

Penwortham Heritage Trail

**HOWICK
& HUTTON
Circular
Walk**

Discover Penwortham's Hidden Histories!



The Lodge House on Penwortham Hill (site 10 on the Trail)
It was dismantled stone by stone and rebuilt at Hutton in 1915



**South
Ribble**
Borough Council

Howick and Hutton

The Trail begins on the border of Penwortham and extends into Howick and Hutton. Howick is a triangular piece of land with its broad side against the River Ribble and its pointed angle around the Pope Lane area at Whitestake. This triangle shape is part of the badge of Howick School. At one time the ecclesiastical parish of Penwortham extended along the river as far as the village of Longton.

The Anglo-Saxon term 'wick' means a specialised farm, usually producing dairy products. For hundreds of years this area's good pasture land has produced milk, cheese and butter as well as poultry and eggs. Other local trades in the past have included fishing on the Ribble, hand-loom weaving of linen and cotton, basket-making from local osieries and all the supporting trades needed for an

agricultural economy such as butcher, blacksmith, brick-maker and innkeeper.

The A59 road through Penwortham and Howick continues towards Southport and Liverpool. From the mid 18th century it was known as the 'Turnpike Road'. A century later the area was served by a railway station on the route of the West Lancashire Railway line from Preston towards the growing resort of Southport.

Howick was fortunate in having a free school from the late 1700s, erected by a local landowner. Most of the land was owned by the local gentry family, the Rawstornes, and some of the properties on this walk belonged to them. Many of the old houses remain to this day, though they are not always easy to recognise. This walk will reveal their past and the lives of some fascinating individuals who lived there.



Illustration of Howick from 'Gamonie or the Art of Preserving Game' by Lawrence Rawstorne, 1837



For those who like to get off the beaten track, one part of the trail is over fields which may be muddy, with slopes and styles. For cyclists and walkers without the right footwear there is an alternative section on roads and cycle paths shown on the map. The walk begins at Howick House (Galloways).

1 Howick House

Now known as Galloway's, a centre for the visually impaired, this house was built in 1835, and is accredited to architect George Webster, who was very active in Penwortham during this decade. It was originally named 'New Hall' to avoid confusion with the older Howick Hall Farm nearby. Webster built in a number of styles, this house is influenced by Elizabethan or Jacobean design. It was built by the Rawstorne

family of Penwortham Priory and Hutton Hall, and in the first census was lived in by a relative, William Rawstorne, a solicitor, his family and five servants. The next resident was Thomas Norris, described as a 'landed proprietor' and 'gentleman' and his family were there for at least 30 years. In 1881 the house was uninhabited, but by the next census of 1891 it was in the possession of Edwin Grundy Wrigley, the eldest son of Thomas Wrigley, a very wealthy paper manufacturer of Bury. Edwin continued his father's lucrative business and probably took up Howick House as a retirement home. He was a qualified lawyer, though there is no evidence he ever practised, he became a JP in the county. During his time a large sum of money was spent on alterations to the house, including a magnificent marble fireplace with two atlantes (carved male figures) holding up the mantle-piece, and another fireplace with the Wrigley coat of arms



Howick House, an illustration from 'Gamonio or the Art of Preserving Game' by Lawrence Rawstorne. 1837



carved over it. The house was requisitioned by the government during WW2 and was a billet for Penwortham Home Guard and a battalion of the King's Shropshire Light Infantry. It was purchased in 1949 with money from a trust left by William Wilding Galloway, turned into a home for the blind and is now a centre for blind and visually impaired people.



From Galloways head towards the A59 main road turning right into the row of shops. At the end of the row emerge onto the A59 bearing right. Continue to the Old Schoolhouse, or numbers 258 and 260, set back from the road on the right.

2 The Old Schoolhouse

This building was erected in the 18th century, funded by local landowners connected with Hutton Grammar School. Its purpose was to educate children on the scattered farms and cottages in the area before any form of compulsory education was available. It is likely



the pupils ranged in age from about 7 to 11 years when their schooling would end, unless they were male and showed exceptional ability, when they might have attended Hutton Grammar School itself. From 1870 onwards, Parliamentary Acts made basic education compulsory for all children and a new school was built (opening in 1878) to take the greater number of pupils. You will pass the 'new' school later on this walk. Basic subjects at school were reading, writing and arithmetic. Most schools would also include religious studies, needlework for the girls and often gardening for the boys.

Continue and turn right into Howick Cross Lane. On the right you will see . . .

