Rutland Local History & Record Society

Registered Charity No. 700273

Belton in Rutland Village Walk

September 1997
(updated 2022)

INTRODUCTION

The parish of Belton, which contains 1,024 acres (414 hectares) of land of mostly clay soil, was originally within the bounds of Leighfield Forest. Since it was enclosed in 1794 it has been almost entirely laid to pasture, but the undulations of ancient ridge and furrow cultivation survive in many of the fields.

The land falls almost 200ft (61 metres) from its boundary with Leighfield parish in the north to the Eye Brook which forms the southern boundary.

After enclosure, George Finch of Burley on the Hill was lord of the manor but most of the land belonged to John Eagleton, Godfrey Kemp and the Earl of Gainsborough.

The Old Hall, next to the church, was the site of the manor house where the Blount family lived in the fourteenth century. The present house was built by the Haselwoods in the sixteenth century. At the time of the Civil War, Thomas Haselwood was Belton's principal resident. He was a Royalist and an active soldier in the King's army.

In 1330 an annual fair was granted to William le Blount and his heirs to be held in Belton yearly on the day of St James the Apostle. In 1332 it was extended to three days.

A mill is mentioned in 1270 among the properties at Belton settled on William le Blount and his wife. Three mills are mentioned in 1650 and two in 1663. A windmill in Belton was sold in 1680 by Richard Verney to Baptist, Lord Campden.

Almost half of the village was destroyed by fire on Wednesday 29th May 1776 when 27 houses were lost and nearly 170 villagers were left homeless with no immediate means to support. The only loss of life was one horse and several calves and pigs. The fire started about mid-day when a servant threw hot ashes out onto the dry litter in the yard of a house '*near the South end of the Town*'. Fanned by the brisk southerly breeze, the fire '*raged with great fury … most of the Buildings being thatched and dry*'. Evidence of the fire can still be seen on some buildings today.

Until the 1950s, Belton was a mainly agricultural self-sufficient village. At that date the village had a butcher's shop, two general grocers and a greengrocer, a bakehouse, a dairy and a draper's shop. It also had a school, a post office, two public houses, a garage, a church, a chapel and a village hall. Today, Belton is largely a commuter village with most of the inhabitants working elsewhere. Only the church, one public house (The Sun Inn) and the village hall have survived. The school is now a pre-school and Belton House is now a care home, but the regular bus service to Uppingham and Leicester continues.

Whilst the social and economic make-up of the village has changed out of all recognition over the last two hundred years, the population figures for 1811 and 2011 are almost the same at 340 and 348 respectively, but it did fall through the first half of the twentieth century to 251 in 1951.

To avoid confusion with other parishes of the same name, Belton was re-named Belton in Rutland in 1982.

The plaque recording the re-naming of Belton on the front of Godfrey's House (S S).

THE VILLAGE MAP

The map accompanying 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, **[9]** for example, refer to locations shown on the map.

Please:
Respect private property.
Use pavements and footpaths where available.
Take great care when walking alongside or crossing roads.
Remember that you are responsible for your own safety.

THE WALK

The walk starts at **Belton War Memorial [1]** which is at the junction of Church Street, Nether Street and Chapel Street. The base of the memorial is the socket stone of an old cross. It is called the King's Stone because Charles I is reputed to have rested here after the Battle of Naseby. In 1612, Thomas Haselwood, the son of the Lord of the Manor, bequeathed two shillings towards the setting up of a cross at the east end of the village and the remnant of this may well be the King's Stone.

Following the end of the First World War, captured German field-guns were presented to towns and villages in recognition of their efforts in the National War Savings Scheme. Belton was no exception, and a light artillery field-gun was positioned next to the King's Stone.

When the war memorial was erected, the field-gun was moved to the crossroads on the A47 just below Littleworth. Its fate is not known, but communities did not want grim reminders of the war and most guns quietly disappeared.

A captured German light artillery field gun was placed next to the King's Stone after the end of the First World War (June Lawton).

Belton War Memorial was unveiled by John Edward Corby of Belton on 1st May 1921. It is now Grade II listed (Jack Hart Collection).

Start to walk along Chapel Street, named after the former Baptist Chapel at its northern end. On the right is **Old School House [2]**, originally two dwellings dating from the mid-eighteenth century. Note the ornate keystone over the front door. It was the home of Mr and Mrs Crabbe who served as head teachers at Belton Church of England National School from 1892-1935.

