

### Walk Details



Find out more about this Tudor lady and her family in this circular walk from Chrishall to Elmdon.



1.5 - 2 hours, approximately 7k. Road and footpaths.



Refreshments available at The Red Cow public house in the centre of the village. (Opening hours, see their website at [www.theredcow.com](http://www.theredcow.com))

### Country Code and Disclaimer

Please keep to public paths, leave gates as you find them, keep dogs under control, take your litter home and take care on roads. Enjoy the countryside and respect its life and work.

Chrishall Archive Group have attempted in all good faith to provide adequate safety warnings and they cannot in any way be held responsible for any claims arising from damage to person or property.

*In Tudor England a local woman set up charities for the benefit of the poor of Chrishall, Elmdon and other local villages. Her name was Lettice Martin and she was a widow living in Chrishall. Her name continues to this day with some villages still retaining her charities. This walk takes in some of the local sites which are associated with Lettice and her family.*



**1.** The walk starts at Chrishall pavilion on Jigneys playing field and cricket pitch. The pavilion houses the Chrishall archive collection which will be **open over the Jubilee weekend and on 26th June, 31st July and 4th September 2022.**

**2.** With your back to the pavilion, turn left and then immediate left to take a path towards the Red Cow pub. When you reach the road turn left to reach the centre of the village and the village sign.



**3.** The road that is straight ahead is signposted Crawley End. On the left hand side is a pond and just beyond the pond is a house called Martinholme. It has been assumed that this is where Lettice lived, but in fact it was probably built a century after she died. However Lettice did own the land on which the house stands. The rents from this land formed part of the charities' income and was owned by the charities until the beginning of the 20th century.

**4.** Head back to the village sign and take the left hand fork at the war memorial. Walk down Church Road as it gradually descends for

between a quarter and half a mile. You will come to a road on your right. Opposite that is a white house called the Butts. Just beyond the house, on the left hand side, is a footpath sign. Take this path. After a short distance you will arrive at Chrishall Church. Look to your right and you will see below you a black and white timber framed house in the Tudor style. To the left of this house is land where it is thought that one of 4 manor houses that existed in Chrishall in Lettice's time was located. This manor house was called Chrishall Bury and was owned by Lettice's family. It is possible that she lived there.



**5.** Lettice asked in her will to be buried in Chrishall church. It is not known where she is actually buried, although there is some suggestion she is buried in the central aisle. If the church is open do take a look. Just inside the entrance on the left hand side are 3 brasses laid into the floor.

The one of a women on her own is reputed to be Lettice. Legend has it that Lettice chose the villages to benefit from her charities, as those that could be seen from the top of Chrishall church.



**6.** On leaving Chrishall church, you will see a gate on the far side of the churchyard. To reach this gate, turn right out of the church and you will see that the footpath by which you came continues across to the gate. Walk through the gate. Ahead of you is a panoramic view. Straight ahead you can see some farm buildings. This is part of Chiswick Hall, which is believed to have been built in the 15th or 16th century and was one of the other four manor

houses in Chrishall in Lettice's time. A previous manor house, mentioned in the Domesday Book, located just behind where the current house stands was known as Flanders. Turn left and follow a path as it turns left and then right to skirt a wood. Eventually leaving the wood behind, you will find you have a hedge on your left hand side and a field on your right, which becomes a fenced paddock. In the distance you can make out some buildings. This is part of Lofts Hall. It is thought that both Lettice's father and nephew (her father's heir who also happened to be an MP), both called Thomas Crawley, lived here. Follow the path until you come to a footpath junction.

**7.** Turn left. You will have a paddock on your left hand side. Continue along the wide track, ignoring any turnings until you come to a ditch with two metal poles either side and a footpath marker. Cross over the ditch. Ahead of you is a field. Turn right. Skirt the field. Ignore the first footpath marker at the first corner of the field. When you come to a second footpath marker, take the path to the right through a small copse. Follow the path around the left hand side of a field and when you come to a wide opening on your left follow the path through the

opening. Once through the opening you will see a footpath sign on a tree. Walk towards a yellow thatched cottage and take the path between the cottage and a 5 bar gate. The cottage is called Shepherd's Hay (the name is on the gate). Turn left and walk down Kings Lane. At the bottom of the lane turn left and follow the road for about 100 yards to reach the centre of Elmdon where you will find the church.



**8.** The church in Elmdon is open most days. At the far end of the church, just before the altar and on the right hand side laid into the floor, you will see a brass to Thomas Crawley, Lettice's father. There is an inscription and also a small brass of 4 men and 8 women (note the brasses are sometimes under a rug). This appears to be Thomas' family, so it is likely that one of the women is Lettice. Also notice the tomb to the left of the altar and the inscription on it to Thomas Meade who was one of Lettice's nephews.

**9.** With the church behind you, turn right. Notice the house painted green next to the church. It is called Crawley House (the name is on the gate). Lettice's father bequeathed this as a school. It remained a school until the 1800s.

**10.** Continue along the road to your right. Ignore the turning to Bury Lane. Be careful the road narrows in places. Just after the national speed limit sign, there is a clearing on the left hand side. Follow the path that branches off to the left from the road and follow a path where you will find a byway sign. Walk along the path with woods on either side until you come to a footpath junction. At the junction turn right keeping woods on your right and with a field on your left. Walk along this path for some time until you come to a road.

**11.** Turn left onto the road known as Crawley End. Walk along this road. Just beyond Chrishall Village Hall, on the left side of the road, just after a pond, there is a field on your left which is believed to be the location for another one of the manors that existed during Lettice's

time. This manor was known as Crawley Bury (or Crowlie Berrie). Lettice's family also owned this manor so she may have lived here. If you look closely at the field you will see there are mounds in it, which could (along with the pond) have formed a moat for a Tudor manor house.

**12.** Carry on walking along this road. Just after Wire Farm on the left hand side, notice the sign on the post box marked Crowley Barn. The Crawley family were sometimes called Crowley. Continue along this road to reach Martinholme and the centre of Chrishall village where this walk started.

Alison Meadows - April 2022.

### QR codes for this walk



Point 6: Learn more about Thomas Crawley



Point 8: The Inscription from Thomas Crawley's memorial in Elmdon Church



Point 8: Read more about Thomas Meade