3 Howick Cross

There has been a cross on this site from the medieval period, but Victorian maps show it as 'remains of' a cross, in other words, just the pedestal. Before the Reformation, when England was a Roman Catholic country, crosses at crossroads



were a common sight, as they still are in some countries in Europe. Perhaps this cross was destroyed during the Reformation or the English Civil War? Or possibly it was simply made of wood and rotted away. The present cross was erected on the original pedestal at the end of the Great War, as a memorial to the fallen. It gives its name to Howick Cross Lane, though part of this lane was once known as Marsh Lane.

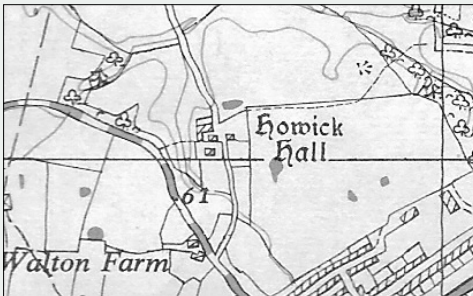


Walk down the lane, past the modern housing until you see two stone gateposts on the right leading into an unmade lane. This is a public footpath leading through the farm yard to . . .

4 Howick Hall Farm



All the farms in Howick Cross Lane can be dated to at least early Victorian times and a few are very much older. Howick Hall Farm is one of them, but it is a house with a mysterious origin! On old maps from the 19th century the farm is shown in Gothic script, indicating it was thought to be an ancient building even then. It has often been confused with Howick House (originally named 'New Hall') especially as their properties bordered each other. The farmhouse



has its age well hidden as the brick and stone is now covered with render, but there are clues. Outside is a fine wall of handmade brick with an arched entrance, indicating it once sheltered a



kitchen or ornamental garden. At the entrance on Howick Cross Lane there are two fine stone pillars which once were topped with carved pineapples or other high status finials. There was a cottage by the entrance gate which belonged to the farm. Inside the house are a number of fine stone fireplaces, including an inglenook that is almost large enough to roast an ox! Documents of a sale of the farm in 1907 describe it as holding 106 acres of old pasture, and 193 acres of rich alluvial land reclaimed from the river. It had shippens for over 50 cattle, stabling for 5 horses, a stable for a saddle horse, a coach-house, 5 loose boxes, a dairy, barn and piggeries. The interior has been altered over the years and it would take a skilled architectural historian to work out the true age, but it appears to date to at least the 17th century, as does Hesketh Farm which you will pass further down the lane on the left.

Turn around and retrace your steps to Howick Cross Lane and bear right. This is a long but fairly quiet stretch of lane which eventually takes you to Hesketh Farmhouse on the left.



5 Hesketh Farmhouse



This Grade II listed farmhouse has a date stone which reads 'Thomas Walton Ellin his wife and Christopher their son Anno Domini 1700' which is, of course, a great help to the historian, but in this case it is slightly misleading as the original building is thought to date to around 1620 and the date stone refers to an extension of 80 years later. At the time the house was listed (1984) it had a number of fireplaces including an inglenook, with a bressumer and a heck. More explanation of these features at site **8** on Ratten Lane. Originally a farm with considerable acreage, it is now simply the house with garden and outbuildings. The early census does not name



the farm: the first year it is named as such is 1881 when the inhabitants were John Rawcliffe, his wife Hannah and their baby daughter Jane. They farmed 74 acres as tenants and employed two young farm labourers, John and Richard Higham, aged 16 and 18 and a domestic servant, Mary Daly, to help in the house. The three employees lived in, so the household was young and seemingly fairly prosperous. By the following census the family had moved to Cockshot House Farm in Walton le Dale, had two more children and four employees, so they were doing well, it seems. The name Hesketh Farm remains a mystery for the moment. There may be a connection with the Hesketh family who have farmed at Old Grange in Hutton for many generations. Perhaps the tithe map of Howick will reveal the owner of the land as a Hesketh.

Continue down Howick Cross Lane passing Townley Lane on the left until you reach a row of cottages on a high bank on the left.

6 Howick Old Row

This row of cottages, placed high on a bank, are believed to be originally the homes of families whose main income came from fishing the River Ribble. Fishing had been a lucrative occupation until the end of the 18th century. By the early years of the census (1841) the residents of the cottages were all members of a small enclave of hand loom weavers producing cotton goods. Indeed, at that time almost the entire population of Hutton and Howick was either involved with agriculture or weaving, and in many cases both.

The cottages were small, containing only 4 rooms, and it is likely that the original residents were amongst the poorest in the area, but now they are desirable character homes and have





been modernised and extended. Walk down the lane to look at the flat fields stretching to the river. Where the land drops in height was once the high tide line and the fields were salt marsh used as common grazing by the population. After the River Ribble embankment was built the land was safe from the tide, it was drained and improved for farming. In the last available census, that of 1911, the occupations of the cottagers had changed to farmer, market gardener, garden labourer, electrician and watch-maker. The possibility of change from hand-loom weaver to farmer or market gardener may have been made by the reclamation of that land which had once been salt marsh.