On the left, **Kingstone Cottage [3]** is one of a pair of mid-eighteenth century cottages.

Next is **5 Chapel Street [4]**, a late seventeenth century Grade II listed house with a Collyweston tile roof and delicately cut and moulded mullion windows. This is possibly the site of the earliest bakehouse in Belton. William and Mary Clarke were the bakers here from 1879 until 1919.

Next is the Grade II listed **Hillcrest [5]**, a large house dating from the mid-seventeenth century with finely coursed stone and a Collyweston tile roof, stone mullion windows and a fire window. Pevsner cites this group of houses in Chapel Lane as a highlight of the village scene.

Home Farm [6] is a Grade II listed late eighteenth century farmhouse. The two-storey stone barn beyond Home Farm, now a private dwelling, was one of the casualties when bombs were dropped on Belton by a German Dornier bomber on 25th May 1942 (see later). The upper part of the gable end was rebuilt in bricks because the stone was too damaged to be reused.

At the end of Chapel Street is the former **Baptist Chapel [7]**, founded in 1842. It was closed in 1998, sold at auction in 2002, and converted into a private dwelling in 2008. The area at the front was once a well-tended burial ground with several headstones, but these have now been removed.

From here there are fine views of the ridge to the north, once part of Leighfield Forest, and the ridge to the east, once part of Ridlington Park, a royal hunting park until about 1620.

College Farm Lane [8], previously known as Forest Road and Norgat Hedge Road, leads north-west past the cemetery to College Farm, and originally to the Forest of Leighfield. About a mile along this lane, but not part of the walk, is College Farm. The land on which the farmhouse now stands was purchased for St John's College, Cambridge, in 1642 '*for and towards the founding and yearly maintaining of two fellowships forever*' (Belton Hist Soc Journal 2). The present farmhouse was built in the eighteenth century, although it is now much altered.

Waterend Barn [9] at the junction of Lambley Lodge Lane and College Farm Lane, has a datestone in the south

gable with the initials G over T A and 1758, which almost certainly stands for Thomas and Ann Goodliffe. It has surviving charred beams inside which are thought be as a result of the Great Fire of 1776. The Winchilsea Estate rentals of 1783 refer to an earlier house in this vicinity as '*burnt down in ye late Fire*' (ROLLR DG7/1/14b/2).

Lambley Lodge Lane was formerly Oakham Road. This old road ran via Leigh Lodge in Leighfield and Brooke to Mill Street in Oakham.
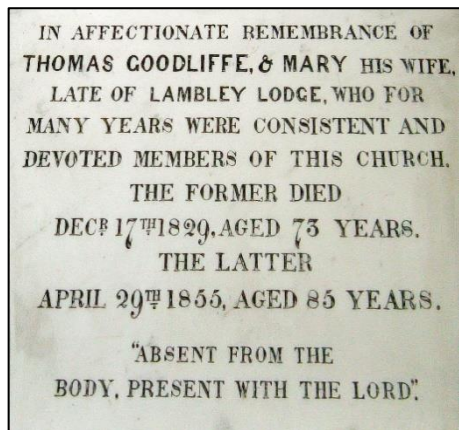
Just outside the village, on the east side of Lambley Lodge Lane, are earthworks thought to be connected with the former early nineteenth century **brickworks [10]**.

Lambley Lodge, about half a mile along this lane, but not part of this walk, is actually just in the parish of Leighfield and is one of the survivors of several sixteenth century forest lodges.
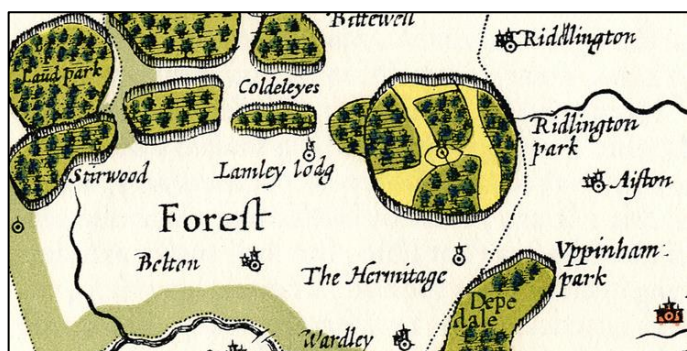
In the 1665 Hearth Tax return, 'Lamley' Lodge had two hearths chargeable when it was owned by Thomas Marston who died in 1702. The Goodliffe family of yeoman farmers were the next occupants and it continued to be their home for over 200 years. Simpson Stokes Goodliffe and his wife Sarah were the last Goodliffes to live at Lambley Lodge, leaving about 1905. His grandparents and parents were loyal supporters of both Morcott and Barrowden Baptist chapels and frequently

travelled there from Lambley Lodge for worship.

