

A brief history of Grampound

In the past the little white river, part of the upper reaches of the River Fal which runs under the bridge at the bottom of Fore Street, was a deep and busy waterway with a Roman encampment nearby. About 1,600 years ago the Romans built a great bridge here; in Norman times the bridge was called Grand Pont, as the village was the lowest crossing point on the River Fal, by which name the village was known and from which its present name has evolved.

The community flourished and by 1332 Grampound was given its charter by Earl John of Eltham which gave the townspeople the right to 'hang convicted thieves' and to exemption from taxes and tolls on the repair and building of other bridges. Most importantly they were granted the right to hold 52 markets a year without payment of dues. The seven-sided market cross still remains in Grampound outside what was once the market hall. The clock tower, now a landmark on the A390, was a symbol of the status of the borough in later years.

The tanning of leather in Grampound goes back to medieval, perhaps even Roman, times and the large cattle markets supplied the hides. At one time there were five tanneries in the area, which was a centre for leather. From 1711 the Croggon tannery flourished in Grampound and until quite recently produced high quality leather by the traditional oak-bark method.

A small dark chamber behind the market hall was the gaol. Perhaps it was used quite often, as later in its history Grampound became a notorious 'rotten' borough, with much buying and selling of votes. It was once described as 'one mass of notorious corruption' but, as it was also described elsewhere as 'a place of great privileges and very poor inhabitants', maybe the temptations were hard to resist.

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Grampound sent two members to parliament from the time of Edward VI up to 1824, but was in that year disenfranchised for bribery, being the only borough so treated prior to the Reform Bill of 1832. It had the honour of introducing to parliamentary life two very notable men, Wm. Noye, the great lawyer (1604 to 1611), and John Hampden, the hero of the ship-money dispute (1620) and prominent parliamentarian during the Civil War, both good friends of the people, though the former deserted the popular cause. In 1768 it was represented by Grey Cooper, secretary to the treasury, and Charles W. Cornwall, afterwards speaker of the house, a man of great ability.

The village possessed a mill, mentioned in the Domesday Book, located at the end of what is still called Mill Lane. In 1501 there were spinning mills, in 1653 fulling mills and later, in 1801, these became woollen manufacturers. From 1816 the industry changed to glove manufacturing.

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A walk around the ancient township of Grampound with Creed

Walk No. 1

Two short walks around the settlement

.....less than one mile
.....or up to 2 miles



Two walks around our historic settlement.....

.....less than one mile
.....or up to 2 miles

- Free parking is available at Grampound Recreation Ground where you will find public toilets also. The River Fal runs behind the Village Hall alongside the field.



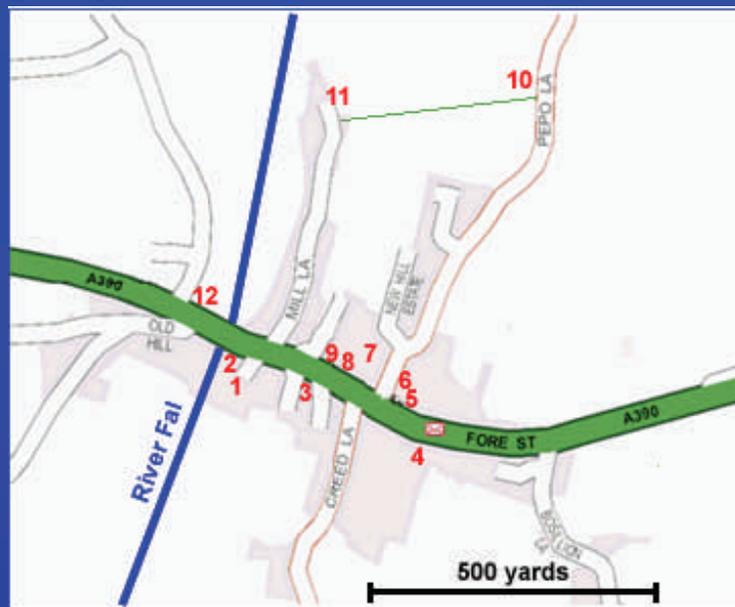
- Next to the car park entrance is Grampound with Creed School. This was built in 1869, to amalgamate the three infant schools of 21 boys and 30 girls. In 1903 the school leaving age was 12 years and then children were sent to work. Visually the school has changed little in over 130 years. Today the school continues to flourish and enjoys an excellent reputation.

- Walking eastwards towards the centre of the village you will pass a number of attractive cottages before reaching an opening known as Well Ope, where you will find Grampound West Chapel, built in 1895 and now a private dwelling. Back on the main road, after the Smoked Fish Shop is a magnificent row of old lime trees and behind these is The Old Forge, once a coach house and stables, in 1923 a blacksmiths' and now Lobbs Garage.



- Continuing in this direction and after crossing Creed Lane you will arrive at centuries old thatched cottages now known as Manor House, but once the Guildhall of the Manor of Tybesta. From 1791 to 1848 The Court Leet was held here twice yearly for the administration of justice. The buildings contain moulded ceilings and a recently discovered ancient painted coat of arms.

Across the main road from the Tannery complex is the Hollies Post Office and Stores, our village shop.



- Heading back down the hill, you will arrive at Pepo Lane. On the corner is the ancient Grampound Town Hall, still in use for parish council meetings today, with its landmark clock tower. Originally supported on four granite pillars, the upper room, with its decorated ornate ceiling and displayed carved wooden Town Arms, was once the Corn Exchange and the lower open space the market place. Once enclosed, it became the council chamber for the first parish council meeting in 1894. A tiny prison known as 'the Black Hole' still exists at the rear of the building. It was later used as a coal-hole and is now a WC. The original clock in the tower was installed in 1894 by J. Smith & Son, who continue to service the clock today. Beside the Town Hall and in front of the church is a tall octagonal shaft on a stepped base of Pentewan stone, which originally supported the ancient market cross.



- Behind the Town Hall and cross is St Nun's Church. The church was built in 1370, close to the market hall, as a chapel of ease for the convenience of worshippers. It was rebuilt in 1869 into the delightful church it is today.
- One of Grampound's hidden corners will be found by walking up Pepo Lane a short distance and then turning left down an un-made lane. This peaceful lane will lead you past some very pretty cottages and return you to Fore Street.

- Turn right and within a few yards is the Dolphin Inn, where food and refreshments are available throughout the day. This is Grampound's last remaining public house.



- Continuing westwards along Fore Street for a few yards brings you to Trevail, with its plaque commemorating John Hampden, celebrated parliamentarian and Cromwell's right-hand man in the Civil War.



It is just a short walk back to the car park, or a longer walk can be had by returning to Pepo Lane and walking along this quiet country lane past houses until a stile and public footpath sign is seen on the left. This path across fields affords lovely views across Grampound and the surrounding countryside.

- The footpath leads to the end of Mill Lane, where the mill has not been working for some years but evidence for its use is all around. The Domesday Book mentions a mill on this site. Continue past the doctor's surgery (the site of Grampound's Poor House and possibly also of a Lazar House where lepers were cared for in the fourteenth century) down Mill Lane and back to Fore Street.

- Turn right and cross the bridge over the Fal. You will soon come to the toll-gate house, built in 1834. Notice the bosses in the form of faces above each window.



Grampound in about 1900, hardly changed to this day, apart from the outfits and the traffic!