



# The Hundred Parishes

## Quiet Lane Walks – number 340

### Standon parish – 6.2 miles (10 kms), starting from Colliers End

This anticlockwise, circular walk is mostly on quiet lanes with the first mile on pavement along the former A10 which is now relatively quiet. The route is entirely within the parish of Standon, mostly through open countryside with short stretches in Standon village and the hamlets of Colliers End and Barwick. Hedgerows can be quite rich in blackberries and sloes.

The route includes Standon village where there is Day's Bakery and The Star (01920 823725 - <https://www.starstandon.com/>). It would be simple to reduce the distance to 5.0 miles by not going into Standon village, but then there would be nowhere to buy refreshments and this attractive village with much heritage would be missed. There are several seats along the route, should you wish to pause for rest or a picnic.

You can join the route anywhere along the way, but the description starts just north of Colliers End hamlet (marked **1** on the route diagram) where it should be safe to park considerably in Dowsetts Lane, just off the main road, Ermine Street. One alternative start could be from Standon village, parking outside or close to the parish church (grid reference: TL396222, postcode: SG11 1LB, what3words: chainsaw.knitted.purses ). This location is marked **2** on the route diagram and in the route description.

**Start and finish:** The walk starts just North of Colliers End at the corner of the main road, Ermine Street, and Dowsetts Lane (Ordnance Survey Grid Reference: TL373212), marked **1** on the route diagram. Recommended parking: just East of Ermine Street in Dowsetts Lane, before reaching the houses: Grid reference TL373212, Postcode SG11 1EE, what3words: camps.rescue.aware  
The route can be followed on Ordnance Survey Explorer Map 194.  
A diagram of the route is provided at the end of the description.

Please follow the usual safety precautions: when there is no pavement, keep to the right so as to face oncoming traffic, crossing occasionally to the left if this offers a clearer view around a right-hand bend. Drivers and cyclists may be as surprised to see you as you are to see them! Fortunately, we have pavement for the early part of this walk.

From the parking area, we should walk along the pavement for just a few yards to the corner, where Dowsett Lane meets the former main road, Ermine Street. Before going further, we should pause at the corner to consider the next two paragraphs . . .

Long ago, just here, there was a crossroads of two Roman roads. We will be turning left to head south along one of them, Ermine Street; the other road came from the South West. Thus, if we are looking south (in our direction of travel), facing 12 on the clock, the Roman road came in at about 2 o'clock.

The unnamed Roman road crossed Ermine Street here at a sharp angle and then continued northeast, bisecting Ermine Street behind us and Dowsetts Lane. It continued northeast towards the Roman settlement at Braughing.

Now, when safe, let us cross Dowsett Lane with care and head south for just a few paces before pausing again.

On the right, the first of a small group of terraced houses was, for many years until the late 1900s, the Fox and Hounds pub; the pub sign remains. Now, these premises sell what they call "Affordable Junk". The curiosities on display include a naked lady in a bath – she has been soaking here for many years. This is the first of several former pubs that we will pass along this once busy road. Let's move on . . .

On the left, out of sight behind the hedgerow, is the site of a former army camp.

We are walking along Ermine Street which was built originally by the Romans to link London, Lincoln and York. This was a busy highway for centuries and was also known as The Old North Road. In the 1920s it was designated as the A10. It continued to be known as the A10 until it was superseded by the present dual-carriageway A10 which opened in 2004. Later, we will twice cross the new A10, once passing beneath it and further on going over it.

Soon we will walk through the hamlet of Colliers End where we will refer to some of its older buildings, most of which are listed for their architectural or historic interest. The hamlet may have taken its name from a 13th-century gentleman called Nicholas le Colyere. By 1526 the place was called Colyersend, with "end" meaning a hamlet.

About 300 yards after Dowsetts Lane, we enter the hamlet of Colliers End, passing relatively modern houses on the left. The first house on the right, with a porch, is called Barnacres. It dates from the 17th century and is distinguishable by its black-and-white painted chimney stacks. In the late 19th century and for some time in the 20th century, it functioned as an inn called The Red White and Blue, advertising luncheons, teas and "good accommodation for cyclists".

