

Grimsargh Heritage Walks

In Celebration of Preston Guild 2012

This is plain text copy of the wording used in the walks leaflets which are available to view on the Parish Council website (www.grimsarghparishcouncil.org) and can be purchased from Grimsargh Post Office.

Walk1 Starting from the Village Green car park

About 2½ miles – allow around 1-1½ hours (walking time)

Haydock Cottage 1850

Originally Brown's Farm - just opposite the car park - it is one of the few remaining farm buildings seen from this walk, the rest being down private tracks.

(2) The Village Green

One of the largest Village Greens in Lancashire, once farmland, it was donated by a local resident to the Preston Rural District Council in the 1920's for 'recreation & leisure'.

Make your way anti-clockwise around the Green towards the Willow Arbour, pond and wildflower area where there is an interpretive board. Continue along this path to join Preston Road and turn right passing:

(3) Grimsargh House

Built in the Georgian period, Grimsargh House is on the south side of the Green. An early owner, James Blanchard, had much influence on the Village in the 1840's and in 1942 its owners, the Mallotts, leased a strip of land to the Grimsargh Parochial School for 1 shilling a year. This land later became the Nellie Carbis Woodland.

Continue along Preston Road for about 150 yards. You will come to:

(4) The Nellie Carbis Millennium Woodland

This was originally a school garden set up during WW2 by Nellie Carbis - a long serving Headmistress of Grimsargh Parochial School. It was restored and re-opened for visitors in 2000 and is now maintained by volunteers as a natural woodland.

Continue along Preston Road for about 90 yards. Across the road is a terrace of low cottages:

(5) The Pinfold Cottages

Originally the site of the Village Pound or 'Pinfold', in 1807 the Lord of the Manor, William Cross built cottages and a smithy on the site. The Village Smithy then moved from its original site next door to the old school house (at 7), into what is now Ivy Cottage. It operated from here until 1852 when it moved again, this time to be closer to the new Railway Station. Originally three ivy covered cottages they were later made into four.

Continue over the Skew Bridge, the first house on the right is:

(6) St Michael's - the old school house

Built by public subscription in 1809 and closed in 1968 when Grimsargh St Michael's School opened. Before 1809 there was a 'Dame School' at Schoolhouse Farm opposite the Pinfold Cottages.

(7) 'Headmaster's House'

Next door to the old school house is a building bearing the date stone JAH1809; built on the site of the original smithy, the Blacksmith John Hothersall Senior was its first occupant. The house was later used by the Head Teachers of Grimsargh School.

Continue along the same side of the road for about 500 yards to:

(8) St Michael's Church

First opened as a Chapel in 1716, it was enlarged in 1815 and further rebuilt in 1868 with monies provided by the Cross family from Red Scar. It became a full Parish Church in 1875.

Continue down the road for about 470 yards and cross over to:

(9) Grimsargh War Memorial

Raised on the base of an ancient wayside cross at the entrance to Grimsargh, the old cross was restored as a War Memorial after WW1. The stone next to it once formed part of the old Grimsargh with Brockholes stocks.

Turn back towards Grimsargh, after about 400 yards, almost opposite the Church is:

(10) St Michael's Vicarage

Built in 1824 by monies provided once again by the Cross family. (Currently in private occupancy)

Continue towards Grimsargh and take the footpath to the right of the bridge, named 'Old Railway Walk'; it was once part of the route of the Preston to Longridge railway. Walk down Old Railway Walk to the end. On the left are the Grimsargh Club, the Village Store and Post Office. Almost opposite is the Plough Inn.

The old Congregational Mission House & Meeting Rooms stood on what is now the Grimsargh Club car park. Grimsargh Club was the Village Co-op Grocery Store and later became the Grimsargh Post Office (after it moved from across the road where Kersey's is now). Until the 1930's, the Blacksmith and Farrier were situated next to the Plough Inn, while the Wheelwright worked from a barn attached to the Inn.

Cross the road to:

(11) The Plough Inn

Built in 1785 as a farm, it became a coaching stop and was eventually licensed as an Inn in 1823. It was also used for inquests on occasions and as a ticket office for trains of the Longridge line until the new railway station was built across the road in 1870. The railway and station closed to passengers in 1930 but freight continued until 1967. Old Station Close was built on the site of the station.

Take the footpath to the left of the Plough Inn, this is a continuation of the old railway line to Longridge. About 125 yards after the first stile, at a lone concrete post, take the footpath to the right down the embankment to a second stile and cross the field to a well-made track. Turn left to follow this track until you come to a stile in the hedge on your right (about 150 yards). Climb the stile crossing the field with Dam House Farm (1700's) on your left and parallel to the reservoir embankments on your right. (This field can be wet at times). Climb over the next stile before turning immediately right to climb over a ladder stile and up onto the embankment, turning left to follow the path around the second reservoir.

(12) Grimsargh Reservoirs

The first two reservoirs at Grimsargh were completed in 1835 and all three were decommissioned in 2001 - the area being granted heritage status in 2003. It was designated a Wetland Wildlife Reserve in 2009.

Follow the causeway footpath that leads through the reservoirs and to Preston Road opposite Elston Lane. Cross the road and walk down Elston Lane – passing Tunbrook Avenue to:

(13) The Hermitage

Probably built around 1820, it was a private family house until 1873, and then St John's College for boys until 1909. It was a restaurant between 1964 & 1989 and has been a private dwelling house again since 1993. The name probably derives from a much earlier building on the site.