This memorial to Thomas and Mary Goodliffe of Lambley Lodge was in the former chapel at Barrowden (R O).

Campden of Exton in 1680, but there is no surviving evidence of it now. A post mill is recorded in this location on several late eighteenth century Rutland maps, including that by John Cary in 1805.

Belton windmill on John Cary's map of 1805.

Turn left and walk down Back Lane. On the left, there is a good view over the wall of Old Hall and the church.

A little further down, on the right, is the **Secret Garden [15]**, a children's playground with gardens, and on the left are the former stables to **Westbourne House [16]**.

Just beyond on the left is **Millfield [17]**, named after the pre-enclosure open field of Mill Field which it overlooks to the west. The house was built on the site of the workshops used by Archie Ringrose when he set up his garage here in 1921. His workshops were originally the barns and stables to his home at 1 Main Street, now known as **Ringrose House [18]**. At some time, he had acquired the clock from Loddington Hall stables which he later donated to Rutland County Museum. The dial he made for this clock remained on one of the garage buildings until it was demolished in 1995. It can now be seen on the gable end of Millfield.

The site of a former watermill on the north bank of West Brook, a tributary of the River Gwash, across the fields from Millfield, was found and investigated in 1997 (*Rutland Record* 18).

Lambley Lodge [Lamley lodg] on John Speed's map of c1610.

The Hornsby family who lived at Lambley Lodge in the early 1900s made Slipcote cheese, so named because of the nature of its outer skin. German prisoners of war from Ridlington Prisoner of War camp worked on this farm in the Second World War. By the 1960s the lodge had fallen into considerable disrepair and was unoccupied for many years before being restored.
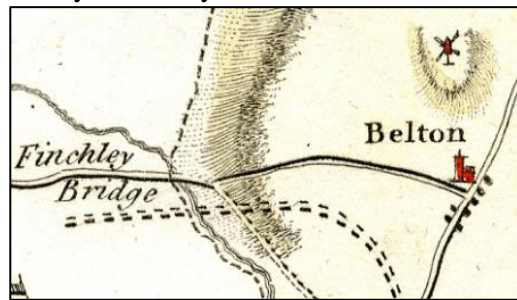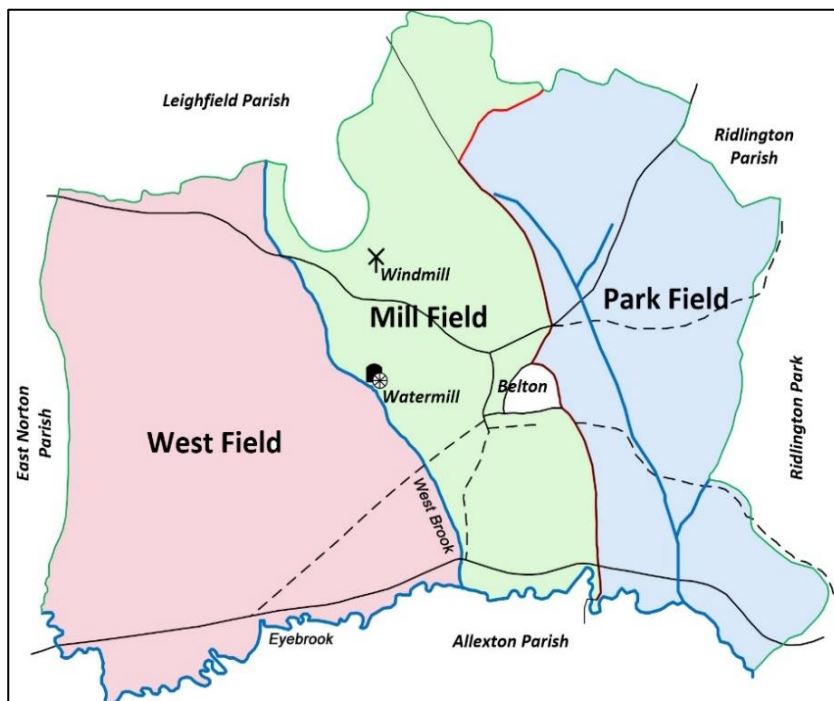
Now walk into Loddington Lane. The first house on the right, **4 Loddington Lane [11]**, was built in 1854 by Edward Elliott, a prosperous tailor who owned several other properties in the village. On the right, a little further along, the line of cottages at 6, 8 and 10 Loddington Lane stands at right angles to the street. This area is known as **Cotton End [12]**, perhaps referring to 'cottages at the end of the village', or to the fact that at one time they were the homes of several seamstresses. Edward Elliot is known to have lived in one of them.

