

This is the third in a series of short Historic Walks around Yeovil. This walk features three superb mansions built for the most affluent of Yeovilians as well as several less-grand residences.

The walks are designed to be printed and carried with you on your walk. The various walks may be undertaken individually or grouped together. None are of any great distance and times will vary depending on the amount of time looking at each key point. [Walking directions are given in blue.](#)

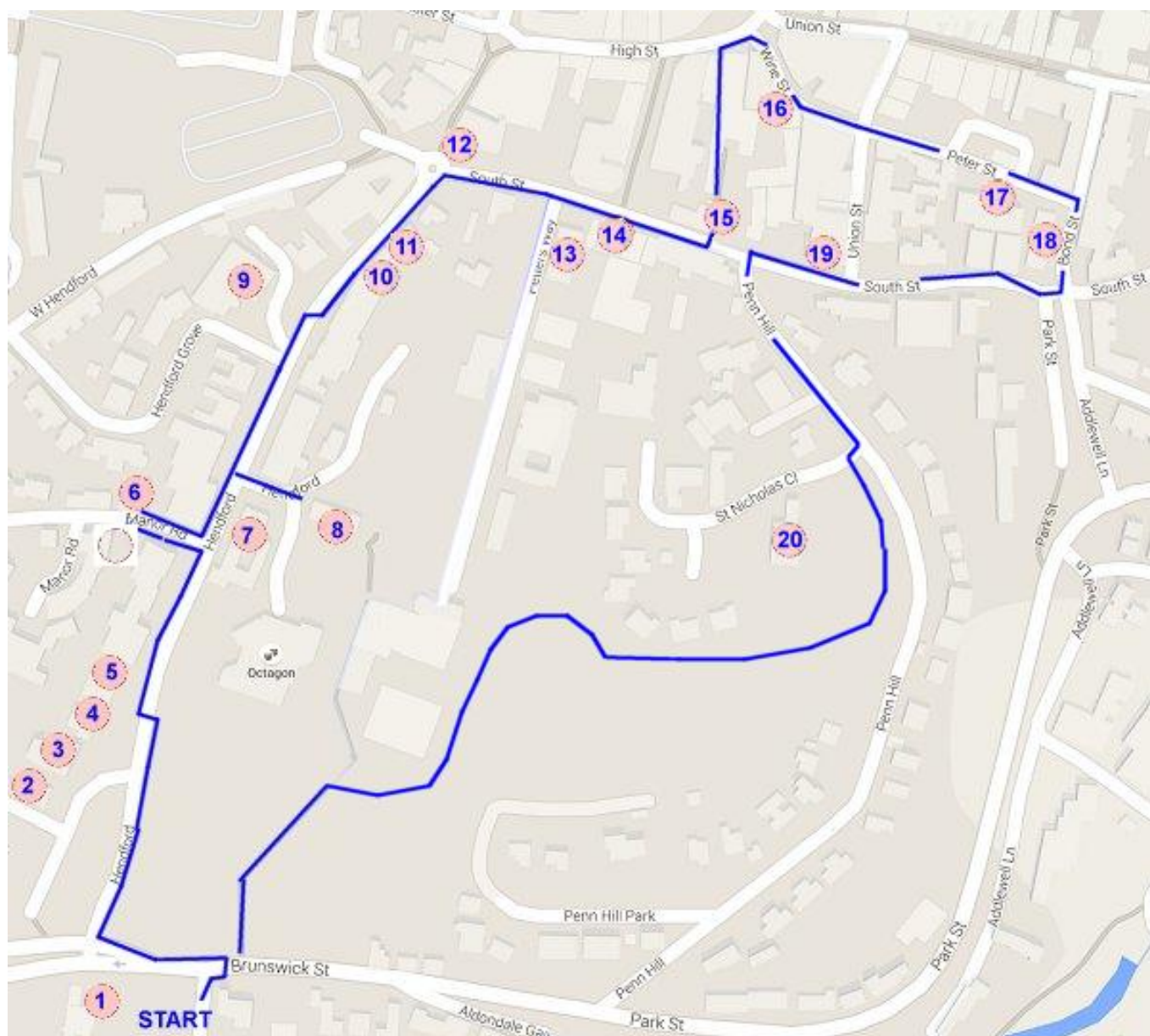
Key points on the walk are highlighted along the route and key facts are included. Most key points may be researched in greater depth on the A-to-Z of Yeovil's History website (www.yeovilhistory.info), either before or after your walk.

