

Rutland Local History & Record Society

Record Society

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Market Overton Village Walk September 2018 (updated 2020)

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INTRODUCTION

The first recorded mention of the village is in the Domesday survey of 1086 where it is simply called 'Overtune'. The name is a combination of the Old English 'ofer', meaning ridge, and 'tun' meaning farmstead or village. Thus 'the settlement on a ridge', a perfect description of the village's location.

The first warrant for a market to be held at Market Overton was issued in 1267. During its rather brief seventy-one-year history, the market was held in a field to the east of the church, and in poor weather most likely in the church itself.

The population of the village has increased and decreased over the years. In 1841, it was 503. By 1901 it had fallen to 294 as a result of migration to urban areas. With the coming of quarrying, the population had increased to 368 by 1911. In 2001, it was 494, rising to 584 in 2011.

THE VILLAGE MAP

The map attached to this guided walk is based on the 25 inch to one mile Ordnance Survey 2nd edition map of 1904. Consequently, later buildings, extensions and demolitions are not shown. Numbers in the text, [9] for example, refer to locations shown on the map.

The walk starts at the Village Hall. The route will then take you along Main Street, Berrybushes, Teigh Road and Thistleton Road, returning to the Village Hall via Bowling Green Lane.

Please:

Respect private property.

Use pavements and footpaths where available.

Take great care when crossing roads.

Remember that you are responsible for your own safety.

THE WALK

From the **Village Hall [1]**, turn right into Main Street. Walk past Bowling Green Lane on the right and continue to the bend in Main Street.

In the later part of the 19th and early 20th century the village carrier was William Munday who lived in a cottage on the left [2], now demolished but shown on the map. Carrying people, produce and even live animals by horse and cart, he plied his trade on market days to

Oakham on Saturday, Stamford on Monday and Friday, and Melton on Tuesday.

On the left is **Old Hall [3]**, a building much altered and extended over the years, and formerly the home of the Wingfield family. Sir John Wingfield acquired the manor of Market Overton and became Sheriff of Rutland in 1631. Until the early part of the 20th century the family owned all but three properties and a great deal of land here. They also held the advowson of this parish and of Tickencote, and numerous Wingfields have been rectors in both parishes.

During the latter part of the 19th and early part of the 20th century the Misses Anne Frances, Jane Adelaide and Harriet Emily Wingfield lived at the Old Hall, together with six servants. All three are commemorated in Market Overton church, but are buried at Tickencote. Tickencote Hall, the main family residence, was demolished in 1950.



Left to right: Market Overton House, a cottage now demolished, and the Old Hall in 1906. (Jack Hart Collection)

Almost opposite Old Hall is the Georgian fronted **Market Overton House [4]**. Here lived William Hinman Wing (1859-1912) who was a pillar of the community in his day. He was a teacher, musician and fellow of the Society of Antiquaries. He took a great interest in the extensive Roman and Anglo-Saxon archaeological finds in the area, and presented talks and exhibitions to local groups and societies.

However, he was responsible for mistakenly identifying earthworks to the east of the church as a 'Roman Station', perpetuated on Ordnance Survey maps up to 1952. Archaeologists now agree that these earthworks were probably the foundations of medieval buildings lost in the extensive quarrying in this area.



Picking lavender in Lady Barbara Seymour's fields, c1920. (Jack Hart Collection)

Next to Old Hall is **Coldstream Cottage**, at 23 Main Street [5]. It was occupied in 1901 by Thomas Pick who left £400 in his will to a village charity for the distribution of coal to the poor. Later, this was the home of Lady Barbara Seymour, a noted huntswoman and owner of lavender fields at the end of the road leading to Cottesmore airfield.

Look along the gravel drive just beyond Coumb Cottage at 21 Main Street to see the outbuilding at the rear [6]. In 1901, this was a laundry run by Catherine Claxon, a widow with four children. The well still exists in the garden behind the outhouse and traces of the fireplace where the cauldrons were boiled are still apparent inside.

Immediately opposite Coumb Cottage is a pair of **brick-built cottages** [7]. In 1901 the cottage to the right was occupied by Suzannah Tomlin, 65, a widow and shoe dealer. George Osborne, 61, a butcher's assistant lived in the other cottage.

Next to the cottages is a large house converted from a barn in recent times. Beyond is **Glebe Farm** [8], in the tenancy of Henry Hibbitt, a farmer and grazier in 1901. 'Glebe' refers to property belonging to the church and historically the rector would have derived an income from it. Farmhouses, barns and outbuildings were once very much at the heart of the village.