Continue downhill to the end of the lane where you will see the flat fields reclaimed from the River Ribble in the late 19th century. Retrace your steps back to Townley Lane, now on the right. Turn into this lane. Directly on the right you will see . . .

7 Marigold Cottage

This is one of the remaining farm cottages, dating to the 18th century and possibly earlier. A well-known resident was Edith Rigby, the Preston suffragette, who lived here during WW1, where she supported the war effort by growing fruit and vegetables, and keeping animals and bees. Edith was an unconventional lady, the daughter of a doctor, married to a Preston doctor and thus firmly in the middle classes. She supported education for the women working in factories, treated servants as equals, was the first woman to ride a bicycle in her home town. Occasionally she wore men's clothing and was an active suffragette.



She was imprisoned seven times for damaging property in the cause of the movement, she went on hunger strike and was force fed. In 1913 Lord Leverhulme's house on Rivington Pike was burned to the ground by arsonists and Edith claimed that she was one of the women involved. She was never prosecuted for this; the police took no action, so the facts remain a mystery. Did Edith do it, was she covering up for friends within the movement, or seeking publicity? The original low cottage has been extended.



Continue onto a green lane between two hedges. Carry on to a wooden stile and climb over. Follow the hedge directly on your right to the next stile. From this stile you will see Mill Brook valley with a plank bridge over the stream. Head straight for the bridge and cross the stream. Go directly uphill to the next stile and into a large field. From the stile walk straight ahead through the field to the next stile which takes you onto Ratten Lane. Turn right down Ratten Lane until you see a footpath with a metal kissing gate on the left and a bit further along some cottages on the right.

8 Numbers 150, 138 and 140 Ratten Lane



These three cottages were the sole residences in Ratten Lane until the early 20th century. The thatched cottage was a farmhouse, built in the early 18th century with a barn added at a later date. Underneath the render is red brick, with some walls partly made of clay. The roof thatch is now of man-made fibre, but would have originally been a local natural material like barley straw or reeds. Inside it has an inglenook fireplace with a 'heck' and a large 'bressumer'. A bressumer is a large load bearing beam and the term heck refers to a panel under the bressumer, separating the inglenook from a door to the outside of the house. This feature appears to be unique to the north of England, especially Lancashire, Yorkshire and Cumbria. A settle was usually placed against the heck to provide a cosy seat close to the fire. 138 and 140 are older, dating from the 17th century. They are both cruck framed, a typical feature of very old cottages in Lancashire. 140 has been modernised inside but is listed Grade II because the original beam structure is intact. 138 was listed in 1984 as having a thatch roof covered by corrugated iron sheets. It has no chimneys now but its original central hearth was still present in that year. It is believed to have once had a hipped roof, and its listing is because of the A-shaped cruck frame and beams. 150 is listed also, with the exception of the barn. It has



been known as Knowles' Farm for at least 200 years. In the 1871 census it is listed as holding 15 acres and the plantation behind it still shows traces of its use as an osiery, growing willow for the local basket makers.

Return to the metal kissing gate, now on the right. Enter, keeping the line of the hedge on your left, pass over another stile and field until you come to the metalled footpath with metal gate leading through a new housing estate on the site of what was Schoolhouse Farm. Walk the short distance from the end of the footpath to the A59 opposite Hutton Grammar School and bear left until you reach . . .

9 The Anchor Inn



This building dates from the 1930s, erected on the site of a previous Anchor Inn, named on some maps as 'The Blue Anchor'. The old pub stood right at the edge of the road and was a traditional long low building, very similar to the Fleece in Penwortham. The new Anchor was built behind the old, then the original demolished, so that no trade would be lost during the process. The pub stands on what was the main 'turnpike road' from Preston to

Liverpool, with a regular stage coach service between the two towns. The smithy still stands beside the pub: this was very common as the two together formed a kind of 'service station' for travellers. The 1881 census shows that the landlord was George Clegg, and that he was also a farmer of 45 acres, a large farm for the time. Combining these two trades was ubiquitous as running an inn alone could not provide enough income for a family. During the 1930s the rise of motor cars and charabanc travel made the woods around Hutton a popular place for day trippers. And so the owner of the inn developed a dance hall close by and built the two rows of terraced houses in Anchor Drive, for the accommodation of his staff and for rental.

Cross the A59 and bear right to Tolsey Drive on your left. Where this road meets Moor Lane is . . .