On the left, the small red-brick building with bell turret and bell once served as a school. It was built in 1862 and had capacity for up to 80 pupils. It has been the village hall for Colliers End since 1982.

Immediately on the right, we pass the black weather-boarded barns at Fisher's Farm dating back to the 16th century, and then the weather-boarded Fisher's Farmhouse itself – it was built in the 16th century, possibly earlier, as an open hall house. That was before the invention of chimneys, so the smoke from the open hearth in the middle of the hall would have escaped through vents in the roof.

Opposite Fisher's Farmhouse, on our left, number 61 was constructed in the early 16th century, another medieval hall house. Like Fisher's Farmhouse, it is a timber-framed building, now partly weather-boarded and partly plastered, with a steep red-tiled roof.

Back on the right, immediately after Fisher's Farmhouse, is another 16th-century building, Little Quakers.

We cross a turning on the left called Upper Bacchus. Immediately afterwards, a terrace of five houses, numbers 52 to 56, stands sideways on to the main road. They date from the 17th century but have been modernised.

Very soon afterwards, The Manor, on the left, dates from the 18th century.

You might like to cross the main road when safe. On the west side of the road, Inglenook Cottage dates from the 17th century, albeit modernised. In the far left corner, next to the telephone kiosk, there is a milestone which advises that we are 25 miles from London. The milestone probably dates from 1742 when a series of stones was installed by the Wadesmill Turnpike Trust which was responsible for collecting tolls and maintaining this stretch of highway. The stone became weather-worn so the cast iron plate was attached in the early 1800s.

The telephone kiosk is a type K6, designed by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott whose diverse work included Liverpool Cathedral and Battersea Power Station.

We should now cross back to the East side of the road.

The next building after The Manor is 16th-century Tudor Cobwebs, complete with subsequent alterations. This once functioned as the Waggon and Horses and was one of at least eight pubs in Colliers End in the late 1800s when the road was busy with horse-drawn wagons transporting, in particular, farm produce and coal. The coal was carried by road between the navigable waterways that brought it from coalmines far away and then carried it by barge into London.

Opposite, The Lamb and Flag was yet another pub. In more recent times, it functioned as a Chinese restaurant until closure around 2015.

As we near the southern end of Colliers End hamlet, we pass small 21st-century residential estates and then reach St Mary's church on the left. The church was built by local craftsmen and dedicated in 1911. A public bridleway immediately before the church leads to Plashes Farm which had been the home of Ernest Edward Wickham who funded the building of the church in memory of his late wife. Sadly, the church is now deemed unsafe.

The pavement ends as we reach the church so we should cross, with care, to continue along the pavement on the right.

We cross the entrance to Icen Rise and then Labdens Lane. The speed limit changes from 30 miles per hour to 50. The straight Roman road descends gently and we pass two pairs of Colliers End village signs. For the next three miles we will pass very few buildings.

After a while, our pavement ends and we should cross to continue along the pavement on the left.

About half a mile after St Mary's Church, we reach a road junction. Here, we turn left into Gore Lane, signposted towards Barwick. We should cross to the right to face any oncoming traffic.

[If, instead of turning left, we were to keep straight on for a few yards and then turn right along a footpath, in about 300 yards we would reach the spot where Vincent Lunardi landed in 1794 having completed the first manned balloon flight in England.]

Having turned left, we continue along Gore Lane for half a mile until we reach Barwick – pronounced BARRICK with emphasis on the BA as in BAT.

Ahead and to the far left, the extensive woodland is Plashes Wood. For a while, our lane marks the parish boundary between Standon on the left and Thundridge to the right; then the

boundary goes off to the right and we are again entirely in the administrative parish of Standon. For a while we may be passed by Pat Taylor lorries from Plashes Farm where they are based.