In the row of **terraced cottages** opposite (on the west side of Main Street) the first, at the south end [9], was a grocer's shop and post office in 1901, run by Ann Measures, spinster, and Ruby Taylor, her assistant. In 1904 there were two deliveries and collections of mail every day. Next to it, the cottage with a canopy above the door was home to Ernest Whittle, coal agent, his wife and four children. In 1911 Ernest was recorded as an ironstone worker, but his cottage was now a butcher's shop run by John William Brown. The last cottage in this row [10], at the north end, was once the saddlery. In 1901 it was run by Harriet Smith, her niece Grace and a servant. By 1911 the business had been taken over by Arthur Gibson who lived here with his wife Mary and young son Leonard.

Just beyond is a Grade II listed Type K6 **telephone kiosk** [11]. It was designed in 1935 by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott to commemorate the Silver Jubilee of the coronation of King George V. Of the 60,000 K6 kiosks installed in Britain, 10,700 remain.

Now continue to walk along Main Street towards the village green. On the right is the eighteenth-century Grade II listed **Three Horseshoes** public house [12] which became a private dwelling in the 1990s. In 1901, the innkeeper was Sarah Tyrell, a widow with two children. Sarah also ran the post office from the same building in the late 19th century. In 1911, Henry Tyrell, Sarah's son aged 34, was the landlord at the Three Horseshoes. He was succeeded by John Orgil who was to die as a prisoner of war at Aachen during the Great War.

To the right of the former pub and attached to it is the premises once known as the **'bottom shop'** [13], a grocers and general retailers. William Bell was the grocer in 1901. This also ceased trading in the 1990s.

The carriage opening under the left-hand end of the former Three Horseshoes leads to **Fountains Row** [14],



The Three Horseshoes and 'the bottom shop', c1905. (Jack Hart Collection)



Fountains Row, early 1900s. (Jack Hart Collection)

a row of small cottages originally built for the poor with outside taps and communal toilets.

To the left of the entrance to Fountains Row, with its original door and weathervane in the shape of a fox, is the former **blacksmith's workshop** [15] which



The smithy and stocks, early 1900s. (Jack Hart Collection)

continued until well into the 20th century. In 1901, the smith was William Bursnall who lived here with his wife Emma, three sons and two daughters. The village pump originally stood in front of it. It was the doctor's surgery for a time in the 1990s and is now a private house.

Continue to walk along Main Street. The first house on the right, next to the former smithy, is the large house known as **Manortoft [16]**, previously named The Limes. In 1901 it was occupied by William King, a farmer, his wife Evelina, two sons and two servants. Unusually they also kept racehorses, their colours being cherry red and white. Next to Manortoft is **Old Manor [17]**, at 10 Main Street. It was occupied by John Hinman, another farmer, and his wife Susannah, together with three sons and two daughters in 1901.

Opposite is a large Georgian fronted house known as **Greystones [18]**. Until the 1920s, it was a school with an average attendance of about 80 pupils. Arthur Pittaway, the headmaster, kept a diary in which he constantly bewailed the fact that many children were absent. Education was not a high priority for farming families and their children were seen as an economic resource. They were needed for work in the fields and elsewhere at busy times.

Next door but one to Greystones is the present-day **post office and shop [19]**. The first public telephone in the village was installed here in the 1920s. In 1901, and for many years before, this was a draper's shop run by George Skillington, his wife, son and daughter. By 1911 the business had been taken over by George's son Frederick, now described as a draper and clothier, and his wife Ethel. Vere Whittle, an apprentice to Mr Skillington, and Vere's brother Owen, a policeman, both lost their lives whilst serving as soldiers in the Great War.



The shop at the north end of Main Street in 1904. (Jack Hart Collection)

Now retrace your steps along Main Street to the **village green [20]**. The much-repaired Grade II listed stocks and whipping post, last used in 1837, were made in the late 18th century by John Wilbourne, who himself was later confined in them for drunkenness.

Now turn to face the thatched **Stocks Cottage [21]** on the western side of the village green and note that there were originally three front doors. In 1901, these three

cottages were occupied separately by sisters Alice and Eliza Faulks, the third property being unoccupied. By 1911 it was a single household. Alice was the head and both were of 'private means'.

