should be able to ensure pitstops at Perry, Staughton and Hail Weston. Discounting refreshments and any other breaks, the walk will probably take between 7 and 8 hours.]*

### Section 1

Follow Walk 10 to the Wheatsheaf pub in Perry.

### Section 2

This takes you from Perry to Stonely. Briefly, from the Wheatsheaf turn L and follow road to the car park for Grafham Water. Follow well marked path, with the reservoir on your R, past the bird hide, ignoring the entrance to the nature reserve on your R.

Climb the hill, leaving Grafham Water to your R and follow the path past the triangulation point, until you reach a 3 Shires Way signpost. Do NOT turn L here but go straight on with the copse on your R, following Walk 8 to Stonely.

Emerge at the B645 in Stonely. Go down Old Ford Lane, following directions in Walk 8 to sewage works, and thence to wooden bridge. Follow directions in Walk 4 to return to Staughton.

### Section 3

The river turns R towards the church, whilst you continue straight ahead in the direction of the houses. Take care! 150m further on, BEFORE you reach the houses near the Tavern pub, turn R down Lover's Lane, emerging at the road leading to the church. Map 1 shows Lover's Lane.

### Section 4

Follow the directions to Sir Adam de Creting's demesne, as described in Walk 6. This agreeable vantage point could be a good spot for refuelling, depending on your timings.

If you do decide to visit the moat, you will need to retrace your steps to the top of the hill. To continue the walk from the top of the hill, follow the directions in Walk 6, along the ridge, taking care to find the gap in the hedgerow on your R, then turning immediately L and descending the hill. (For details see Walk 6).

### Section 5

At Staughton Moor road, turn L to the house on the bend. From this point on, use directions for Walk 9, in reverse, to return to Staughton. Take path to L of house and follow this to Hail Weston, passing through Kidman's farm. At the B645 turn R. Refreshments at the Crown, or taking the road to the L of the pub, at the Royal Oak, in the centre of the village.

