

# An historical fenland walk around CROWLAND

An 11 mile journey through a landscape shaped by water

## Directions

Leave the starting point in the Abbey car park, heading eastwards, towards the far corner of churchyard.

**1** Take route diagonally over 'Kissing Ground', note the 'Kissing Gate'. At far corner follow wide path to main road (A1073) keeping Snowden Playing Fields on right, and houses on left.

**2** Cross over A1073, taking care. Continue on footpath with ditch on right for approximately 540m (1/3 mile).



**3** At footbridge, cross over Yellow Stockings Road. Follow signed path until crossing footbridge on left. Follow wide field track to Half Acres. At T junction turn right, continue until A1073.

**4** Turn left. Walk along left verge for approx. 20 metres, then cross over onto lay-by on right.

**5** Continue along Postland Road past Millfield Gardens. Cross the road again with old school on right.

**6** Turn right at next junction into Kemp Street. After 400m (1/4 mile) turn right onto North Bank (gravelled track). For Short Walk turn left here onto West Bank.

**7** A short distance along North Bank cross stile on left, keep to top track until next stile at Breach Pits on right.

**8** With Clout House on right, go through hand gate (note the large willows) Bear left and continue on metalled road to Brotherhouse Bar.



**9** Take wide track on left, over wooden bridge to River Welland, do not cross footbridge. Turn left onto bank top and continue towards Pump House, now heading back towards Crowland (southward)

**10** At the road bridge, cross to opposite stile. Turn left to another stile at head of the 'Rig Bit'. Continue, with lake on your left, to far end passing proposed wildlife pond.



**11** Cross bridge and bear right onto metalled path along West Bank. Turn left into West Street to Trinity Bridge. Go under or over bridge into East Street noting mounting block opposite ironmongers shop. Continue back to Abbey Car Park.

The history and geography of Crowland have been shaped by water - by rivers and the fens. In Saxon times the rivers and creeks of the fens were ideal routes for invading Vikings. They, and the Romans before them, realised the wealth tied up in the rich fen landscape. Man has struggled over the last millennium to drain the fens and release this agricultural wealth, initially for sheep and wool, now for arable farming. The millennium trail is an exploration of Crowland's history and the struggle against encroaching water.

## Short Walk option - 5 km (3 miles)

For short walk follow points from 1-6, but ignore gravelled track and continue along metalled path on West Bank top until reaching West Street, turn left into West Street and follow to Trinity Bridge in the town. Go under or over bridge into East Street and continue back to the Abbey car park.

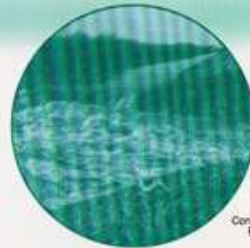
## Waymarkers

The route is waymarked with Millennium Trails Waymarkers.

