

Brompton, or Bruneton, was so called by the 8th century; its 12th century lord added his name of Ralph. It has always been an area of small farms and self-sufficient cottagers - an unusual number of houses have their own curing ovens. The population, at its peak of 530 in 1851, is now, at around 220, only slightly more than it was in 1667.

There has probably always been a shop of some kind here - in 1686 William Martin accused Charity Hobbs, with Christian Teyney of Wiveliscombe of stealing 'strong waters' and sugar from his shop.

Brompton Ralph people have always been keen gardeners - every cottage had its orchard and the 'waste' between the road edge and the hedge has always been used.



This walk starts at the PO Stores and passes through the village finishing at the Village Hall. We hope you enjoy the delights of our village as much as we enjoy living here.

10
10 parishes
festival

This leaflet was produced as part of the
10 parishes festival
13th to 21st September 2003

A Walk through Brompton Ralph



"In a woody country, full of ascents and deep, narrow vales or glens, luxuriantly watered. The air here is esteemed remarkably salubrious; and the pasture so fine, that it has been asserted by some of the inhabitants there has scarcely ever been known a rotten sheep in the parish"

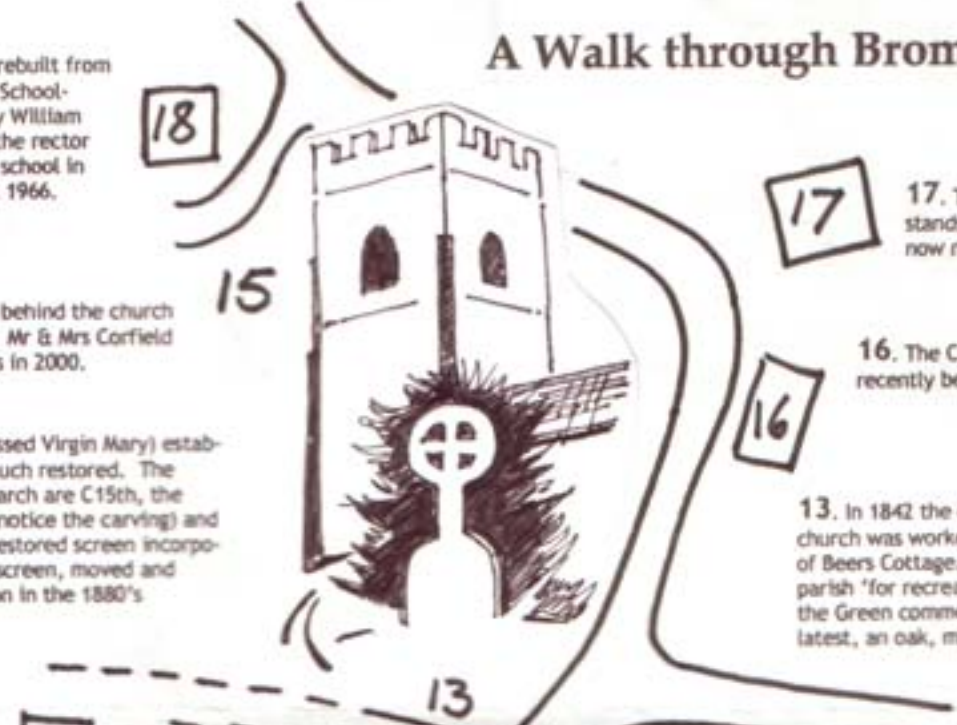
(Somerset Free Press, 1880)

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18. The Village Hall was rebuilt from the remains of the Village School-house, occupied in 1842 by William Hawkins who was paid by the rector and parents. There was a school in the village from 1606 until 1966.

15. Trees in the paddock behind the church were planted by villagers. Mr & Mrs Corfield gifted fencing and benches in 2000.

14. The Church (The Blessed Virgin Mary) established by 1291 has been much restored. The south doorway and tower arch are C15th, the south aisle window, font (notice the carving) and benches are C16th. The restored screen incorporates pieces of the C15th screen, moved and damaged during restoration in the 1880's



17. The bungalow, Willett View, stands in the front garden of the now ruined Long House

16. The C18th Cridlands Barn has recently been sold for conversion.

13. In 1842 the common land beside the church was worked as gardens by Ben Winters of Beers Cottage. This land was given to the parish 'for recreation' in 1845. Each tree on the Green commemorates some event - the latest, an oak, marks the Queen's Jubilee.

12. Beyond Cridlands Farm, the pair of cottages, now amalgamated, were built in two stages, probably during the C19th, while the further house is C18th with a Victorian wing.

11. Records show that Rock Cottage was built some time after 1842. William Duddridge, carpenter and his six children left Beers Tenements when it was sold in 1854 and were in the cottage by 1861, so it is possible that he built the cottage and workshop himself on the site of an existing barn - an early barn conversion.

10. The original forge lay behind the Smithy, now 'The Old Forge'. Older residents can remember wagons being driven into what is now the open garage at the side.

9. Bracken House was built in the mid 1990's in the gardens of the Old Forge.



8. High above the road, Hill View is a small terrace built in the early 1920's on Home Meadow for village farm workers.

6. Halfpenny Hive is a small cottage with the village pump outside.



7. The thatched, lime-washed Brendon Cottage is one of the oldest in the parish. Originally of late medieval open-hall, single storey plan, it was developed in the C16th when the upper storey, fireplace and curing-chamber for producing hams and bacon were added. In 1842 it was called Tyler's.

5. The Villa was built in the late C18th as three very superior poorhouses with a lean-to at one end containing a communal oven and boiler. It was rented to the Overseers of The Poor.

4. There have long been Non-conformists in the parish - John Galpin was teaching here in 1669, and in 1840 the Evangelical Congregational Chapel was opened. It closed in 2001 and has just been sold for conversion to a private dwelling.

2. Beers Cleeve Cottage, identified by the potter at his wheel, is all that remains of five 'tenements' built in the early C19th. Mr Parsons the baker and his wife lived here in 1930. In 1966 two became unsafe and were demolished, and in 1973 Mrs Kathleen Conway bought what she called 'A ruin with a view', and converted the remaining three to one house.

3. The green triangle was once the village pound. The horse-chestnut was planted by the W.I. and the seat and notice-board commemorate the Queen's Jubilee

1. The present Post Office Stores was originally Beers Cottage and became the village bakery in the C19th. After the 11 World War it became the P.O. Stores and in 1998 was rented to the village. It is now run by volunteers. Its fields: Higher and Lower Beers Cleeve. record the local name for a steep incline.