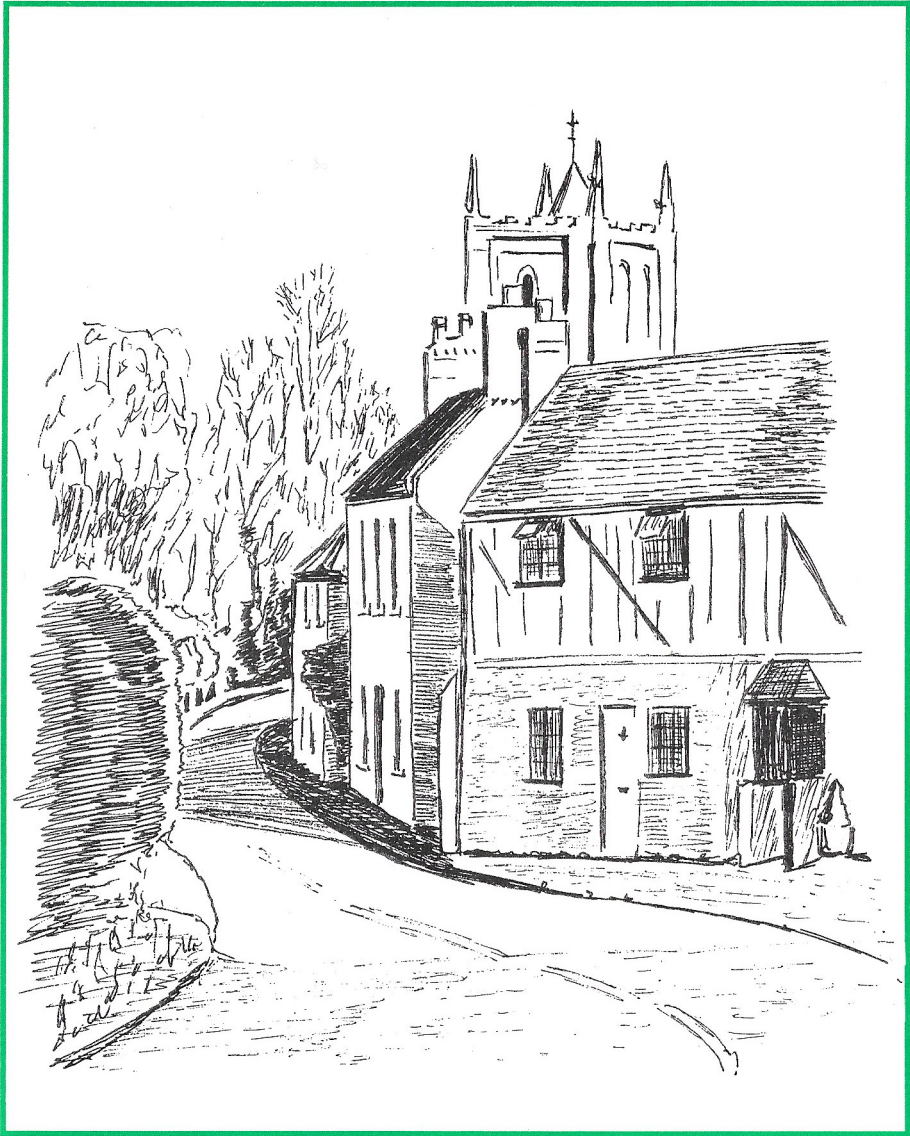
### Section 6

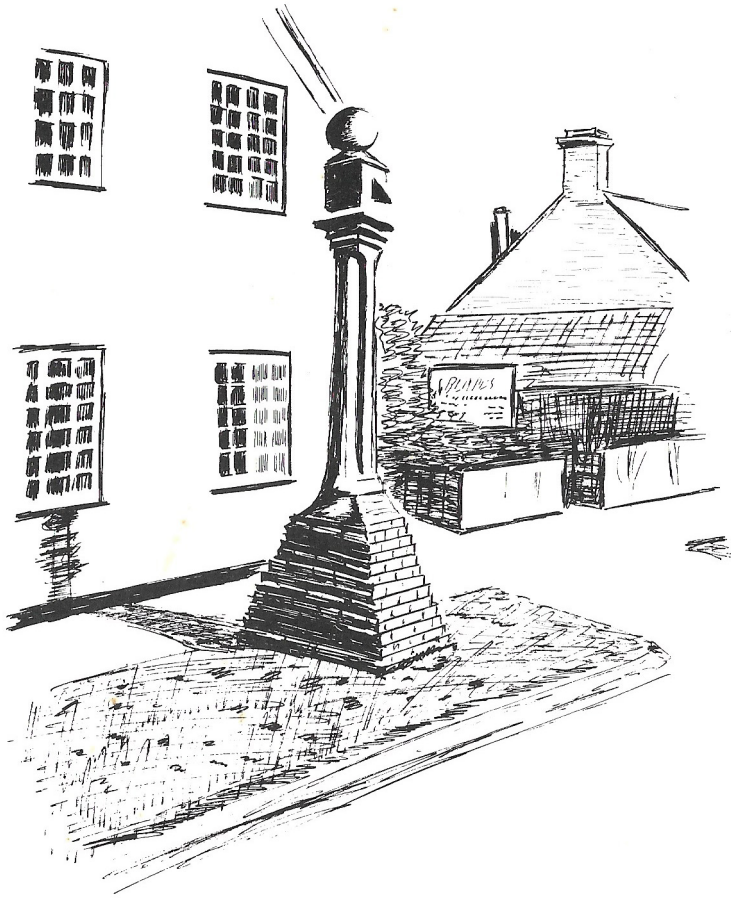
From the Royal Oak, follow road, turning L into Ford End after 50m. Descend hill, taking farm track straight ahead, ignoring road to R which leads to ford.

Continue to follow the description in Walk 9, reversing the directions of course, passing the copse and turning L at the signpost. Follow the broad path for approximately 2.5kms and you should emerge at Dirty Lane, and thence at Cage Lane. Here turn L and follow road for approx. 400m turn R across field, cross ditch, past telegraph pole and emerge into Moory Croft. From here, you are but a stone's throw away from well deserved refreshments!

Congratulations!







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