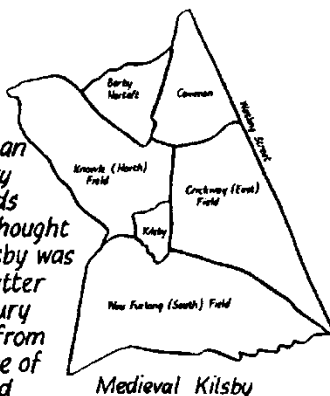


# Kilsby

The first settlement in the parish of Kilsby was probably a Roman farm. Retired soldiers often settled land close to the main Roman roads. Roman pottery has been found in fields around Kilsby. It is thought that the village of Kilsby was first founded in the latter part of the 9th century when the Lord's son, from the neighbouring village of Barby, set out to found his own community.



Medieval Kilsby

"Childesbi" was built on the side of a wooded hill in a clearing. The Roman road, Watling Street, bordered the parish. This road was used as the boundary between Danelaw and England. The entire Kilsby length of the original Watling Street is still a public right of way. The 'by' in Kilsby does, however, suggest a viking settlement.

Medieval Kilsby can still be found, with excellent examples of ridge and furrow, as well as windmill mounds and, of course, the Church. Kilsby has two main historical claims to fame. The first skirmish of the Civil War took place in Kilsby on August 8th 1642. Thomas Winkler attacked Sir John Smith with a pitch fork. Shots were also fired from bedroom windows and in the melée several villagers were killed.

In 1833 the railway came to Kilsby. Stephenson had decided to build a tunnel under Kilsby hill. He thought it would be straightforward, but it turned out to be very difficult and very expensive. It was finally opened in 1838. Much of the trouble was due to the existence of extensive quicksands along the line of the structure. Work was interrupted for 6 months while water was continually pumped away at the rate of 1800 gallons per minute.

According to School records, during the Second World War, in 1940 several bombs were dropped on Kilsby. The records state that there was "damage to one cabbage patch".

Modern history brought motorways. It was inevitable that one of the first, the M1, should pass close to Kilsby - for it was channeled through the same Watford Gap used by the railway and canal engineers, and even by the Roman legions.

## The Walkers Code

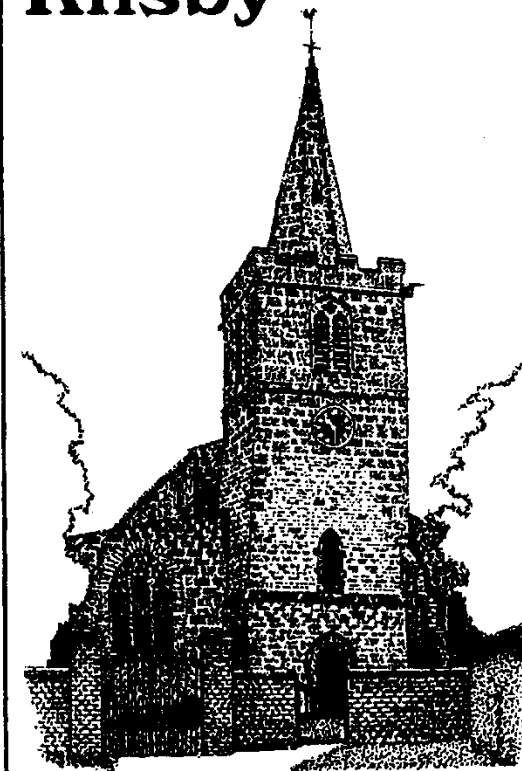
- \* Enjoy the countryside and respect its life and work.
- \* Guard against all risks of fire.
- \* Fasten all gates.
- \* Keep your dogs under close control.
- \* Keep to public footpaths across farmland.
- \* Use gates and stiles to cross fences, hedges and walls.
- \* Leave livestock, crops and machinery alone.
- \* Take your litter home.
- \* Help to keep all water clean.
- \* Protect wildlife, plants and trees.
- \* Take special care on country roads.
- \* Make no unnecessary noise.

If you experience any difficulties on any of these walks please report them to the County Right of Way Officer, Northamptonshire County Council, John Dryden House, 8-10 The Lakes, Northampton NN4 7DE Telephone (01604) 237582.

