

The Griffon Guide

The Literary Trail

This trail is a treat for booklovers and leads you to places made famous by local authors, whilst also offering a selection of second hand bookshops to explore. There are more places mentioned here than can be comfortably covered in a single day, so please make some selections before setting out.





1. The Old Station Pottery and Bookshop
2, Maryland, Wells-next-the-Sea NR23 1LY
(map ref OS 591343)

This shop has a good variety of books to suit all tastes and a display of pottery made by the owners. Park on Maryland.



2. Crabpot Books
High St, Cley-next-the-Sea, NR25 7RN
(map ref OS 604344)

This bookshop holds a good selection with a particularly good stock of art and New Naturalist books. There is limited parking along the High Street.



3. Peter's Bookshop
19, St Peter's Road, Sheringham NR26 8QY
(map ref OS 615343)

There are thousands of titles here in a labyrinth of bookcases, both new and old. If you can't find what you are looking for, just ask Peter! The nearest car park is at Sheringham Station, Station Approach NR26 8RA.



4. Bookworms
9, New St, Cromer NR27 9HP
(map ref OS 621342)

This is a charming little bookshop with a small but nicely chosen stock, with strengths in history and military titles.



5. Much Binding
36, Church St, Cromer NR27 9ES
(map ref OS 622342)

You will find a good selection of books here for both the academic and pleasure reader. For both Cromer bookshops, the most convenient car park is the Pay and Display, Meadow Rd, Cromer NR27 9HZ.



6. Clement Scott Memorial
Northrepps Road, Sidestrand NR27 ODR

As you drive along the coast road out of Cromer, remember Clement Scott – the man who created Poppyland. Cromer was already popular, but the phenomena which changed the coastal town and its district into a mecca began on August 30th 1883 when Clement Scott published the first of his Poppyland columns written 'by a holidaymaker...at a farmhouse by the sea.' He wrote somewhat sentimental accounts of his idyllic experiences at the millers cottage, with old miller Jermy and his pretty daughter Louie, farm animals and country life. His vivid word pictures of genteel visits to the seaside or strolls along the cliffs appealed to his readership immensely, but his flowery prose in 'Poppyland' and 'The Garden of Sleep' were what really

captured the public's imagination. 'Poppyland' was the name Scott gave to the fields which perched along the cliff tops between Sheringham and Sidestrand, swaying with the distinctive red blooms in the summertime. The spiritual heart of Poppyland was the ruined tower of Sidestrand church that stood like a gaunt sentinel juxtaposed with the cliff edge, gravestones and poppies:

"In my garden of sleep, where the red poppies are spread,
I wait for the living, alone with the dead!
For a tower in ruins stands guard o'er the deep,
At whose feet are green graves of women asleep!
Did they love as I love, when they lived by the sea?
Did they wait as I wait, for the days that may be?
Was it hope or fulfilling that entered each breast,
Ere death gave release, and the poppies gave rest?
O! life of my life! On the cliffs by the sea,
By the graves in the grass, I am waiting for thee!"
Excerpt from The Garden of Sleep!, Clement Scott (1885)

His memorial is a drinking fountain that has now been planted with flowers situated on the corner of Northrepps Road, as you drive into Sidestrand.



7. St Margaret's Church **Bacton Road, Paston NR28 9TA** **(map ref OS 632334)**

Along the coast road between Mundesley and Bacton is the village of Paston, home to the Paston family, made famous by their remarkable collection of correspondence, written between the years 1422 and 1509. The Paston Letters are a unique window onto gentry family life through three generations and three monarchs (Henry VI, Edward IV and Richard III) during the War of the Roses period. Within the letters most of human life at the time is reflected, from ill-matched unions and deceits to legal wrangles and castle sieges.

Further information about the Paston Letters can be found at <http://www.luminarium.org/medlit/paston.htm>

Paston Church is renowned for its memorials and historic connections with the Paston family, notably the tomb of Dame Katherine Paston (d.1628) with her carved figure recumbent by Nicholas Stone.

There is a small exhibition about the letters in St Margaret's Church. Park in the church car parking area.

8. Bromholme Priory & the True Cross Fragments **Priory Road, Bromholme NR12 OHQ** **(map ref OS 634333)**



Here are the remains of Bromholm Priory founded in 1113 by William de Glanville.

A cross made from fragments of the True Cross upon which it was believed Jesus Christ was crucified was brought to Bromholm by a priest who had absconded with it from the court of King Baldwin I in Constantinople after the king's death. Other monasteries had turned the priest away and disputed the authenticity of his fragments but Bromholm, low on patronage or particular distinction, took him in and the cross was combined into their rood screen. Soon miracles began to occur; blindness was cured, the sick cured and there was even an instance of one pilgrim being raised from the dead! The Priory became a centre of national and international pilgrimage, with Monarchs such as King Edward II (who visited c.1313) and gentry paying their respects too.

Sir Hugh Pie, chaplain of Ludney, was accused before the bishop of Norwich on the 5th July 1424 of holding that people 'ought not to go on pilgrimage or to give alms save to beggars at their doors, and that the image of the cross and other images ought not to be worshipped.' He was also accused of having 'cast the cross of Bromholm into the fire to be burned, which he took from one John Welgate of Ludney.' However Sir Hugh utterly denied the charges, and purged himself by the witness of three laymen and three priests. The truth is the cross was not burnt, for it appears in records more than a century later.

So famous was the 'Holy Rood' of Bromholm it entered into popular parlance as an exclamation and features in the Langland's Vision of Piers Plowman, Sir Walter Scott's Ivanhoe and in The Reeve's Tale in Chaucer's Canterbury Tales:

The miller's fall started her out of sleep. 'Help!' she screamed. 'Holy Cross of Bromeholme keep Us! Lord! Into thy hands! To thee I call.

The priory is on private farm land, but it can be seen from the stone archway that marks the edge of the property. There is also a public footpath that runs along the boundary to the left of the arch, offering alternative views of the ruin. Park on Abby St.



9. The Hill House **Happisburgh NR12 OAB** **(map ref OS 638330)**

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle the creator of the great fictional detective Sherlock Holmes visited North Norfolk and was inspired by what he saw. In The Adventure of the Dancing Men (1903) Holmes cracks a crime by deciphering a code composed of dancing stick men; a story inspired by the real life unusual code that Doyle saw used by the son of the owner of the Hill House pub in Happisburgh. People who know this area well will also notice a number of our distinctive local surnames in this book and others by Doyle. In The Adventure of the Dancing Men Holmes and Watson come to Norfolk to investigate a dreadful crime and catch the train to Ridling Thorpe Manor (undoubtedly another amalgam of local place names, probably Ridlington and Edingthorpe) from North Walsham.

On your visit to the pub, look out for Doyle references both inside and out. The pub has its own car park.



10. The Courtyard Bookshop
Lothiam Barn, Blickling Hall NR11 6NF
(map ref OS 617328)

Here you will find a superb selection of books to suit all tastes, sold in aid of the National Trust. After visiting the shop, why not explore the hall and gardens. Full details of prices and opening times can be found here:
<http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/blickling-estate/>

Blickling Hall has its own large car park.



11. Norfolk Children's Book Centre
Wayside, Alby NR11 7HB
(map ref OS 620333)

The centre boasts a comprehensive selection of books for both children and teachers. Many famous authors of children's books have visited the centre and adorned its walls with good wishes, cryptic comments and doodles.

The centre has its own car park.