In his will of 1741, Francis Allen, a carpenter, left a dwelling house in Loddington Lane to his son John, also a carpenter. This house, now 8 and 10 Loddington Lane, was '*lately Burnt Down and Destroyed*' in the Great Fire of 1776. John had lost not only his home but probably also his tools and his stock-in-trade. He received £27 8s 6d for goods from the Great Fire appeal fund.

Further long, on the left, are the **barns and stables [13]** of Old Hall (see below).

Continue to the junction with Back Lane and **Loddington Road [14]**. Belton windmill was in a field named Windmill Hill about half a mile along Loddington Road on the north side. It was sold to Baptist, Lord
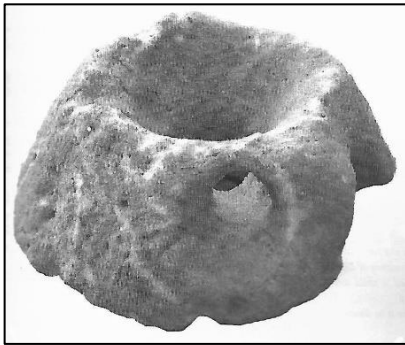

Belton pre-enclosure open fields. There were two mills in Mill Field (R O).

The watermill was leased to Robert Sylls of Belton for seven years at a cost of £5 in 1628 from Thomas Haselwood, Lord of the Manor (NRO C48). The marriage of Robert Sylls (Seels) and Francisca Beisson in 1601 and

the baptisms of their offspring are recorded in Belton parish registers, as is Robert Sylls' burial in 1644 (ROLLR DE 1785/1).

A late Iron Age or early Roman quern stone, used for hand grinding corn to make flour, was found during excavations in 2006 near the mill site, where an ancient footpath crosses West Brook. Iron slag, the waste produced from smelting iron ore, was also found on this site.

The quern stone found in 2006 near the watermill site (Rutland County Museum).

Continue down to the end of Back Lane. On the right is a signposted footpath which is an **old road** leading west into Leicestershire **[19]**. It was previously known as Stilton Way and Occupation Road.

Also on the right, at 2 New Road, is **Highfields [20]**, an early eighteenth-century Grade II listed house with its gable end facing the road. In 1881, this house was occupied by Fred Issit, an ale house merchant and in 1891 and 1901 by William Andrew, a brewer's agent who became a brewer's manager. The house was purchased by the Northampton Brewery Company possibly sometime in the 1880s; it is not known when they sold it. It was however known as 'The Stores'. It is now a private residence. It may have been the public house known as the Lion and Lamb (see Ivy Cottage **[39]** later).

Below Highfields, the first building on the right, at 4 New Road, is the former Victorian Vicarage, now known as **The Old Rectory [21]**. It is now in private ownership and offers traditional farmhouse style bed and breakfast accommodation and holiday lets.

Opposite Highfields, and leading to **Belton House**, is **Goughs Lane [22]**, named after former occupants of the house (see later).

Enter and walk along Main Street. On the left, the **two garage doors [23]** mark the former Main Street entrance to the garage set up by Archie Ringrose in 1921, now the garage to Millfield already seen in Back Lane. From here he sold petrol and serviced and repaired cars. He also took orders for new cars which he had to fetch from the factories including Wolseley, Standard, Austin and Triumph. He sold the garage in 1956, but continued to restore vintage cars, particularly MGs.

Next on the left, the single-story building at the front of 7 Main Street **[24]** was the greengrocery shop of Ron and Betty Ashby in the 1920s. They also sold fish and chips and ice cream made out of custard. The outline of the blocked-up shop window can still be seen in the front wall.