Designed and illustrated by Bill Ellory from a concept conceived by Peter Bramhall, in whose memory this leaflet is dedicated.



## Countryside Walks Kilsby



St Faith's Church



Northamptonshire  
County Council  
Planning and Transportation

- Walk 1
- Walk 2
- ++++++ Walk 3
- +--+ Walk 4
- Walk 5
- Walk 6 (see overleaf)
- Combined Walks
- Other Walks

**Red Lion** The old Red Lion was burnt down in 1888 when the thatch caught fire. The present Red Lion was rebuilt in 1906.



**Circular Walk No 1 Oxford Canal**

**Pollarded Willows**  
Along the Rains Brook can be seen rows of pollarded willows. They are cut off just above animal head height. The small branches that grew and spouted out were used by the people of Barby and Kilsby for basket making.

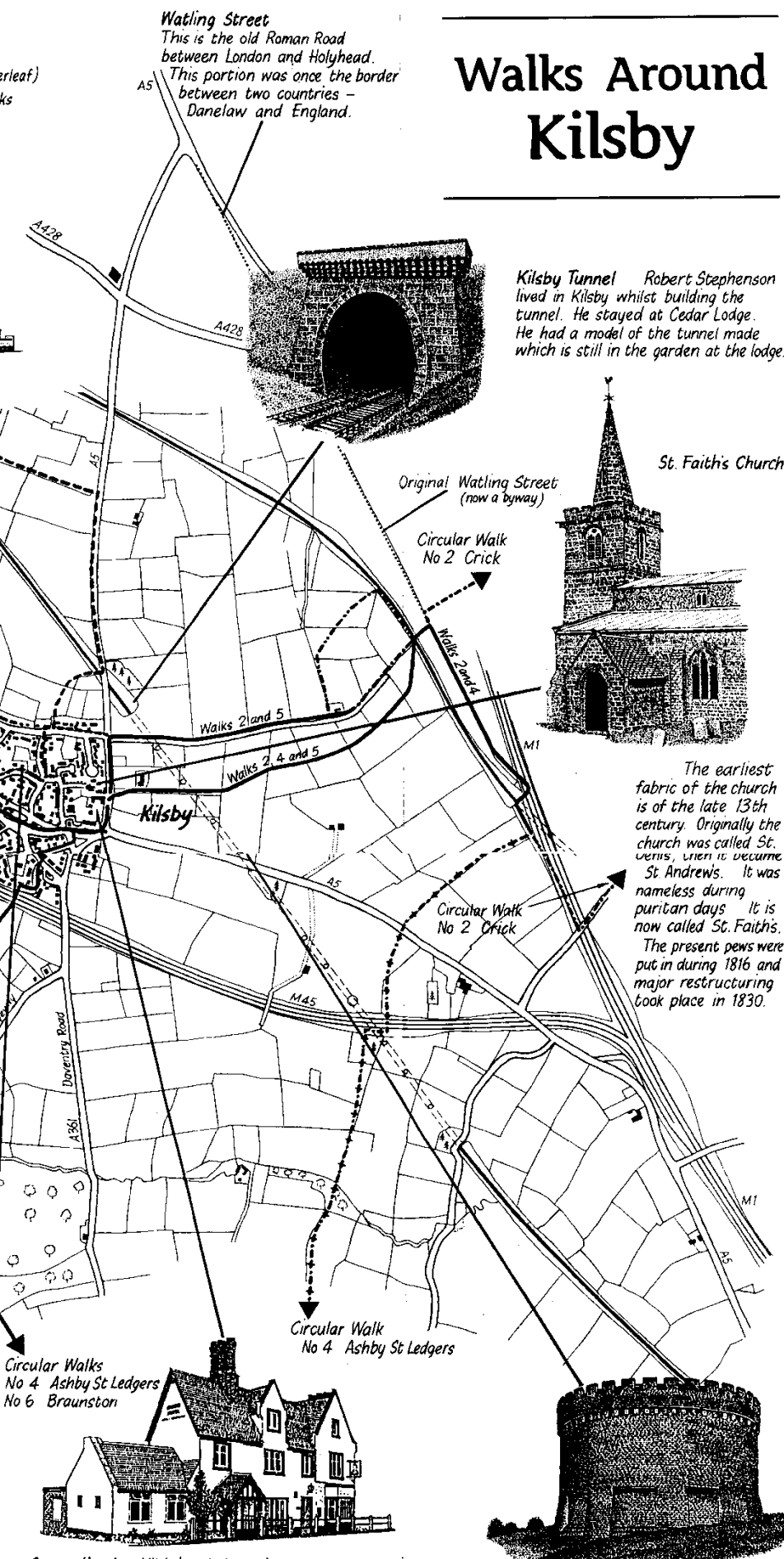
**Ridge and Furrow**  
Kilsby has many fine examples of ridge and furrow (medieval field strips). Did you know that these are usually shaped as a reversed 'S' in plan.