Walk 3: Grand Mansions (and a few less grand)

Distance: One and a quarter miles

Time: 40 to 60 minutes at a slow amble.

Gradient: Mostly flat but the final section is quite steep (mainly going downhill). To miss this last section, from key point 20 retrace your steps to South Street, turn left and proceed to Hendford, proceed south along Hendford to return to the start car park.



START - Goldenstones Car Park

Commence Walk - walk north to Brunswick Street, passing on your left -

Key Point 1 - Coopers Mill Originally built as a leather tannery, it was last used as such by LH Nichols & Co, leather dressers and glove manufacturers specialising in 'slink' skins - from lambs that die naturally at, or soon after, birth. The company left these premises and later occupied premises at Reckleford.

The modern pub, Coopers Mill, first opened in 1989 under the name of 'The Hendford', changing to Coopers Mill in 1993.

Turn right into Hendford and notice, on your left the four Regency residences -

Key Point 2 - 72 Hendford Now a pharmacy, this genteel residence was built around 1830 in typical, if simple, Regency style with elegant proportions and a fine stone porch supported on Ionic columns.

In 1851 it was the residence of glove manufacturer William Rawlings and by 1871 it was the home of coal merchant Uriah Burt.



Continue north along Hendford to the next property



Key Point 3 - 70 Hendford Now a private residence, this was built around 1830 and was the former Hendford Vicarage. It is brick-built with the front elevation at first floor level rendered and scored to give the appearance of ashlar. The ground floor has a full-width Victorian extension, typically over-elaborate and somewhat spoiling the plain simplicity of the original elevation which would have, when built, closely matched its neighbours.

Continue north along Hendford to the next property

Key Point 4 - 68 Hendford Again a private residence, it was built around 1830 and is shown on Watt's map of 1831. It has retained the marginal lights - a typical Regency characteristic - in all its first floor windows, but the ground floor windows have been replaced with Victorian bay windows in stone - somewhat out of character with the original simple, classic lines of the villa. In 1851 it was the residence of retired glove manufacturer Henry Penny and in 1871 it was the home of James Curtis who listed his occupation in the census as 'Mayor, Alderman, Distributor of Stamps, Retired Draper, Landowner'.



Continue north along Hendford to the next property



Key Point 5 - 66 Hendford Again another private residence, and was also built around 1830 and is shown on Watt's map of 1831 as well as Bidder's map of 1843. The most architecturally interesting feature of this villa is that it has retained the marginal lights (small panes of glass all around the edges of each window) - a typical Regency characteristic - in all its windows, somewhat unusual for Yeovil where it seems many windows have been visually ruined by the removal of glazing bars. In 1851 it was the residence of Dr John Penkivil, his wife Jeune, and three servants. By 1871 it was the home and surgery of Dr Russell Aldridge and family, and by 1891 it was the home of 'Editor & Author' Alfred Sylvester.

[Continue north along Hendford, then turn left into Manor Road for 50 yards.](#)

Key Point 6 - Glove Factory In 1910 Ernest Ricketts established his glove manufactory in newly-built Manor Road. Ernest closed down his Manor Road factory in 1925 in order to join his brother William in partnership. The new company was WG & EG Ricketts Ltd. of Addlewell Lane. After he vacated the premises in 1925 the Raymond brothers (cabinet makers, furniture dealers and undertakers) moved in and added the shop-front with the carved-face supporters either side as demonstrations of their wood carving skills - well worth a look.



[Return to Hendford, and facing you is -](#)



Key Point 7 - Hendford Manor The first of our three 'mansions' of this walk, Hendford Manor was originally built about 1740 for Rev. James Hooper, a Yeovil solicitor. It is a fine town house of Ham stone ashlar with a Welsh slate roof. The original house was simply the central part with the later porch. Hendford Manor was one of the properties attacked and damaged by the mob of hundreds of protesters in the Yeovil Reform Riot of 1831.