Now look at the large house on the opposite corner of Main Street and Berrybushes **[22]**. Harriet Ayscough, the grandmother of Sir Isaac Newton, lived in a previous house on this site. Isaac lived at Woolsthorpe and he is said to have been a frequent visitor here. In recognition of this, Earl Fitzwilliam of Barnsdale presented a carved stone head of Isaac to the then owner. It can still be seen on the wall of the building in the corner of the garden. Sir Isaac Newton was Professor of Mathematics at Cambridge, Master of the Mint and an MP.

The present Grade II listed house was built as a doctor's surgery in 1861. In 1901 the doctor was John Scott, surgeon. The sales particulars for this house in 1929 describe it as being suitable for use as a 'Hunting Box', having paddocks and stables and being close to the Cottesmore Hunt kennels at Ashwell. In the season, hunting was available locally on six days a week with the Cottesmore, the Quorn and the Belvoir.



Rear of the Grade II listed house built as a doctor's surgery in 1861. From a postcard of, c1908. (Jack Hart Collection)

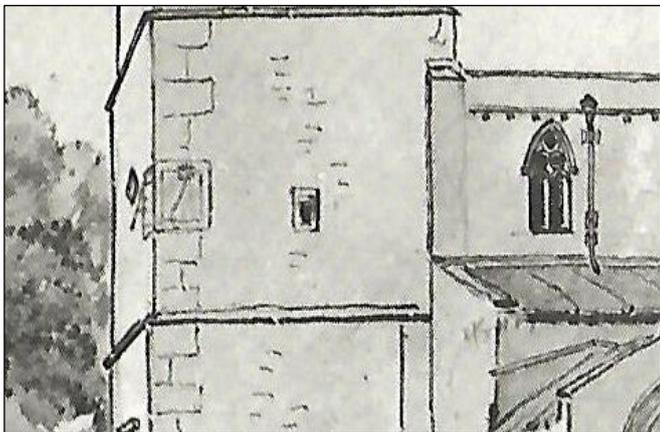
Now cross the road and walk along Berrybushes which gets its name from the orchards which used to be further down on the right-hand side. The single storey building on the right **[23]** is the former Reading Room built by William Wingfield about 1906 for the benefit of the ironstone quarry workers. It became the village school in the 1920s but was closed in 1971. Most primary school children now attend the school in Langham.

The house set back from the road on the left-hand-side with a tall chimney is **6 Berrybushes [24]**. It was a bakery in 1901 run by Mary Becroft, a widow. Wally Hudson was the last baker in the village, retiring in 1953. It was often said of him that '*it wasn't only Alfred who burnt the cakes*'.

Staddlestones [25], the next house on the left, was home in 1901 and 1911 to stonemason Henry Lowe and his wife Elizabeth. Opposite is a Grade II listed **eighteenth century cottage** [26], once the home of William Kellam, gamekeeper to Major John Wingfield. In the 1980s it was the village surgery.

Now continue along Berrybushes to the junction with Teigh Road. Almost opposite, to the left of the Church, is the Grade II listed **Old Rectory** [27]. It was built in 1858 by Sidney Smirke, RA (1797-1877) who received the RIBA Royal Gold Medal in 1860. His many projects include the circular reading room at the British Museum. In 1911, the occupant of the Rectory was the Rev Folliott L. Salusbury, aged 64, who lived here with his wife Cicely, a daughter and three servants.

Enter the churchyard and walk up to the Grade I listed church dedicated to **St Peter and St Paul** [28]. On the south west corner of the tower are the remains of a double sundial given to the church by Sir Isaac Newton, but the painted numerals of both dials and the gnomon to the west-facing dial have long since disappeared.



An 1839 drawing in Uppingham School Archives shows that both church sundials were then more complete.

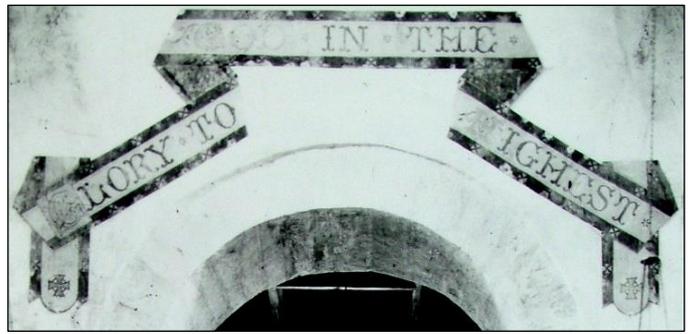
Evidence of the church's Saxon origins survives in the stones with typical Saxon twisted knot decoration which can be seen on all three faces at the base of the tower. Also, the uprights of the **stile** [29] at the rear of the churchyard are believed to be from an Anglo-Saxon church window.

