

A Chapel to Church Walk: On Monday the 20th of June, David Outhwaite led more than twenty members of the BDGHS on a walk from the Chapel to St. Lawrence's Church. A map of the walk prepared by Richard Dean based on the 1876 O.S. map is available from Biddulph Library and the Methodist Chapel and Victoria Centre, Station Road. You can use this article in the Chronicle or you can print these instructions on the Biddulph History Society (BDGHS) website and attempt the walk which takes about one and half hours and is just less than two miles in length.

The start is the former Primitive Chapel on Chapel Street (now Station Road) when you turn right onto Cross Street to arrive at the War Memorial.

Albert Square: You can compare what was here in 1876 with the present day – Albert Street is similar but many of the houses on John Street have not been built.

You will see on the map the Post Office is at 4 High Street but is now at 8 High Street. The year after our map the Post Office moved to a more central position at 42 High Street and in 1901 Mr. John Thomas Oakes, stationer and postmaster, was running Biddulph's post office from here.

It was in 1871 Charles Woodstock, a chemist from Lutterworth in Leicestershire lived at No. 4 along with his wife, Mary Ann, daughter and a domestic servant. In Kelly's 1892 Directory he was described as "a dentist, postmaster and agent for W & A Gilbey, Wine and Spirit Merchant." After spending over twenty years on the High Street, Mr. Woodstock and his family moved to Willesden, Middlesex.

A directory for 1896 has Fred Hancock, a grocer, living at No 4A High Street. [At some time the property must have been split into Hancock's grocery business and also an auction office operated by Mr. William Moss.]

In the 1911 Survey at No 4 or 4A John Pointon, who was a wheelwright [35] and his wife Elizabeth Pointon [32], with daughters Mary Ellen [7] and Alice Jane [3] were living at this address.

From around 1914 No 4A was occupied by Ernest Wells, Cycle Agent – who had moved from Congleton Road.

In the 1921 Survey at No 4 or 4A John Robert Green [48] and his wife Elizabeth Green [38] with sons Henry [17], Fred [15], Harold [13] and Frank [3]; and daughters Lily [11], Annie [8] and Caroline [6] were living at this address. Robert was a Labourer at Robert Heath Ironworks but was out of work, Henry was a Pony Driver and Fred a Pot Lad at Whitfield Colliery but were both out of work. Elizabeth Green, John's wife was described as doing Home Duties.

From 1936 to the 1940s it was occupied by Albert and Frederick Bew, wireless apparatus dealers.

It is thought that the Midland Bank took over the premises around 1955 to be closed in March 1981 because of a lack of space and the poor condition of the property.

By 1985 Top Fashions was operating from the property and it is now "Tang Dynasty" a Cantonese takeaway.

Walk down Bridge Street (now Congleton Road) to the roundabout at the end of Thames Drive.

Note that **Cromwell Street** hasn't changed since the map was made. Neither has **Thomas Street** except where Charter Vets are it was Machin's Shop with the Bakery under the arch on the right. What is the link between **100 Congleton**

Road and 72 John Street? As you walk down the hill imagine the amount of traffic you see at the end of the Inner Relief Road trying to turn into town and Thames Drive.

Walk to the corner of Fountain Court.

Note that the **Horse Trough at Fountain Court** was moved here when the road was re-aligned for the Inner Relief Road. The inscription reads 1861 "For the refreshment of Weary Travellers may God Speed them on their way" IYB which may be a quote from John Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress."

Walk to the corner of Smithy Lane.

Smithy Lane was the main road to Congleton until the Turnpike was built. The original road went behind the Church and Biddulph Grange and joined Grange Road

Walk to the corner of Woodhouse Lane

Woodhouse Lane which is the main route to access Biddulph Moor was originally just a track from March Green'

Walk to the car park of the Church School Car Park.

As you enter the Churchyard through the South Gate (with the date 1835 above it) when you turn right past the Crusaders graves (on the left by the church wall) find the sundial on the right and then count to find the third grave buried underground but whose grave is it?

Research in 2002 found it states: Here lies the remains of WILLIAM EARDLEY who was interred June 6th 1769 aged 84. Also SAMUEL EARDLEY son of WILLIAM and MARY EARDLEY who was interred September the 29th 1804 aged 92 years. EMME EARDLEY his wife who departed this life May 11th 1811 aged 95 years. Also HANNAH wife of RALPH EARDLEY and daughter to the above who died July 13th 1822 aged 59 years. MARY ----- who was interr-- August 29th 1771 aged 84.