The house remained in the Hooper family until it was sold to attorney Edwin Newman in 1840. Newman's growing family of eleven children necessitated later extensions to the house; a plain north wing of cut and squared local stone with eight rooms was added, together with a large dining room on the south side that projects forwards.

Following Edwin Newman's death in 1885 Hendford Manor was bought by his partner James Bernard Paynter (who, being the son of Newman's second wife, was also Newman's son-in-law) and the solicitors practice continued operating from there. James Paynter died in 1927 and Hendford Manor was sold by his son to Yeovil Borough Council in 1938. It was used by various government departments including offices of the Ministry of Social Security and by local voluntary organisations but became all but derelict by the early 1970's. It was completely gutted internally due to extensive dry rot such that only the external shell of the original building survived. The interior was rebuilt and the building re-opened in 1986 as offices. The photograph here dates to about 1890 (before the ornate porch was added around 1900) and shows the original part of the house, the extensions either side were those added by Edwin Newman.

[Walk around the northern end of Hendford Manor, and facing you is -](#)

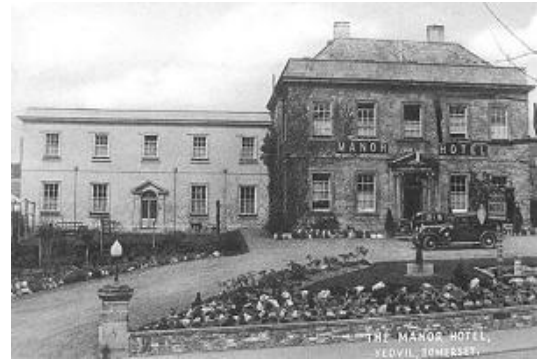
Key Point 8 - Hendford Manor Coach House The Coach House is a Grade II listed building and is set to the northeast of Hendford Manor house, is thought to be contemporary with the early phase of the Manor House. It is of two storeys on a rectangular plan. The main entrance is in the narrow west elevation of 3-bays with a deep stone plinth and approach stairway. The doorway has a simple stone surround supporting a cornice and on each side at ground floor level narrow pairs of sash windows set in raised surrounds with plain central mullions. A Venetian window over the entrance is flanked by circular windows with radial glazing bars (the left-hand side false). The south side elevation is of 5-bays and almost a repeat of the west elevation: the doors now replaced with sash windows. The outer bays project slightly and have high semi-circular arched openings now glazed in.



[Return to Hendford and continue walking north.](#)

After a few yards, just after Hendford Grove, is -

Key Point 9 - Hendford House Our second 'mansion' is now the Manor Hotel but originally a private house, known as Hendford House. With its fine Georgian five-bay Ham stone elevation and recessed five-bay stable block, it was built in 1776 and was the residence of local glover John Daniell the Elder, who later became a merchant banker setting up what became known as Yeovil Old Bank in a building next door. His son, John Daniell the Younger, took over the business and the family home in 1797. On his death in 1819 his daughter Elizabeth Clarke Daniell inherited Hendford House. She married the Rev. Arthur Johnson.



From a postcard of the 1930s

The house, among others, was attacked by the mob during the famous 'Reform' riot in Yeovil during 1831. Johnson sold the house to Henry Penny of Yeovil, gent, in 1833 and in 1840 Penny, in turn, sold it to Frederick Greenham, Esq., described as 'a gentleman' and a Town Commissioner. The house had extensive grounds, known as Hendford Park, extending from the house, running the length of today's West Hendford all the way down to today's Horsey Lane.

Hendford House was for a time owned by Dr Alridge Russell but by 1898 it was owned by sisters Caroline and Henrietta Hinuber. Just over ten years later it was taken over by Edwin Brewser as a boarding house. It didn't become a licensed hotel until 1927.

Turn around



Key Point 10 - Ayr Villa Built in the late 1880's at a cost of £699 Ayr Villa, or Ayr House, was the Manse for the Baptist Minister. In 1889 the Baptist Minute Book records "Mr Newnam [the minister] expressed sorrow at not being able to occupy the Manse for some considerable time, Mrs Newman having such a nervous horror of living in a new house." Around 1900 it was occupied by the Reverend Ernest Whitby Burt, son of William Burt of Yeovil. The Reverend was also a missionary in Shantung, China from 1888. His father William, a coal and timber merchant as well as a Yeovil JP, died in Ayr Villa in 1925. More recently it was the premises of an estate agent until 1992, then briefly owned by the Council and lastly used as a solicitor's office.