The Barn [25] at 9A Main Street, possibly together with the adjacent **Vine Cottage**, was the Belton workhouse which closed when the Uppingham Union Workhouse was opened in 1837.

Belton workhouse was then sold at auction in 1840 to William Ward who built the cottages at 5, 7 and 9 Main Street in the former workhouse garden. Thereafter, that part now known as The Barn was used as an outbuilding and garage until it was converted into a house in 1973.
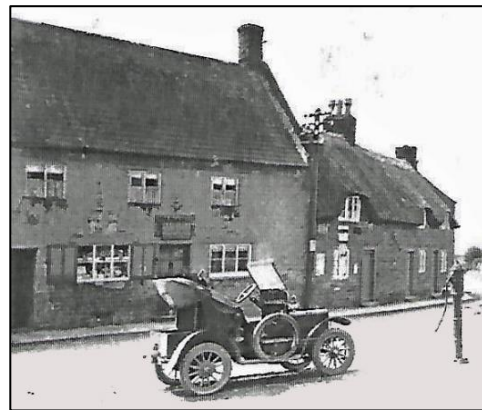
On the right, **Ringrose Cottage [26]** is the former home of Tom and Edith Ringrose, parents of Archie. It was one of the few remaining thatched properties in the village until the thatch caught fire in the 1990s.

Next to Ringrose Cottage at 20 Main Street is **Oak Beams [27]**, a former Post Office and shop. Notice the slot under the left-hand window which was used for posting letters. Later it was a grocery and general provisions shop run by sisters Kath and Hilda Grocock until it closed in the late 1940s.

The Grade II listed **Godfreys House [28]**, overlooking the square, is a fine yeoman's house of coursed rubble with limestone dressings and a Collyweston stone tiled roof. It dates from the mid seventeenth century when it was owned by the Kemp family. It is named after Godfrey Goodliffe (1818-1895) who purchased the house in 1880 from Mary Ann Eagleton, the daughter of John Eagleton, a tea dealer, and his wife Mary Ann (*née* Kemp), who lived at Belton House (see below). The Godfrey family had lived in Belton from the early seventeenth century.

Notice the round bullseye window in a stone frame with a hood mould over the doorway, and the plaque erected in 1982 when the village was renamed.

The mid-nineteenth century Grade II listed cast iron **village pump [29]** near Godfreys House garden wall, with its fluted head and long curved handle, was originally at the centre of the square as shown below and on the walk map. It was moved to its present position to allow the free flow of traffic, particularly the Midland Red bus.

Belton village pump about 1927 and in 2021. Ringrose Cottage with its thatch can be seen to the right in the background of the first photograph (June Lawton).

Continue to walk along Main Street, formerly known as Front Street. On the right, the **Sun Inn [30]** is the only public house in the village to survive and it has been a free house since 1996. Previously it had been owned by Northampton Brewery, Watney Mann and finally Wolverhampton and Dudley Breweries.

Also on the right is the **Village Hall [31]** which was built about 1904. A plaque in the hall records that it was presented to the village by Cecil Clare Gough of Belton House. In its day, it was well used for whist drives, barn dances and other social events.

In 1953, Archie Ringrose installed a television in here for villagers to watch the Coronation of Elizabeth II, the first time that most had experienced this new technology.

The plaque inside Belton village hall (S S).

Immediately opposite the Village Hall, the taller section of the wall is all that remains of the **original village school [32]**. It was built for 12 pupils in 1857 by John Eagleton and closed in 1870 when the new National School opened. It was then used as a reading room and Belton's first village hall, then a barn until it eventually became derelict.

Further along on the left, the Grade II listed **Ivydene Cottage [34]** at 23 Main Street is of late seventeenth century construction. The Great Fire of Belton is reputed to have started here on 26th May 1776 when a servant girl emptied hot ashes onto a litter heap at the rear, resulting in almost half of the village being destroyed. The red colour of the stone on the gable end wall and at the rear of the house is due to the fire. The house to the left of Ivydene Cottage **[33]** is built of brick on a stone base, suggesting that it was rebuilt after the fire.

Next on the right-hand side of Main Street is **Grooms Cottage [35]** and the **former stables to Belton House [36]**. The stables have been converted to private dwellings.