**Circular Walks**  
No 1 Oxford Canal  
No 3 Barby  
No 6 Braunston

**Circular Walk No 3 Barby**

The original footbridge over the Rains Brook was known as "The Promenade" because of its importance to the courting couples from Kilsby and Barby. The present bridge owes its existence to the energy and dedication of Peter Bramhall in his role as Parish Path Warden until his death in February 1994.

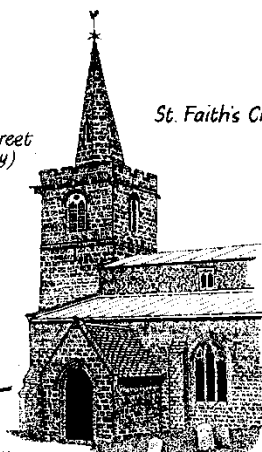
**Essen Lane** One side of Essen Lane has an attractive row of thatched cottages. It was here that the Civil War is reputed to have started



**Watling Street**  
This is the old Roman Road between London and Holyhead. This portion was once the border between two countries - Danelaw and England.

# Walks Around Kilsby

**Kilsby Tunnel** Robert Stephenson lived in Kilsby whilst building the tunnel. He stayed at Cedar Lodge. He had a model of the tunnel made which is still in the garden at the lodge.



St. Faith's Church

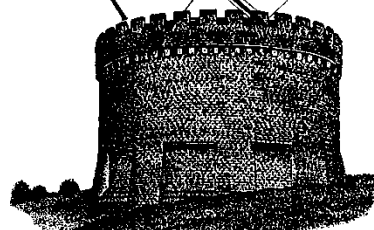
The earliest fabric of the church is of the late 13th century. Originally the church was called St. venis, when it became St. Andrews. It was nameless during puritan days. It is now called St. Faith's. The present pews were put in during 1816 and major restructuring took place in 1830.

