

HERITAGE TRAIL WALK FOUR

NEWPORT PAGNELL HERITAGE TRAIL

WALK 4

WALK BEGINNING

We begin this walk at Cannon Corner roundabout adjacent to the MOZA restaurant, a short distance down St Johns Street and you will reach a turning to your right. This leads to Silver Street. During the Civil War the town was heavily defended by the roundheads and according to the fortification map of that time this street was called Marsh Street. Marsh End was the other end of what is now Silver Street. Silver Street has kept virtually all of its original character. Go down this road.

Carry on past the left turn to the car park. A little way further on your left is a listed 18th century building. In the late 19th century it was the home of one of Newport's doctors, Charles Terry. The building was split into two. The domestic quarters were at the front and the main surgery entrance at the rear.

As you walk down Silver Street on your right is the Workingmen's Social Club. The club started as a local group of workers, who pooled their cash to buy originally one barrel of beer, then growing to form a club. Across the street from this building at number 19 is THE HERMITAGE. This three storey building dates from the 17th century, but it has seen quite a few modifications since then. Originally it was two houses and you can see the position of the doorways in the pattern of the brickwork. Inside is a water pump in the kitchen, though this would originally have been outside. Next to this building are two 17th century cottages. A strange story concerning this building is about the death of Oliver Cromwell's son, also called Oliver, who died of smallpox in 1644 in the town. It is suggested that he died inside this building or if not nearby in Paggs Court across the road, as both were on the defensive boundary of Newport Pagnell during the Civil War. A little further down on the left-hand side of the street you will encounter Waterhouse Close. Just past this turning you will come to a V shaped building which is numbered 25 and 27, because it is now split into two. It is Grade II listed and became two buildings after modernisation in 1985.

Once upon a time it was a Public House called the 'March of Intellect'. When it was a Public House, one of its doors led into the pub and the other on the shorter side into a shop. It is listed as 19th century and a new front was added in 1850. However, it could well be that the building dates back as far as the early 16th century, i.e. early Tudor. The building is now privately owned. A well was found inside and it features very old beams. It boasted extensive land to the rear, which featured stabling and drays for beer barrels. It even hosted town fairs. Part of this land is now Waterhouse Close. One curious aspect to the former public house is that it boasted a sign with a chimney sweep wearing a tall top hat playing a piano, quite possibly a reference to the name 'March of Intellect', which is pre 1820.

You can see below what the public house looked like in its heyday, when it was part of 'Northampton Brewery'. You can also see the shop – a butchers.

Walk down the right-hand side of Silver Street and cross the narrow road. A little further down you will reach a narrow-arched alleyway called CHANDOS COURT. It is between numbers 52 and 54. Walk up this covered passage and you will come out to find on your right CHANDOS HALL. This is now the museum of the Newport Pagnell Historical Society and has been since 1994, when it was purchased as a result of support by the Middleton Gift. Originally according to the 1881 census there were three buildings here and a chapel called United Brothers, which later became the area Lodge for the Oddfellows Society. It was constructed into a two-storey meeting hall. The three cottages were altered so that there was just one dwelling and the present Chandos Hall, as is the case today. The museum is opened during the year to all with free entry.

Continue walking down Silver Street and across the road you will see a prominent building set back in its own grounds. This is LOVAT BANK.

It is Victorian. Originally there were workshops, barns and stables on this site. The business was that of wool stapling or sorting wool into different grades or types and this trade was big business in the town. In 1877 Frederick Taylor demolished workshops and three cottages adjacent to the property to build a lodging house, now Lovat Lodge. Thus Lovat Bank alongside its lodging house came into existence for the famous Taylor family of mustard and mineral water manufacturers. Lovat Bank is typically Victorian with its huge chimneys, tall pinnacles and mock Tudor beams. You can also see a metal weather vane on top.

Look for the impressive front door set into the curved porch and the ornate windows. The family lived here until 1957. The impressive Taylor tomb can be found in the cemetery. Taylor's mustard is now made elsewhere. Just after this building is a turn to Lovat Hall, which was built on the site of a Post-War Territorial Army depot. It is now the Baptist Church.

On the opposite side of the road is 'The Rose and Crown' public house. Up to 1966 another house stood next to it. It belonged in the 1800s to a General Dealer. However, it now forms part of the pub. The old Rose and Crown was a stone building several centuries old and inside today you can see the old beams running through it. In 1966 it was modernised and lengthened to include the old house next door. Because of the outer rendering this is difficult to see. The new pub opened in 1967. Next to it two cottages were demolished to make way for the car park.

Just a few paces down on the same side is number 84. This is clearly one of the largest buildings in the street. As it stands now it is thought to date back to 1810. On the right-hand side of the building you can see a stone wall, which runs through the whole of the house and on into an outside wall. It is thought that outbuildings at the back were once used for livestock. A small Neolithic axe head was discovered in the garden. The building is listed. The roof is believed to be Belgium slate. The house was owned in the later part of the last century by William Cowley, who founded Newport's famous Parchment Works. He left the property in 1887. In 1871 he traded as a Fellmonger, that is to say a dealer in animal hides or skins.

Across the road is the former Primitive Methodist Chapel built in 1867. It has served many purposes including a school. The main entrance was added just before 1900. It became known as the Ambulance Hall and was used for many years by the St Johns Ambulance Brigade, though no longer so. Run by The Middleton Trust and hence is named The Middleton Centre.

Just before this building on the same side is a row of cottages. It is interesting that being called Cromwellian Cottages very much harks back to the town's Cromwellian heritage. They were started in 1899 and completed a year later. They replaced five older buildings.

Across the road and to the end you will come to the final building. Once 'The Green Man' public house now a private residence. Very old it was built high to avoid flooding, a common problem when the river flooded. In the 1870s at the rear was the town's original parchment works, owned by John Hillyard. His son took on the business and became licensed owner of the public house. This parchment business of 2 men and 2 boys would probably, when it existed, have been doing business with William Cowley and David Cook, who were originally fellmongers and then became renowned in the parchment business.

If you turn left at the bottom of the street and walk up Caldecote Street, you will reach Newport Pagnell's Parchment Works which is still operational and one of few in the world. Supplying parchment to our own government and producing many legal documents.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS FOR THIS WALK: Newport Pagnell Historical Society, Ousedale and Green Park Schools.