Further along, also on the right, is the **blocked-up gateway [37]** to the grounds of Belton House

Belton House [38], mainly unseen on this walk, is now a care home. It was built about 1830 by the wealthy Eagleton family of tea importers on the site of what is believed to be a former parsonage from when Belton was a chapelry of Wardley.

Col Fleming Gough, of Ystradgynlais, Breconshire, married Cecil Clare Jones-Ford in 1880 and located to Stockerston Hall in 1881 for the local hunting, moving to Belton House, which they leased, in 1883. They purchased the house in 1905 and added a new wing in 1906.

Belton House about 1910 (Jack Hart Collection).

When Fleming Gough died in 1933, aged 78, he was buried in Ystradgynlais Church cemetery. Cecil Clare donated a new bell and commissioned a stained-glass window to his memory in St Peter's Church, Belton. She died in December 1936 at Belton House.

Follow the road round to the right and walk a short way down Littleworth Lane.

On the left is the site of **Ivy Cottage [39]**, believed to have been an inn known as the Lion and Lamb in 1831. There is little evidence to prove this but Harry [Charles Henry] Browett whose family had lived in the cottage for many decades recalled that his uncle had found an old 'Lion and Lamb' sign in the bedroom of the cottage. Harry himself, born 1925, remembered there being raised stone platforms in a passageway, which may have been for the storage of beer barrels.

From the Stamford Mercury *Friday 9th December 1831.*

The Browett family home was a cruck-framed thatched cottage which was demolished in 1953 when 1 Littleworth Lane, the house behind, was built. A small section of the front wall of the cottage survives. Fred and Olive Browett, Harry's parents, had a dairy and they sold milk to the villagers up to about 1950.

Ivy Cottage in Littleworth Lane in 1910 (Jack Hart Collection).

Littleworth cottages about 1920 (Jack Hart Collection).

Further down Littleworth Lane at Littleworth, but not part of this walk, is a line of former terraced cottages [40], now converted and extended to form a single dwelling. A small thatched cottage and an outhouse at the northern end were demolished at the time of the conversion.

Turn round and walk half right into Nether Street. The first property on the right is **Parkfield [41]**, a Grade II listed former farmhouse in two parts, the earlier of which is probably early seventeenth century.

The high two-storey later part of Parkfield, with its gable facing the street is probably late eighteenth century. In the early part running along the street, notice the blocked-in windows, and the Jacobean doorway inserted where there is a dividing line between two old cottages. This part used to be a dairy run by John Stubbs.

Parkfield gets its name from the pre-enclosure open field of Park Field which it overlooks to the east.

Opposite Parkfield is **Woodland View [42]**, at 8 Nether Street, a Grade II listed house which is probably early eighteenth century, but of two builds. This was the home of John Loake at the time of the Great Fire in 1776. His house was saved from the ravages of the fire, but he received £82 3s for goods from the appeal fund, probably for items stored in his out-buildings. His letter in the *Stamford Mercury* on 14th October 1779 demonstrated that he was greatly troubled by the way the appeal fund had been distributed, implying fraudulent deeds, but his concerns were never answered.

Between this house and **The Cottage [45]** is a length of Grade II listed nineteenth-century coursed rubble walling. It has a re-sited datestone with J over G M and 1699. This datestone may have been recovered from one of the houses destroyed in this part of the village in the great fire of 1776.

Opposite the wall is **Finchley House [43]**, an unlisted nineteenth century brick-built property.

Finchley Bridge about 1930 (Jack Hart Collection).

The old bridge over the Eye Brook on the A47 between Belton and East Norton, now mostly lost to road widening, is known as **Finchley Bridge**. The name may relate to 'an area frequented by finches' (Cox).

Next on the same side of Nether Street is **Corby Cottage [45]**, named after the Corby family of farmers and blacksmiths. John Edward Corby, High Sheriff of Rutland from 1916 to 1919, donated the lych-gate at the south-east entrance of the churchyard in 1911 and unveiled the War Memorial in 1921.

Opposite Corby Cottage is **The Cottage [45]** at 6 Nether Street, a substantial unlisted stone-built property. In 1772 the house was conveyed by Dorothy Roberts of Glaston to Robert Sherard, 4th Earl of Harborough (ROLLR DE2374/16/4). Between 1772 and until at least 1791 it was occupied by William Cleypole, a tenant farmer who received £107 10s 'for goods' from the appeal fund after the Great Fire of 1776. The south gable end of this house shows signs of fire damage. It was probably saved because it had a slate roof.