After a while, we go under the new A10 road. About 200 yards later, we go past the entrance on the left to Plashes Farm.

In due course, 30 mph signs are the only indication that we have reached the hamlet of Barwick, another outlier of Standon parish. Its name goes back at least 600 years to Barwick Manor which lies south of here.

The settlement now called Barwick has an unusual past. The first visual clue is Wellington House, which is on the left. Let's pause for an explanation . . .

Barwick was established as a "factory hamlet" around 1890 after James Dalziel Dougall founded the Smokeless Powder Company and took a 99-year lease on 126 acres of the Youngsbury estate which lies mostly to our right in the parish of Thundridge. The company established a factory complex with its own tramway network and here it manufactured high explosive gunpowder for military use and for mining. The company had over 100 employees, two of whom died here in an explosion in 1893. Ownership of the site changed over the years but it continued to manufacture gunpowder and ammunition, especially for the First World War. After the Second World War, a new owner dismantled the tramway and for some time used the premises to manufacture 'snaps' for Christmas crackers. Today, the area is home to a number of commercial enterprises but some of the original buildings remain.

Wellington House was built as part of the factory hamlet, a pub for the munitions workers called The Factory Arms. Around 1904 it was renamed as The Duke of Wellington. It ceased to operate as a pub in the 1990s and is now private residences.

We continue past Wellington House and past a mobile home park, Ashleigh Park, on our left.

At a road junction, we turn left, signposted towards Standon and Puckeridge. If we were to go straight ahead we would come to the area where explosives were manufactured.

Having turned left, we climb gently past Gunpowder Farm, Powder House and Barwick House on the right and soon leave Barwick hamlet. Looking back to the right, there is no sign of the former gunpowder works buildings

After a while, our lane runs for about 300 yards between Hanging Wood on the left and the River Rib on the right. The river then turns off to the right.

On the left we pass Hanging Cover Cottage which started as a hall house around 1500 AD and since then has been much altered and extended.

Just afterwards, we pass Ribford Cottage on the right, right beside our lane - red brick and from early 19th century.

After climbing for a short while, we might look back to our left, over the gates, to Hangingwood Cottage which has 17th-century origins.

We continue along the lane, climbing steadily for about 200 yards until we pass Little Manor on the right.

Soon, we pass a turning on the right signposted to Latchford, yet another hamlet within the extensive parish of Standon. Looking back, a sign tells us that the lane we have just travelled is “unsuitable for HGVs” – yes, that is true!

We continue straight ahead for about a mile.

Along a while, we pass a reservoir on the right, fed by the River Rib. Beyond it are the red-brick buildings of 16th-century Standon Lordship, which we get to see more clearly through a gap in the hedge as we approach the top of a climb.

At the top of the climb, we keep straight ahead, crossing public byway 19 and passing the drive on the right that leads to Standon Lordship. Now on high ground, we have a good view ahead and to the right of Standon and its parish church.

After another quarter of a mile, we descend to a road junction with Dowsetts Lane on the left. Our route will soon go right to visit Standon but, if you should wish to omit that section and reduce the distance to 5 miles, you can turn sharp left into Dowsett Lane and rejoin the route description towards the bottom of page 6.

The full route goes straight ahead, very soon bearing right into a no-through-road which is signposted only as “Ford ahead impassable to traffic 230 yards”.

On reaching the ford, we keep right on a footbridge over the River Rib. We soon join a tarmac roadway, Papermill Lane.

We pass Paper Mill House on the left, once part of the paper mill that was powered by the River Rib.

At the end of Paper Mill House’s wall, the roadway rises briefly to cross the bed of the former railway line – the Buntingford Branch Line – which ran through Standon for a hundred years until 1964.

We continue ahead, soon heading towards the “Hertfordshire spike” that rises from the tower of Standon’s parish church.

As we enter the village of Standon we pass barns on our left and Church End Cottages on the right – former almshouses that date from the 17th century and whose decorative features, including the elaborate bargeboards beneath the gable roofs, were added in the early 19th century.

