

HARROLD

1.1 miles - 45 mins

Start at main entrance to Harrold Country Park (1). Cross Carlton Road and take footpath opposite through cemetery, churchyard and Lychgate. At the cross roads turn right into Church Walk. Cross the High Street to the corner of Dove Lane.

(2) The Wheatsheaf. In 1850 William Parris took a packet of 5 handkerchieves to the pub to sell. He sold one but 2 others disappeared from the back of a chair. Local carpenter, Thomas Pratt, was suspected - he had been seen looking at the handkerchieves and then going out the wood barn where the missing items were found. When the case came to trial, the jury decided there was no case to answer.

What could you do with a handkerchief that made them so valuable? Find out in Odell.

In 1889 the landlord of The Wheatsheaf, Henry Abraham, was victim of a robbery by a serial conman who had taken lodgings in the pub.

Walk down Dove Lane 50 m. Turn left down public footpath. Follow footpath alongside the stream until you reach the tennis club on the right. Turn right into the High Street. Pass the Oakley Arms and cross the road to The Muntjac.

(3) The Muntjac formerly called The Globe.

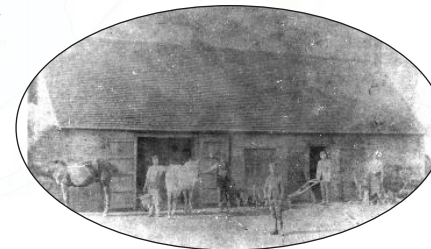
Thomas Willey, landlord of The Globe in 1883, lent money on the security of a garden fork. David Thompson, Harrold beerseller and maker of forks said the fork had been stolen from his barn. Meanwhile William McGrath's missing fork turned up in the possession of William Franklin of Carlton. In both cases witnesses pointed the blame at Edward Loakes, who was already under arrest for the theft of beef and butter from local farmer, John Bailey. Loakes was found not guilty of the fork thefts but a trail of footprints from Bailey's to within 15 yards of Loakes' home at Odell helped convict him of the beef theft.



How did the constable gather evidence?

Turn left and follow High Street until you reach the village green. Turn right into The Green.

(4) The Old Smithy. 7 year-old John Arnold Crouch lived at the Smithy. He appeared as a witness in the case against John Allen who he said he had seen take a piece of pickled pork from William Stephen's butcher's shop while the butcher was away. In spite of Allen's pocket being wet with brine, covered in salt and grease and his having a recently used frying pan Allen was found not guilty!



Take the path across the green to the small round building.

(5) The Lock-up. This was built about 1824 at the expense of Harrold parish but it was used by the surrounding villages and in 1849 the Quarter Sessions magistrates were asked to buy the lock-up or pay for its upkeep; they decided to pay rent.



In 1850 Jonathan Barker, a chimney sweep from Olney, was put in the lock-up on suspicion of stealing 2 shovels. Joseph Neal, police constable of Carlton, testified that Barker told him where the shovels, stolen from a travelling salesman staying at the Mad Dog in Odell, were hidden. Neal also said he had overheard Barker while he was in the lock-up trying to get his boy, Henry Hine, to say he had taken the shovels. The evidence was circumstantial and hearsay and Barker was acquitted.

How did Quarter Sessions tackle potholes?

Follow public footpath to the left. At the crossroads with Church Walk turn right past the church into Hall Close and continue until you rejoin Carlton Road. Turn right to Harrold Bridge. To view the bridge you need to cross to the other side of the river.

(6) Harrold Bridge. For much of the 19th century the upkeep of the bridge was disputed between the Alstons of Odell, Earl de Grey and the County. In 1847 there were plans to build a new bridge but this was never done. An 1885 report described the bridge as 'insufficient, inconvenient and in want of reparation.' The magistrates ordered repairs.

Return across bridge to Harrold and continue to the entrance to the country park on your right.



ODELL 2 miles - 45 mins

Start at main entrance to Harrold Country Park (1). Go past the visitor centre and across the grass area to join the footpath at the northern side of Grebe Lake, turn right towards Odell. Take footpath to left up through field.

(7) *Field between Little and Great Odell.* On March 1st 1863 Thomas Askew took off his great coat and tied it up in a cotton handkerchief. He put it in the rack in a hovel in a field near the road between Great Odell and Little Odell and went on to Harrold. Returning after an hour his coat had gone. He enquired about it and told all his friends. On 4 March the coat and handkerchief were brought to him by Mary Ann Foskett. Mary's brother, Ezra, had found the coat, taken it to Wellingborough and pawned it for 6 shillings but when he found out it was Askew's he got it back. Foskett was acquitted on this occasion but at the next Quarter Sessions he was found guilty of another theft and jailed for 3 years having previously served 2 years in the Bedfordshire Reformatory at Turvey.

Where was the sweetshop in Odell?