Continuing up Nether Street, after The Cottage is another **stone wall [46]** which includes another re-sited datestone. This one is dated 1830.

Opposite is **Netherfield House [47]**, a substantial unlisted farmhouse, now re-named **Rutland Manor**. It was built by George Godfrey Ward of Belton in the late nineteenth century and probably stands on the site of an earlier house or houses.

Next, on the same side, is **Forge Cottage [48]**, built on the site of a former smithy. The village pinfold, or pound, an enclosure for holding stray animals, was also in this area. Edward Corby was the blacksmith before the Webb family took over the smithy sometime before 1881, later moving to the yard behind Woodland View at the bottom of Nether Street.

On the left of Nether Street is **Foresters Hall [49]**. It was built in 1914 on land which had been part of Thomas Wadd's garden. It was built as a meeting place for the Belton Lodge of the Ancient Order of Foresters. It was also used for social activities in the village. It is now in private ownership.

Opposite is the former **Black Horse Inn [50]**, now a private residence. This Grade II listed house dates from the mid-seventeenth century. The modern single-storey extension to the right was formerly a butcher's shop with the slaughterhouse in the rear yard. The shop was severely damaged by a German bomb in the Second World War.

On Whit Monday, 25th May 1943, a lone Dornier 217 bomber, being chased by British fighters, jettisoned four bombs over the village, causing deep craters. These are shown on the walk map as A, B, C and D.

The bomb crater in Nether Street outside The Black Horse Inn and below Gorse View in Church Street (Leicester Mercury).

The first bomb (A) fell in Mrs Miller's garden at 1 Church Street. The second bomb (B) caused the damage

to the butcher's shop and the third (C) fell in the garden of Old School House, where Mrs Crabbe, a retired schoolteacher lived. The fourth bomb (D) fell in the road adjacent to Home Farm barn which was extensively damaged. Fortunately, no one was hurt in this incident although the Black Horse Inn was busy at the time.

At the end of Nether Street, turn left and walk into Church Street.

Gorse View and The Limes [51], at 1 and 3 Church Street, are a pair of late seventeenth century Grade II listed cottages. At one time there was a private school here, the pupils being taught by a Mr Drowley. The Limes had been a haberdashery shop from about 1860. For much of the following period it was run by Miss Wadd and Miss Whyman and then Mrs Edith Miller from the 1920s to the 1950s. The bay window on the west end was the shop window, with the shop entrance marked by the blocked doorway seen on the front elevation. Note the four-centred stone arch surround to the entrance door of Gorse View, and the adjacent fire window with a stone surround.

Ethel Miller's haberdashery shop in 1924
(Jack Hart Collection).

Opposite, at the south-east entrance of the churchyard, is the lych-gate donated by John Edward Corby in 1911.

The churchyard lych-gate in 1911. Note the King's Stone in the foreground (Jack Hart Collection).

Next is **5 Church Street [52]**, a red brick house which was formerly a grocery shop.

7 and 9 Church Street [53] are a pair of Grade II listed cottages, now a single property. They are probably of mid-seventeenth century with later alterations. Note the four-centred arch doorway and stone mullioned windows.

Opposite is the Grade II* listed **Parish Church of St. Peter [54]**. Note the medieval stone effigies capping the churchyard wall by the electricity pole.

Enter the churchyard by either of the gates and note the many fine tombstones in the churchyard on all sides of the church.

This medieval parish church is mainly of fourteenth century origin, but the south arcade is *circa* 1200. The church was restored in 1897-8 by Talbot Brown and Fisher of Wellingborough who removed the box pews and west gallery, rebuilt the porch and restored the nave and chancel. Standing outside, note the three-stage tower and its parapet with battlements above a quatrefoil frieze. The porch has a sundial and two large waterspout gargoyles, and there are other gargoyles around the church roof.

The church is normally open during the daytime, and it is well worth exploring if time allows.

Next to the church is the Grade II* listed **Old Hall [55]** which was once the Manor House and the site of the house where the Blount family lived in the fourteenth century. The present house was probably built in the late sixteenth or early seventeenth century by the Haselwood family but altered by the Verney family about 1675.