.... and next door

Key Point 11 - Flower's House Now known as Flower's House because it was the home and surgery of Doctor George Flower in the early 20th century - it still retains the doctor's night bell and speaking tube by the front door. It was built around 1820 as an impressive three-storey, five bay town house and during the late 1830s and early 1840s the house was the property of Samuel and Mary Bradley, both of 'independant means'. During the latter part of the 19th century it housed twenty boarders of the Yeovil Free School (located at the Chantry) and later became the Grammar School run by Henry Monk before being taken over by Dr Flower.



Proceed past the Butchers Arms to the corner of South Street.



Key Point 12 - The Three Choughs Hotel It is not clear when the Three Choughs first opened. There is a date stone from 1724 on the South Street elevation but this is on a three-storey extension clearly added after the main building fronting Hendford was built. The records, however, clearly indicate that the Three Choughs was operating by 1664. The building's facade facing Hendford was re-fronted in 1845. The building was at one time owned by the Woborn Almshouse and the rent of the building provided income for the Almshouse. Until the 1960's the Three Choughs had stabling and garaging for

customers horses and cars on the opposite corner, between Hendford and West Hendford. The Three Choughs closed in 2004 and has since been converted into offices and flats.

[Walk east along South Street, to the corner with Petters Way](#)

Key Point 13 - Baptist Chapel The Conventicle Act of 1664 made persons attending private assemblies for religious worship liable to severe penalties yet several sects are known to have been active in and around Yeovil, the earliest on record being the Baptists with their Yeovil church being first mentioned in 1656. Their meetings in the town, of necessity in secret at first, were in South Street from 1668 in a barn built by John Cary. The barn was converted to a Meeting House some time prior to 1717. Meetings continued to be held in the barn. In 1810 a chapel was built on or near the site of the barn, but because of the growing congregation, it was replaced by a larger building in 1828. The Baptist Chapel was enlarged in 1868 and a choir added in 1898. Extensive alterations have recently taken place.



[Next door to, and integral with, the Baptist Chapel](#)



Key Point 14 - Newnam Memorial Hall & Schools In 1912 the Newnam Memorial Hall and Schools were built and named in memory of Rev Samuel Newnam, minister of the adjacent Baptist chapel from 1883 until 1896. In January 1915 a Red Cross hospital opened in the Newnam Memorial Hall, the hall being lent free of charge. In total 1,200 servicemen of the Great War were treated at the hospital and only four deaths occurred. A commemorative plaque is affixed to the front wall of the building.

[Proceed east along South Street as far as the Globe & Crown, cross and enter the narrow alleyway alongside The Keep \(the former Greyhound Inn\)](#)

Key Point 15 - Tabernacle Lane As you enter the lane, notice the scratches in the brickwork - one of those little items that makes Yeovil so special - these scratches in the soft red Yeovil bricks were made by Victorian children sharpening their slate pencils on their way to school in South Street. The earliest mention of what is now called Tabernacle Lane was in a Woborn Almshouse lease dated 1464 where it is referred to as Narwelane (Narrow Lane). It was also known as Little Lane and Hannam's Lane because Josiah Hannam had an ironmongery warehouse there. However Tabernacle Lane has been the most often used name since the founding of the Tabernacle Meeting House in 1804.



Walk the length of Tabernacle Lane (notice the Ham stone remains of the Tabernacle in the wall by the stagger), enter the Borough and immediately turn left into Wine Street

Key Point 16 - The Royal Oak Now called the Green Room, this was originally a public house called the Queen's Head, then the Royal Oak, the Hole in the Wall and the Green Room from 2005. A very old building it still retains its 16th century cellar. Wine Street (which originally comprised of both today's Wine Street and lower Union Street as far as South Street) had been called Grope Lane and is even mentioned in the Woborn Muniments of 1431. The name Grope Lane probably refers to nothing more salacious than having to grope, or feel, one's way along in the dark, narrow lane.