If time permits, now is a good opportunity to explore inside this delightful village church and discover its many features and memorials, using the printed guide that can be found inside.

Here are some of the highlights:-

As you go into church please close the outer door behind you. On the left is the **font** which the architectural historian Nikolaus Pevsner describes as 'a very weird combination of two large capitals, the foot an Early English stiff-leaf capital upside down, the bowl a big square Norman capital'.

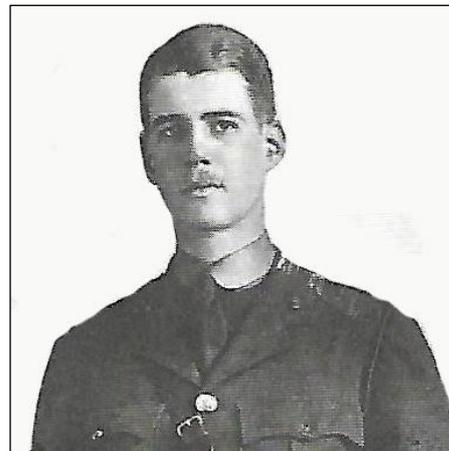
Between the font and the door is the **stone coffin** of a child. However, there is no evidence to date it. The **rounded arch** leading into the bell tower is Saxon in origin. Pevsner describes it as 'the only worthwhile piece of Anglo-Saxon architecture in the county'. Above it was a decorated scroll inscribed 'Glory to God in the Highest', sadly now painted over.



The scroll 'Glory to God in the Highest' now obliterated. (Jack Hart Collection)

To the right of the archway is a memorial to **Anne Frances Wingfield**. The Wingfield Family Society paid for the restoration of this plaque some years ago.

In the south-east corner of the nave, you will find a window dedicated to **William Wing** and below it a plaque and cross to his grandson, **Vincent Sladen Wing** who was killed in the First World War at La Gorgue in France. The cross that marked his grave was one of around 2000 that were brought back to Britain.



Vincent Sladen Wing. (Phillips, Rutland and the Great War)

Walk into the chancel and up to the altar. The window behind the altar, dated 1813, is dedicated to **John Muxloe Wingfield** and his wife Catherine. The window to the right depicts Saints Peter and Paul to whom the church is dedicated. On the wall to the left of the altar the memorial with a striking coat of arms is to **Henry Tymperon**, rector from 1700 to 1725.

Return to the church door. On the left is the imposing memorial to **John Mottram** who, at the time of his death, lived in St Martin's, Stamford. The coat of arms is that of the Mottram family with the Tymperon arms superimposed. At the time of John Mottram's death in 1759, Catholics were still persecuted in Britain. However, early in his life he had travelled to Spain where he trained for and was ordained a Catholic priest. On returning to England he fell into debt and was imprisoned in London. He underwent a change of conscience whilst in prison and was issued with warrants to arrest Catholic priests on his release; he had become a 'priest catcher'.

As you leave the church please ensure that the doors are securely closed.

Walk along the path towards the lychgate and look up at the church roof where the chancel joins the nave to see the small bell cote which once housed the Sanctus Bell.

Before Henry VIII's Reformation of the Church, all churches were Catholic. The Sanctus Bell was rung at the holiest point of the mass when the consecrated host was raised. The only other surviving Sanctus bell cote in Rutland is at Manton, but records show that there were medieval Sanctus Bells at seven other Rutland churches.

Further along the path, on your left you will see several grand tombs occupying pride of place in the churchyard at the east end of the church. These are for rectors and their wives, several being members of the Wingfield family.

Now walk down to the Grade II listed **lychgate** at the east entrance to the churchyard [30]. It was made and erected by the men of the village and unveiled on Easter Sunday in 1922 as a memorial to those who died in the Great War. On the piers are the names of the men from the village who lost their lives in both World Wars. Market Overton lost ten sons in World War I, all named here. Nearby Teigh is known as a '*thankful village*' by virtue of having lost none.

Almost opposite the lychgate in Teigh Road is **Church Cottage** [31]. In 1901 it was the home of Thomas Rouse, a groom, his wife Mary, four sons and four daughters. Tragically, two of the sons were to lose their lives in World War I - Martin in France in 1914 and Tom in the Dardanelles in 1915, both reported 'missing, believed killed'.

The large house fronting the road is **The Old Manor House** [32], a Grade II listed house of 2½ storeys with stone coped gables. It has a datestone on the right gable front corner with 'M I M 1733'. Edward Costal, retired farmer and parish constable occupied this house in 1901.