John Eagleton of Belton House owned the Hall in 1846 and Edward Monkton of Fineshade was the owner by 1861. The occupants of Old Hall from 1861 until the early 1890s were Robert White Baines and his two sisters. A plaque in the church porch records: *The clock in the church tower was erected by Mary and Eliza Baines in loving memory of their dear brother Robert White Baines who died May 31st 1887.*

Pevsner considers Old Hall, which is built to an H-plan with gables to the projecting wings, to be the most interesting building in the village. In the middle room is a massive four-centred arched Tudor fireplace with a gadrooned frieze and cornice; a 'noble piece' as Pevsner describes it.

Opposite the front garden gate to Old Hall is **High Gables [56]**, a mid-seventeenth century Grade II listed house with a Welsh slate roof. A blocked door is evident between the windows on the front elevation, and it has stone mullioned windows to each floor and a fire window to left on the ground floor. Fire windows were often set in the wall beside an inglenook fireplace to provide light for cooking.

To the right of High Gables, the area shown on the map as an enclosed yard **[57]** was known as **Round Yard**, but the mid-seventeenth century cottages fronting the street were demolished in the 1960s. Access to the yard was via a ground floor covered way off Church Street. The room above this was the workshop of a Mr Abbott, a shoemaker, during the 1920s.

Cross the street to the parish notice board and post box and walk up to the gate with two stone piers. From here there is a view to the right of a Grade II listed '**crinkle-crankle' garden wall [58]** designed to grow fruit to the maximum advantage. This brick wall with rounded brick coping is probably late 18th or early 19th century and the bricks were probably made in Belton brickyard.

Return to Church Street and turn right. Immediately on the right is **4 Church Street [59]**, the right-hand part of which was the village shop and post office run by the Griffiths family for many years. The shop was temporarily renamed *Abbey Stores* when the BBC filmed *Signs & Wonders*, in the village in 1995, with James Earl Jones and Prunella Scales. It was the last surviving shop in Belton, but it finally closed about 2005. The old post box remains unused in the end wall.

Next on the right is a house which was a **bakery [60]** and old photographs show that this building originally had a thatched roof. The actual bakery was to the right of the front door and a passage led from this door to a hinged counter where bread was sold.

The Misses Goode were the bakers in the early 1900s, and their father had been the baker here from about 1841. A later baker was Harry Bond and the last baker in Belton was Fred Wadd until his bakery closed about 1950.

Next is the Grade II* listed **Westbourne House [61]**, a fine *circa* 1740 building flanked either side by pavilions of similar style but built at different times of dissimilar Ironstone ashlar. The main front is a well-balanced classical five-bay façade and probably represents a partial rebuilding of an earlier house. It has windows with twelve-light sashes and stone surrounds with keystones, and a central doorway in a channelled ashlar architrave. Curiously placed on the right-hand side of this architrave is a crudely scratched date of 1767 with the initials J S, or I S and a knot below. This is probably a later addition after a change of ownership, the new owner wanting to leave his mark. There is an even cruder scratched date on the other door jamb which may support this interpretation.

Opposite is the former **National School [62]**. It was built at a cost of £383 on church glebe land given by Rev C H Newmarch to the design of the Rev Gardner who was then curate in charge. It opened on 18th April 1870 as a single room for 40 pupils from Belton, Allexton and Wardley, and extended with an infants' room in 1895. After its closure in 1971, it eventually became the home of Belton Pre-School.

This is the end of the walk which we hope you have enjoyed.

Originally researched by Betty Finch, Peter Lane, Sheila Sleath and Robert Ovens.
Updated by Sheila Sleath and Robert Ovens.

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Fred Browett with members of his family outside Ivy Cottage in Littleworth Lane about 1912 (Jack Hart Collection).

Colin Griffiths and Malcolm Bradshaw unveiling Belton's new name on 27th March 1982 (Leicester Mercury).

College Farm Lane

Baptist Chapel (General)

Lambley Lodge Lane (formerly Oakham Road)

Loddington Road

Loddington Lane

Loddington Lane

Old Hall

St Peter's Church (Vicarage)

Grave Yard

Smithy

Netherfield House

Belton

Church Street

Nether Street

School

Back Lane

Main Street

Inn

P.O.

Main Street

Gough's Lane

New Road

Vicarage

Belton House

Littleworth Lane

N
W — E
S

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62

A, B, C, D