Continue along Wine Street and cross into Peter Street



Key Point 17 - The Church of the Holy Trinity Built in the Early English style of the 13th century, it was designed by the Diocesan architect Benjamin Ferrey and was consecrated in 1846. Of Ham stone ashlar under a Welsh slated roof, it was of cruciform plan with four bays to the nave, with north and south aisles. There is no tower, but a small turret to the west end. The church was declared redundant in the 1990s and was converted to Yeovil Trinity Foyer in 1996 to provide accommodation and training to young people aged between 16 and 24 years old.

At Bond Street, turn right

Key Point 18 - Woborn Almshouse The Woborn Almshouse or hospital was founded in Yeovil under letters patent granted by King Edward IV in 1476, in Silver Street. It was set up by John Woborn and Richard Huett, chaplains and benefactors, for the support of six poor men and six poor women who were "single and chaste, and untainted by leprosy". The original Woborn Almshouse building was sited just behind the property that was to become the Pall Tavern but had become so ruinous by the 1850's that the new Woborn Almshouse was built in 1860 at its present site.



At the end of Bond Street, turn right into South Street and continue as far as Union Street



Key Point 19 - Victoria Temperance Hall Towards the end of the 19th century there was a strong temperance movement in England - not just Yeovil where there were three temperance hotels and two temperance pubs (yes, really). The Victoria Temperance Hall, on the corner of Union Street at its junction with South Street, was built of local red brick in 1887-88 and opened in 1889. It contained two large rooms, holding 300 and 200 people respectively. In 1903 Whitby's Yeovil Almanack advertised day and evening classes at the 'Government Art and Science School' in the hall. For several years the Victoria Hall

was the town's library. It was opened in 1920 by Miss KM Chaffey, with the initial costs being made by public subscriptions. Miss Chaffey had started the "Everybody's Library" in Yeovil in 1891. The library moved in 1928 when the new purpose-built library opened in King George Street. Now known as the South Street Centre, it is the home of Yeovil Day Centre.

Continue west along South Street, then turn left into Penn Hill

Turn into St Nicholas' Close and walk the 50 yards or so to the front of...

Key Point 20 - Penn House The third of our 'mansions' on this walk, Penn House is a fine late 18th century town house set in its own extensive grounds and built high on the hill behind South Street. When it was built it was the only building on the hill although the name of the builder is unknown.

Penn House had an entrance hall, dining room, drawing room, morning room, library and WC on the ground floor, five bedrooms, dressing room, WC and housemaid's closet on the first floor, five bedrooms on the second floor and, in the basement, a kitchen and scullery, butler's pantry, large fire-proof muniment room, smoking room, housekeeper's room, large larder, good wine and beer cellars, WC and a coal house. In the extensive grounds were vineries, a pinery, an orchid house, and other conservatories, stabling for five horses and two double coach houses with accommodation over.

Certainly in 1806 it was owned by wealthy mercer and town developer Peter Daniell (1764-1834) after whom Peter Street is named. Between 1840 and 1851 Penn House was the home of John Slade, one of eight wealthy solicitors living in large Yeovil houses.

From 1861 it was owned by Miss Elizabeth Neal, youngest daughter of John Neal Esq. until her death in 1877 - Penn House was then sold, with extensive lands, to corn and timber merchant Jabez Bradford for £5,400 (in excess of £4 million at 2016's value). In the 1891 census the house was occupied by 62-year old general merchant Jabez, his 39-year old wife Annie, six children, a governess, cook, housemaid, nurse and undernurse. After Bradford's death in 1894 his wife Annie continued in residence at Penn House until her death in 1930. From 1931 it was a boys private prep school, called St Nicholas' School, run by a Mr Ball. The school moved to West Coker House in 1960. In the 1970's it was the base of the Borough of Yeovil Parks Department. Today this former mansion has been converted into flats.



Return down St Nicholas' Close, just before reaching Penn Hill, turn right onto the footpath marked 'Yeovil Country Park'. This footpath runs around the grounds of Penn House. Just keep walking and the path eventually comes out near Maltravers House, turn left along the path to Brunswick Street. Cross the road and walk back to the car park.

I hope you enjoyed this walk and don't forget that full details and photographs of all the Key Points mentioned may be seen on the A-to-Z of Yeovil's History website - www.yeovilhistory.info