Next to The Old Manor House is the **Black Bull** public house [33]. The landlord of the Black Bull in 1901 was Samuel Barfoot. In 1911, the new landlord was William Martin who lived here with his wife Ethel, three young children and two boarders. Until 1855 the pub was simply known as The Bull. The cellar was often used as a mortuary and it will have seen more than its fair share of corpses - it was the coolest place to keep a body before



Quarrying by hand at Market Overton in 1910. (Kate Don)

burial.

Continue to walk along Thistleton Road to the gap in the hedge [34] at the far end of the houses on the north side and look across the large field. Today this is a tranquil rural landscape, but from 1906 to 1972 the scene was very different. Extensive quarrying for ironstone was carried out

between Market Overton and Thistleton, at first by hand, but later using huge dragline machines. Calcine banks hundreds of yards long, known locally as 'callibanks', were used to fire the ore and raise its iron content, producing copious amounts of smoke, steam and red dust.

Railways transported the ore to the foundries at Scunthorpe, and later Corby via Pain's sidings on the Saxby to Bourne railway to the north, now dismantled. James Pain, the first to exploit the area for its iron ore on an industrial scale, built locomotive sheds and workshops at the hub of the quarry system and this area is now Market Overton industrial estate. The 'Rocks by Rail' railway museum between Cottesmore and Ashwell now houses some of the old locomotives and rolling stock.

During quarrying in 1907 and 1908, two Anglo-Saxon pagan cemeteries were found just to the north of where you are standing. Numerous grave goods were found, including many exquisite brooches and beads dating from around AD 550. These are now in Rutland County Museum where some are displayed.

James Pain started quarrying in Market Overton in 1906. His first quarry, known as '**The Parks**' [35], was behind the line of 12 **quarry workers cottages** [36] which he built about 1908.



Quarry worker's cottages in Thistleton Road, c1910. (Jack Hart Collection)

The turning to the left [37] just beyond the quarry workers cottages leads to Market Overton Industrial Estate, formerly the quarry locomotive sheds and workshops. The railway line to the quarry system was on the west side of this drive and passed through a tunnel under Thistleton Road into 'The Parks' quarry.

Walk down the short drive at the east end of the cottages to see the village **cricket pitch** [35] which was established in the sunken area of the former quarry.

Return to Thistleton Road, turn left and then left again and walk down Bowling Green Lane. On the right is Market Overton **Bowls Club** [38], which gives the lane its name.

Continue to walk down the lane. The large housing estate on the left [39] was built on land which was James Pain's second ironstone quarry, begun in 1911 and excavated to a depth of about 1.5 metres. This land, between here and The Lodge, was known as Lodge Close, originally part of the Exton Estate. From 1820, **The Lodge** [40], now the Lodge Trust, was rented together with its surrounding fields from the Exton Estate by Richard Westbrook Baker, the eminent Rutland

agriculturalist and Steward on the Estate. It was here that he started his prizewinning herd of Shorthorn cattle.



The Lodge Trust. (Wikipedia)

Fred and Anne Hutton started the Lodge Trust in 1984 to provide a home and meaningful work for adults with learning disabilities within a Christian context. The Trust, in its original form, consisted of a farmhouse, a few outbuildings, and 20 acres of land on which sheep were kept. Now there is a block of individual apartments for 30 people as well as work opportunities for the residents in the grounds, kitchen, crafts and laundry. The land is now a country park with a café, both of which are open to the public six days a week.

Near the end of Bowling Green Lane is another former smithy [41]. This ceased around 1910.

Turn left at the junction with Main Street to return to the **Village Hall** [1] and the end of this walk.



The newly erected Village Hall in 1932. (Jack Hart Collection)

Acknowledgements

This walk is based in part on *Market Overton Village Walk* published by Kate Don in 2009.

David Gilmour, Sheila Sleath, Uppingham School Archives and Rutland County Museum (Jack Hart Collection).

Robert Ovens

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

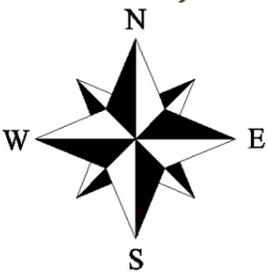
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ROMAN STATION
(Supposed Site of)

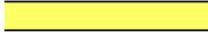
'The Parks'
quarry

Market Overton

The Lodge



Key:

- Area of former ironstone quarry 
- Public highway 
- Property noted in the walk 