10 The Gatehouse

This building seems a little out of place in Tolsey Drive, amongst the 1920s bungalows! The reason: this is not its original site. Until about 1914 it stood on what is now the A59 in Penwortham, at the entrance to the narrow footpath leading up to the parish church of St Mary, the road we now call Church Avenue. It was originally the gatehouse to Penwortham



Priory, the house belonging to the land owning Rawstorne family. The Priory was the largest mansion in the area, and was redesigned by architect George Webster in the 1830s. The gatehouse (in a similar period style) is thought to have been added then. It consisted of a single room with a large fireplace and chimney and could well have served as a gatekeeper's lodge when the family were entertaining visitors. It was not intended to be lived in. Around 1914 the building had to be demolished because the road needed to be widened to serve the new bridge over the Ribble. The Rawstornes must have been fond of this little building as they arranged for it to be dismantled stone by stone and carried the mile or two to Hutton, by horse and cart to where it was rebuilt just outside the gates of Hutton Hall. The land was sold in the 1920s and the bungalows built, around the gatehouse. Extra courses of stone were added so that it now has two storeys. The present owner has added extra windows and two conservatories. The walls are solid stone without a damp course. On the outer wall you will see a heraldic symbol, a lion passant with a scroll saying 'Fortiter et Fideliter' (Bravery and Loyalty) the Rawstorne motto.



after the hall disappeared two parallel rows of crocus came up in spring, marking the edges of the old carriage drive.

There has been a house on this site for centuries but the one pictured here is the Georgian restoration commissioned by Lawrence Rawstorne, for the particular use of his beloved mother as she found Penwortham Priory too cold and damp. The architectural style could not be more different from the Priory: it is simple, symmetrical, typical of the fashion of the time. The house had extensive ornamental gardens, orchards and kitchen gardens and a number of greenhouses. The home farm belonging to the hall became the agricultural college in the 1920s.

The Hall and the family, were at their grandest in the late Victorian/Edwardian period and the 1881 census shows that Lawrence, his three small children and nine servants were present at the hall on census day. There was a German governess, 2 children's nurses, a cook, 3 housemaids, a 15 year old scullery maid and a male groom. In a later census Lawrence also had a valet. Lawrence's wife, Edith, was not present on census day, perhaps on a visit elsewhere.

Turn left into Moor Lane and cross the very busy dual carriageway WITH CARE! You will see two ornate stone gateposts with metal gates that form the original entrance to . . .

11 Hutton Hall

Lancashire Police Headquarters stands on the site of Hutton Hall, one of the favourite residences of the Rawstorne family. The land here was bought by Lancashire County Council in the early 20th century and the hall was demolished in the 1960s to make way for the new building. All that remains are the stone gateposts of the main drive. The iron gates were added by LCC. For many years

From Hutton Hall go left along the dual carriageway towards Penwortham and you will see . . .



12 Howick School



Howick is a Church of England school affiliated to St. Mary's Parish Church, Penwortham. It was opened in 1878 when new education acts demanded that all children receive free education and it replaced the previous smaller school building seen earlier on this walk.

The stream, Mill Brook, marks the boundary between Hutton and Howick, now part of Penwortham. Before the turnpike road was created the stream flowed across the road at this point, forming a ford. In the early 20th century the teachers kept ducks in the school grounds to provide eggs for the children's dinners! Like all country schools the children would be absent at potato picking or harvest as they were needed to help on the farms. In 1978 the school held an elaborate centenary celebration, there was a gala on the school field, with entertainments including the Bacup Coconutters, a sheepdog demonstration by a local farmer, the adoption of a police horse (named 'Royal') and lots more. Each pupil was given a handmade paper knife with a ram's head handle crafted by a blacksmith as a keepsake.

Continue towards Penwortham. Just where the dual carriageway ends is a very old and unusual tree . . .

13 Squires Oak

This strange and magnificent tree has a story attached to it. It once stood on land belonging to Hutton Hall, the home of the Rawstone family and legend says it was planted by Lawrence Rawstone, the local squire, with the intention that when he died the tree would be cut down to provide wood for his coffin! Fortunately for the tree, the family sold up all their property in Penwortham and Hutton and moved away, so the tree remains to this day. Its huge extended girth was probably caused by a disease or trauma in its youth. Some pupils from Howick school measured its girth by standing round it and touching hands. It measures 8 children in circumference! Its exact age is not known. There is another oak beside it that shows the same characteristics, but on a rather smaller scale.



Continue past the oaks to the pelican crossing where you can cross safely and return to Howick House (Galloways)

**My Neighbourhood
Penwortham**