Continue down the lane and after 50 yards turn right into Elston Green.

The area between Elston Green and Woodlands Grove was once the site of the Grimsargh Corn Mill, Mill Dam Cottages and the Mill Pond. The Mill fell into disuse by 1900.

Return to the Village Green via the footpath at the end of Elston Green, along Woodland Grove and west down Preston Road back towards the Plough Inn – this part of Preston Road was originally called Longsight Lane.

When walking along the old Longsight Lane, note the Victorian buildings such as Sunnybank & Myrtle Bank on the north side and the cottages of Kitchen Terrace (1875) on the south side - almost opposite the Plough Inn.

From the Plough Inn continue along the road to return to the Village Green car park.

Walk2 Starting from the Village Green car park

About 5 miles – allow around 2 ½ - 3 hours (walking time)

Walking boots or Wellington boots are needed. It involves some steep steps and walking across farm fields in which there are likely to be farm stock grazing.

Make your way around the Green to join Preston Road and turn left along the main road towards the Plough Inn:

Now follow numbers 11 to 13 from walk one to The Hermitage; then taking the lane to the left, continue the walk following numbers 14 & 15 and the route directions.

(14) Elston Lane & the old hamlet of Elston

Along Elston Lane you will pass some very old houses, among them Elston Grange Farm (1701), Chapel House (circa 1500), and Marsh House (1700's). In the 1840's there were nine dwellings and just four major landowners in all of Elston: the Crosses of Red Scar, Thomas Walmsley, the Farrington Trust and the Bushells Hospital Trust.

About 400 yards after passing Chapel House and shortly before the bend, you cross the route of 'Watling Street' - the old Roman road to Ribchester. You are now following the Ribble Way until you reach the Guild Wheel.

Continue down Elston Lane for just over a mile from the Hermitage.

At the fork in the road, a narrow lane leading off to the left leads down to the ancient hamlet of Elston - where there was once a ferry across the River Ribble.

Taking the right fork, continue for about 400 yards until you get to a right angle bend off to the left where there is a Ribble Way sign pointing ahead across the field. Climb the stile and cross the field to the corner of the wood, climbing another stile to enter the ancient Tun Brook Wood – a designated 'Site of Special Scientific Interest'. There is now a gradual descent along steps and a winding path down to a bridge followed by a steep ascent up more steps.

Leave the wood at the stile near the interpretive board and follow the fenced-in path to the left. Climb the ladder stile and go straight on across the fields for about ½ mile along the wood edge until you see a prominent pipeline just ahead. Turn right at a gateway with Ribble Way signs on the posts, leaving the Ribble Way to join the Guild Wheel at:

(15) Site of Red Scar Mansion

The Guild Wheel here passes close to the site of Red Scar Mansion. The now large beech trees feature on many old paintings of the house.

Now turn right following the 'Wheel' along the path of the old Red Scar Coach Road for nearly 350 yards to join the Crematorium driveway.

Following the demolition of the Red Scar Mansion and prior to the Crematorium, the Courtaulds factory occupied this site. The Red Scar Memorial Walk is centred here, an interpretive board nearby gives information.

Turn left following the Guild Wheel down the Crematorium Driveway to the main B6243 road (about 550 yards) and turn left again. Cross the main road at the crossing still

following the Guild Wheel. About 330 yards from the main road you will reach a T junction, leave the Guild Wheel here and turn right to follow the track for a further 440 yards until you reach a footpath off to the right just before The Hills estate.

Follow this footpath to rejoin the main B6243 road, (440 yards). Turn left and return to the Village Green from the south along Longridge Road. (It is now just under a mile along Longridge Road back to the Village Green car park).

The Name

The name of the village is an Old Norse personal name, Grimr, combined with argh indicating pasture or homestead.

It has Viking connections from its name and Roman connections from the military road which runs through it.

Grimsargh with Brockholes and Elston are documented as two separate townships in 1212, Elston first having been separated from Grimsargh after the Conquest.

Both townships were dispersed farming communities which changed very little over the centuries. Eventually there was a smithy and mill at opposite ends of the village, but no clear centre before 1716 when the chapel was built.

The rapidly increasing population of Preston led to the building of the reservoirs (1835), and the expansion of the quarries in Longridge in the early part of the 19th century, led to the building of the railway (1840).

The area around the Plough then became the centre of day-to-day activities, the Village Smithy moving there in 1852.

The development of Whittingham Hospital (completed 1875) and the free railway which connected it to Grimsargh in 1889 brought the first new private

housing along Longsight Lane. In 1875 Grimsargh became a parish in its own right, and by 1889 had its own post office.

The advent of Courtaulds in the 1930's brought new houses along Longridge Road. It also meant that the boundary of Grimsargh with Brockholes, which ran roughly along the line of the M6 motorway, was changed so that Courtaulds could be included in Preston. The two old township names were abolished in 1934, Brockholes passing into Preston with Grimsargh and Elston being combined as the village of Grimsargh.

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Additional Notes

The maps used in the leaflet are interpretations of an 1847 map, therefore it is strongly recommended the Ordnance Survey Explorer map (sheet 286) or the Landranger map (sheet 102) are used.

Further details about the areas covered by the walks and the History of Grimsargh are available via the Parish Council website: www.grimsarghparishcouncil.org