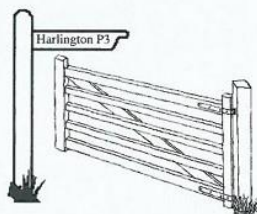




The Tinker's Trail



Footpath Guide No. 2



The Tinker's Trail

① Face Carpenter's Arms, turn right on leaving Village Hall car park and walk towards crossroads from where you can see Harlington House. Turn right again along Church Road. Before reaching old Village School, now the Parish Hall, look at P3 notice board showing all footpaths in the parish. Cross road and continue past church to the corner of Lincoln Way ② so named because for centuries Harlington was in the diocese of Lincoln. Passing shops on right take second left into Monmouth Road. At the bottom turn right for 70m and cross road to finger post beside school. Keep between the two fences stopping at ③. Look to right across field showing distinct crop marks - site of a mediaeval moated farmstead.

Continue uphill to stile. Cross and turn left along hedge and follow Waymarkers. Cross field diagonally to yellow marker post (left of large tree). ④ (This is an area of Countryside Access. The scheme allows the public recreational access and its continuance is to be reviewed in January 2001). In the woodland to your left are traces of early 20th Century brick manufacture. For the serious nature lover these fields are home to a healthy population of rabbits and stoats; woodpeckers both green and great spotted betray their presence by distinctive calls.

Walk down middle of field, the path then passes between pond and hedge towards overgrown trackway to railway line. On your right note the ruins of College Farm so called because it was donated to the Cambridge University colleges of Caius and Gonville founded in 1348. This area is still within the Countryside Access Scheme. Keeping railway line to your left, passing solar powered signalling system, turn right into Samshill Road. Climb up steep hill to Hillcrest where fine views of surrounding countryside can be

seen ⑤ eg to the west Toddington Church and to the north Maulden and Flitton Churches with King's Wood on the horizon. The weary walker may like to take advantage of bench on right! Continue down lane to junction of four tracks. ⑥ The track to the right goes back to College Farm and also to the site of the moated farm where John Bunyan was arrested whilst conducting a prayer meeting in November 1660. His congregation from the neighbouring villages had assembled by using the tracks you are walking today. From here Bunyan was taken by the Constable to Harlington House for interrogation before Francis Wingate the magistrate and thence to Bedford Gaol.

Turn left along road for 50m to footbridge on right. Cross field, over bridge and stile towards Middle Samshill Farm - originally another moated farmstead. (In wet conditions use lane). Pass through gate then turn right into lane towards Upper Samshill Farm. This Westoning hamlet probably derived its name from its location on a sandy hill. The farm is at a junction of four paths - the old road between Harlington and Pulloxhill crossed here. Turn right at five barred gate into pasture. Before walking downhill look right across to the opposite hill and observe ridge and furrow ploughing - remnants of earlier cultivation. Cross stile, sleeper bridge and second stile beside pond passing through a patch of newly planted woodland. Walk through large arable field keeping to left of oak tree until you reach junction of paths. ⑦ Cross over bridleway, once travelled by Cistercian monks between their properties at Woburn Abbey and Harlington Grange Mill. Keep hedge of old factory to left, formerly the site of an early twentieth century brick works. During World War II The War Ministry set up a factory here to produce tungsten carbide and shell cases.

Follow round field edge to plank bridge