

## Chapel Brampton – May 2018

Our walk this week encompassed two villages known as The Bramptons. Church Brampton and Chapel Brampton lie in relative close proximity to one another. The walk began at the Brampton Halt public house in Chapel Brampton.

The day was predicted to be very hot so, after the normal formalities and a brief description of the walk by Stuart Emmerson, we set off in the relative cool.



The Brampton Halt marks an intermediate train stop on the now closed Northampton loop line running between Northampton and Market Harborough. The only remnant of the line here is used by train enthusiasts for the restoration of rolling stock and on special occasions short forays with a Loco to the Wind Hover a few miles away. The line was opened in 1859 and after a financial incentive the then 4th Earl Spencer had the line and the stop, then called Merry Tom Halt, moved closer to his estate for his convenience.



The first part of the walk was adjacent to the now defunct railway line on the Brampton Valley Way. Taking care to step aside for the occasional cyclist we crossed two bridges over the Brampton arm of the River Nene and turned left onto a short section of the Midshires Way - Merry Tom Lane. Named "Merry Tom" after the 4th Earl Spencer's favourite horse, which sadly it broke its back attempting to jump the River Nene.





The yellow oil seed rape stretched uphill continuously for two fields before us, its smell, at first pleasantly sweet, soon becoming very strong. With relief, steps then lead us away onto the main Welford Road. The access road to Brampton Hill farm took us to a bridle path where panoramic views through the clear morning air took us across fields as far as Brixworth on the horizon.

Following the bridle way through the farm, the descent to Church Brampton gave equally good views across fields to the west.



Church Brampton has a 13th century church dedicated to Saint Botolph at the far end of the village. Brampton Lane through Church Brampton is busy at all times and it was a relief to leave the single file path into fields once more leading us back to Chapel Brampton. The buildings of Victorian sandstone are a distinctive Spencer estate design. Built in the mid 1800's they were complete with shed and pigsty.



Now back on the Welford Road the building to our right is called the Posting House. This was a staging and stabling facility for coach horses at the end of the 18th century. On turning the corner into Pitsford Road is the site on which once stood the now demolished Chapel of Chapel Brampton. Descending past a small nature reserve and a fish farm we arrived back at the Brampton Halt. The Sunday lunch for the thirteen who stayed was excellent and promptly served.

The walk was 4.3 miles and without any stiles and two minor ascents.