**Circular Walk No 4 Ashby St Ledgers**

**Circular Walks**  
No 4 Ashby St Ledgers  
No 6 Braunston

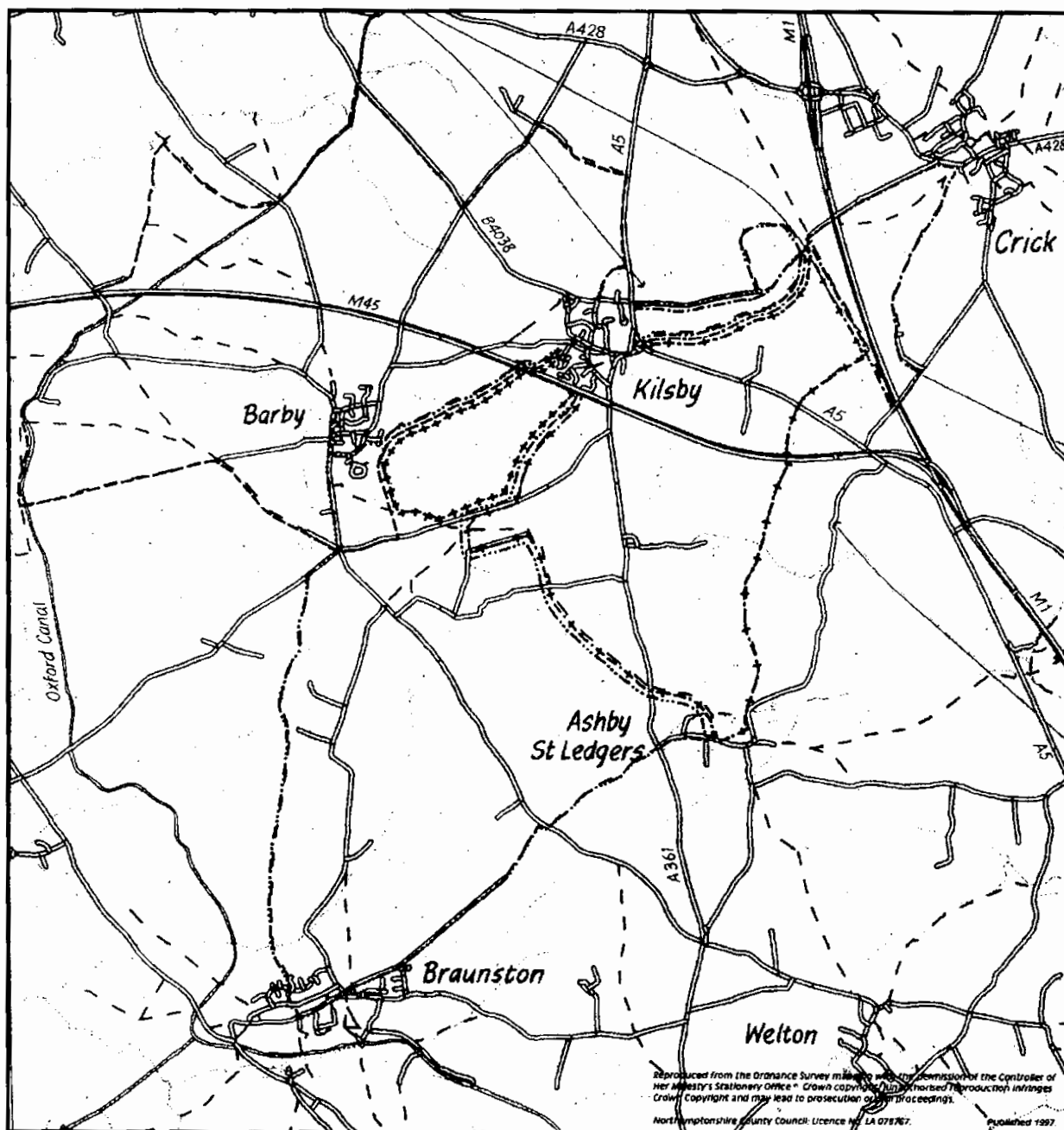


**George Hotel** Kilsby's only hotel is a very good starting point for many of the walks referred to in this leaflet. The hotel was built between 1834 and 1838 with bricks from the tunnel.



**'Kilsby Castle'**  
The tunnel has several small air vents and two larger ones. An interesting legend relating to one of these tells how, during the tunnel's construction, three drunken navvies fell to their deaths when attempting to jump these shafts.

# Circular Walks Starting in Kilsby



**Walk 1** -----  
Kilsby - Barby - Oxford Canal - Barby Nortoft - Kilsby

A walk of about 9 miles - rough going in places.  
Uses OS Landranger maps 140, 151 and 152 or  
Pathfinder series 956 and 977.

**Walk 2** -----  
Kilsby - Crick - original Watling Street - Kilsby

An easy walk of about 5 miles in length. Uses OS Land-  
ranger map 140 or Pathfinder series 956.

**Walk 3** ++++  
Kilsby - Barby - Kilsby

A pleasant 3½ mile round trip. Uses OS Landranger  
maps 140 and 152 or Pathfinder series 956 and 977.

**Walk 4** +-----+  
Kilsby - original Watling Street - Ashby St Ledgers -  
Arnills Gate - Kilsby

A pleasant 6 mile walk almost entirely on footpaths.  
Use OS Landranger maps 140 and 152 or Pathfinder  
series 956 and 977.

**Walk 5** -----  
Kilsby - London to Birmingham Railway - Kilsby

A short field walk of 2½ miles. Use OS Landranger  
map 140 or Pathfinder series 956.

**Walk 6** -----  
Kilsby - Arnills Gate - Ashby St Ledgers - Braunston -  
Barby - Kilsby

At 11 miles the longest of these suggested walks. Use OS  
Landranger maps 140 and 152 or Pathfinder series 956  
and 977.