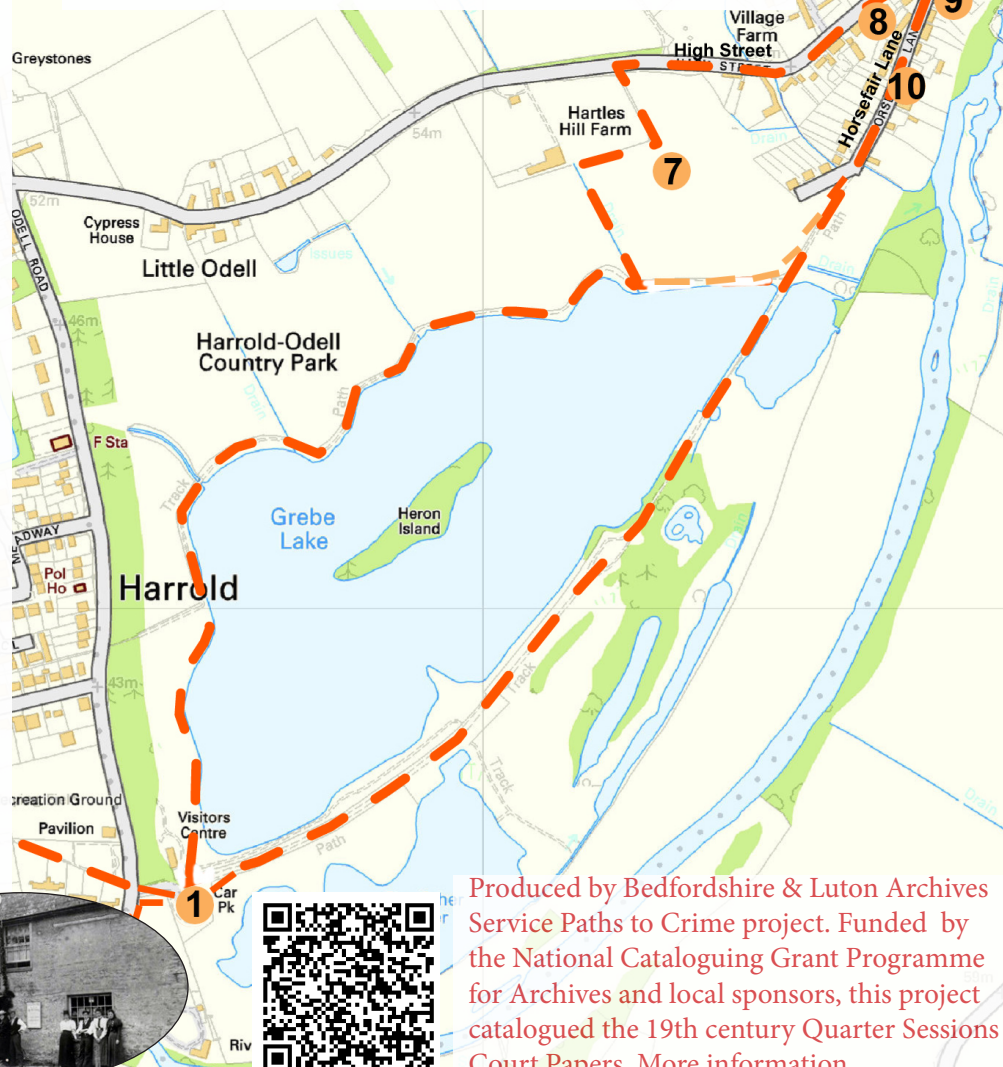
When you reach the High Street turn right follow road to Odell.

(8) *93 High Street.* Ezra Foskett probably began his life of crime here. In 1859 he and Charles Stratton, broke a window of Sarah York's shop and stole 5 bottles of sweetmeats. The boys promised to pay for the damage but were prosecuted and sent to the reformatory.



Continue along High Street. Turn right at junction

(9) *The Bell* features in a number of cases. In 1846 Joseph Oastler of Olney sold a "truck" to Thomas Kennedy here. Unfortunately the cart wasn't his to sell as he had only borrowed it. Kennedy described Oastler as 'neither drunk nor sober' at the time.



Produced by Bedfordshire & Luton Archives Service Paths to Crime project. Funded by the National Cataloguing Grant Programme for Archives and local sponsors, this project catalogued the 19th century Quarter Sessions Court Papers. More information www.bedford.gov.uk/archivecrimepaths



What was sold at Odell fair?

Facing The Bell turn right.

(10) *Horsefair Lane.* Odell Fair took place in Whitsun week each year. Two cases give us an idea of how busy it was. In 1845 William Holland had a gingerbread stall at the fair. He tried unsuccessfully to pass off counterfeit coin at The Bell, where he was staying and at a shop in the village. He was eventually arrested in Harrold when a grocer's shop near The Green took the coin.

In 1848 Richard Ashpole of Pavenham bought some plaid cloth at the fair and gave it to the tailor, Joseph Mole. He left it at The Bell with the landlady's sister, Mrs Wykes, who put it on the kitchen table although the kitchen was being used as a sitting room that day. The cloth disappeared but a hawker, George Johnson from Northampton, was suspected, traced and stopped on the road to Northampton. He handed over the cloth claiming that he had found it behind a fair booth.

Continue down Horsefair Lane into the Country Park and make your way back to the car park.