Opposite Church End Cottages, we turn left beside a small village green. Here, there is a mounted puddingstone beside an oak tree planted in 1911. To our right, the long building with exposed timber-framing is Knights Court, dating from the 16th century or earlier. It was once a courthouse, then a school for around 400 years before conversion into apartments in 1974. The herringbone brickwork was added in the 19th century.

From the green, when safe, we cross the road and pass through a gate and up steps into the churchyard of Standon’s parish church. Unusually, the tower was built separate from the church and was connected only in the 19th century. We will follow the path to the left and to the main church porch.

If open, we should take a look inside this Grade I-listed church, but if boots are muddy please remove them or cover them with boot covers or plastic bags.

St Mary's dates from the 13th century. From the entrance, the floor slopes up and a set of steps then leads up to the chancel. Of particular note are the fine archway between nave and chancel and the memorials in the chancel to Sir Ralph Sadleir and his son Sir Thomas Sadleir, former residents of Standon Lordship. The church welcomes visitors and visitors may welcome the opportunity afforded by the toilet on the left alongside the little kitchen. Even if you don't spend a penny, please consider making a donation as you leave.

On leaving the church, from the porch we go straight ahead to leave by the main gate. When safe, we cross the road, Standon's High Street, towards the Star Inn which dates from the 17th century or earlier. You may wish to dine here. Our route turns right along the pavement.

On the right, immediately after the church, is Standon House, built around 1700 AD. Here, we can cross to the right and pass along a slip road. This wide part of the High Street is where a market was held from the 13th century until some time in the 20th century.

All the houses along the slip road date from the 17th century or earlier. Standon's former telephone kiosk has been imaginatively converted into a miniature version of a Kew Gardens plant house. Beside it, the Old Windmill was a pub until about 1960.

Further along, we pass seats which may be handy if you would like a takeaway from Day's bakery opposite.

Just a little further along on the right, we come to the white-painted Old Post Office with jettied upper storey, possibly as old as 14th century. Almost opposite is The Bell, 16th century and another option for refreshment (although they did not offer lunches in 2026). Before we reach the end of the High Street, we should turn and retrace, perhaps along the pavement on the other side of the road.

[We retrace back past the church on the left and The Star on the right. This location is marked **2** on the route diagram and is a possible alternative starting point.]

Soon after the church, we turn right beside the small green with puddingstone, turn right again along Papermill Lane, cross the railway bed and then cross the river.

After a short climb, we turn left and soon turn right into Dowsetts Lane.

[ Here, the route description is joined by anyone who chose to omit the foray into Standon.]

Having turned right into Dowsetts Lane, we immediately start climbing. Our lane climbs gently for nearly a mile, with a good view back towards the tower and Hertfordshire spike of Standon parish church.

Near the highest point on the route, we pass the gated entrance on the left to Dowsett's Farm. Over to the right, we can see the extensive buildings of St Edmund's College which is just off Ermine Street, a little north of where this walk description started.

Our lane becomes wider with pavements as it crosses over the new A10.

Soon afterwards, we can use a pavement on the right as we pass beside a row of 20th-century semi-detached houses, Wellington Cottages.

Just afterwards, there is an entrance on the left to a former army camp. We soon reach the area where we parked, shortly before the junction with Ermine Street and where this walk description started.

[If you started the walk elsewhere, please go to page 1 to rejoin the route description.]

This route description, last updated 14 February 2026, was downloaded from [www.hundredparishes.org.uk](http://www.hundredparishes.org.uk). There, you can read more about the parish of Standon and also find many additional walk routes including three that include Standon: station walk 18 and circular walks 105 and 168.

Please email any suggestions for improving the route or the route description to [hundredparishes@btinternet.com](mailto:hundredparishes@btinternet.com).

A diagram of this route, based on the Ordnance Survey map, is shown below. It is published under © Crown copyright 2020 OS 100062498.