Turn left around the east end of the Church

The Heath Chapel is in the south east corner of the Church. As well as a beautiful marble statue there is a plaque for all the members of the Heath family remembered here. Including Voltelin Percy Heath of the Royal Horse Guards, only son of Sir James Heath, Baronet, born January 10th 1889, died September 4th 1914 from wounds received during the retreat from Mons. Buried at the Chateau Baron, France.

Walk through the Churchyard to the War Memorial

The Church War Memorial was dedicated in 1921 just one year before the Town War Memorial and has the same seventy three names as casualties of the First World War.

Nearby you will find the R.A.F. grave of John Machin. R.A.F. In Loving Memory of Lieut. JOHN EGBERT MACHIN the dearly loved husband of ELIZABETH MACHIN of John St Biddulph who was killed while flying at Cambridge on the 29th of May 1918 aged 24 years. He gave 'His life for England' but 'His soul to God' Gone but not forgotten.

Should the Church bells ring before you re-join Congleton Road they are labelled as follows: **Peal of Bells** (Smallest Treble and largest Tenor)

1. My gentle voice shall lead the cheerful sound: Peace to this Parish: May goodwill abound.
2. May all in truth and harmony rejoice, To honour Church and Queen with heart and voice.
3. Prosperity attend Old England's shore, Let Biddulph flourish now and evermore.
4. With loving voice I call to Church and Prayer, And bid the living for the grave prepare.
5. For mercies undeserved this peal is raised, And may Thy Name, O God, through Christ be praised.
6. To the honour and Glory of God this peal of six bells was given to the Parish Church of Biddulph by Robert Heath, Esq., of Biddulph Grange, 1873

Walk back to the corner of Woodhouse Lane

Look on the opposite side of Congleton Road and note the gateposts of **Spring Grove**. These are some of the people who lived there:

Year	Directory	Occupier	Trade
1874 – 1880	Kelly's	John Sherratt	Nurseryman
1884 – 1896			
1907	Kelly's	John Venables	
1912	Staffs Sentinel	Rev. J. Oakgill	
1936 – 1940	Kelly's	Mrs. A. Pointon	

Later it would be the home of Baker Taxi's and Baker Bus



The front view of Spring Grove House, Congleton Road, Biddulph

Walk to the Biddulph Arms Hotel

You can use your map to identify the owners and occupiers of the fields to the East of the Biddulph Arms (information from the Biddulph Tithe Survey 1840 which are identified on your map)

151 An inclosure owned by Thomas Gould and occupied by Hannah Lockett

918 Mill Meadow owned by John Bateman and occupied by Jane Goodwin

923 Big Gorsy Field owned by John Bateman and occupied by Jane Goodwin

994 Plantation of John Bateman

995 Big Stack Yard owned by John Bateman

996 and 997 Plantation owned by John Bateman

1411 Three Cornered Field owned by Rowland Mainwaring and occupied by Anne Stanway

1411a and 1411b Croft; House and Patch owned by Rowland Mainwaring and occupied by Benjamin Beech

1415 Three Cornered Piece owned by Rowland Mainwaring and occupied by William Bailey

1416 No information

1417 Gutter Piece owned by Rowland Mainwaring and occupied by Thomas Bailey (thatcher)

Now the whole of this formerly wooded area is covered in houses including the site of the Selectus Factory

Walk to the start of the Inner Relief Road

You will pass one of the replaced milestones of the original Turnpike Road to Congleton. To build the **Meadows Way** the Department of Transport contributed two-thirds of the cost of the £10.5 million bypass, which runs for a mile west of the town centre. The county council is hoping to secure the remainder of the money from the company behind a residential and supermarket scheme for land off Walley Street. It was completed in the Autumn of 2003 by Alfred McAlpine.

Walk up the Meadows Way to the Mills opposite Station Road.

Alliance Mill, Whalley Street now Minster Mills

Stringer's Street Mill This old two storey fustian mill was built in 1892 in Stringer's Street and 10 or 12 cottages from the 1840s period were demolished in order to cater for the increase in demand for fustian velvet. Built for mill owner Henry Mitchell, it later had other owners as a fustian mill including the Platt brothers and United Velvet Cutters in 1912/16. Between 1959 and 1987 the textile company of William Stannards took over the premises producing clothing and small wares for a worldwide market.

Walk back to the Chapel on Station Road

All the information in this walk guide is available on the website of the BDGHS or in the publications of the Society. This reflects the work of many members over the years who have devoted their time to recording Biddulph's Past. Photographs of some of the sites mentioned will be included in the write up of the June Meeting 2022 in the meeting reports section of the website. *The map for the walk can be downloaded from the website and laminated versions are available from Veronica at the Biddulph Victoria Centre and Matt and the staff at the Biddulph Library.*