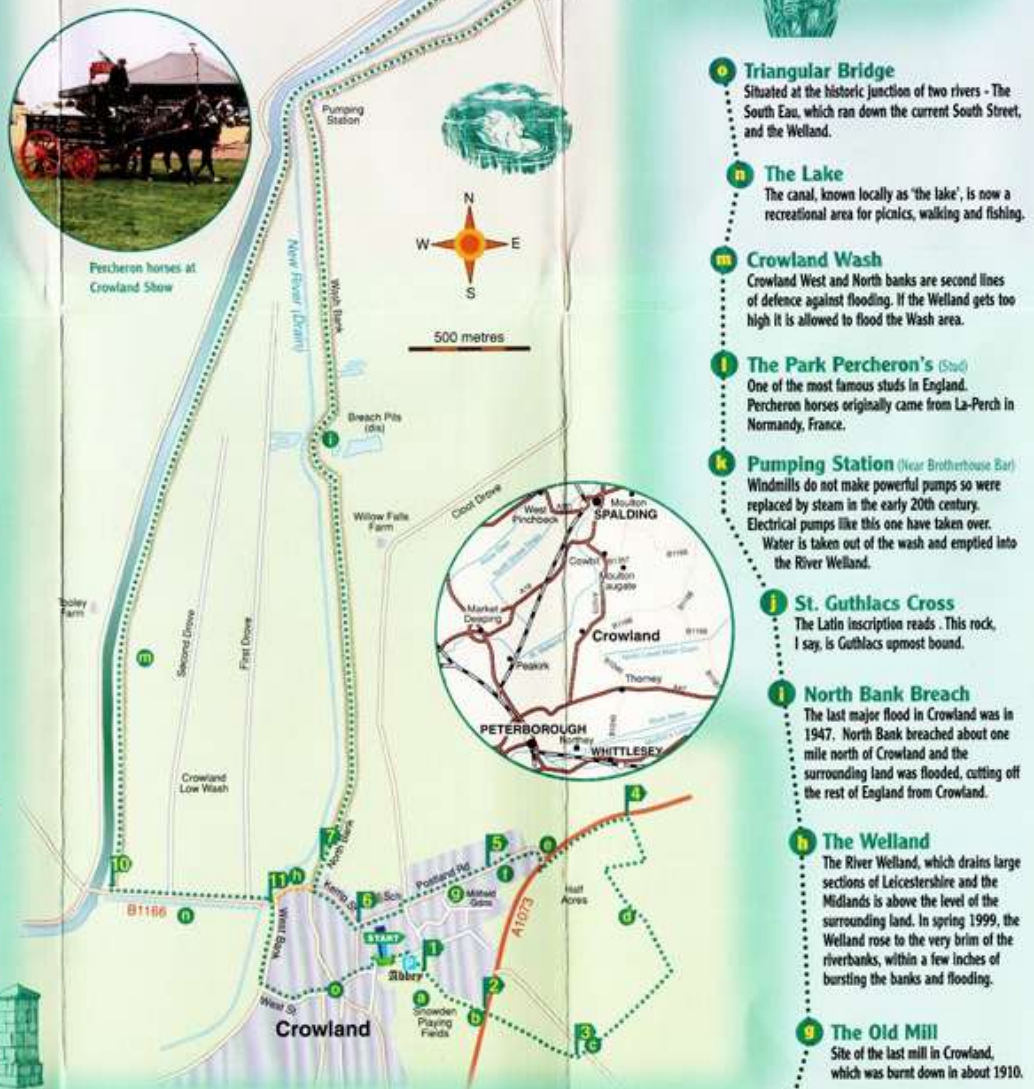
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Percheron horses at Crowland Show



Crowland Floods in 1947



### o Triangular Bridge

Situated at the historic junction of two rivers - The South Eau, which ran down the current South Street, and the Welland.

### n The Lake

The canal, known locally as 'the lake', is now a recreational area for picnics, walking and fishing.

### m Crowland Wash

Crowland West and North banks are second lines of defence against flooding. If the Welland gets too high it is allowed to flood the Wash area.

### i The Park Percheron's (Stud)

One of the most famous studs in England. Percheron horses originally came from La-Perch in Normandy, France.

### k Pumping Station (Near Brotherhouse Bar)

Windmills do not make powerful pumps so were replaced by steam in the early 20th century. Electrical pumps like this one have taken over. Water is taken out of the wash and emptied into the River Welland.

### j St. Guthlacs Cross

The Latin inscription reads 'This rock, I say, is Guthlacs upmost bound.'

### i North Bank Breach

The last major flood in Crowland was in 1947. North Bank breached about one mile north of Crowland and the surrounding land was flooded, cutting off the rest of England from Crowland.

### h The Welland

The River Welland, which drains large sections of Leicestershire and the Midlands is above the level of the surrounding land. In spring 1999, the Welland rose to the very brim of the riverbanks, within a few inches of bursting the banks and flooding.

### g The Old Mill

Site of the last mill in Crowland, which was burnt down in about 1910.

### f 1000 miles (in 1000 hours)

At Girdlestone House, see plaque commemorating Henry Girdlestone's 1000 mile walk at the age of 56 in 1844.

### e Guthlacs Stone

Commemorating the landing of St Guthlac 1300 years ago.

## Did you know?

### a Coffin guard

The Coffin guard on the church wall was once used to stop people stealing the coffins! There are not many of these left in the country.

### b Snowden Field

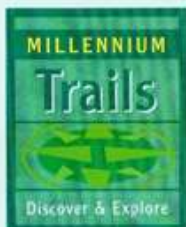
The many cows that grazed here supplying Crowland with milk and butter were taken to town to be milked and returned twice a day.

### c Yellow Stockings Road

The fields were covered in buttercups. As the girls walked across the fields to collect their cows, their legs were covered in yellow pollen - hence the name!

### d Half Acres

Half Acres is now a field of considerable size. When the male citizens came home from the war they were allotted a portion of land - half an acre.



Coffin guard