

An Extract from The Evening News August 23th 1929

Week-end rambles by 'Roamer'

Easington, Kilnsea and Spurn.

Before the advent of the motor car the extreme south-east of Holderness was somewhat remote, and rarely visited, except by naturalists and cyclists. Formerly, as now, pleasure steamer parties from Hull or Grimsby were occasionally able to land boats on the extremity of Spurn point for an hour or so. Now a convenient bus service to Easington places the Spurn area within easy reach of the rambler.

Easington itself has points of interest in the church and the ancient Tithe Barn, which has been remarkably preserved through the centuries and is now open to view as a folklore museum. The Tithe Barn can easily be reached by crossing the path just opposite the Marquis of Granby Inn. Another museum, containing the Loten collection can be seen at a house on the left of the main village street just past the post office. The best route for seeing the nature of the district is to make for the Humber shore from Easington, and to walk along the Humber side past Kilnsea, and along the Spurn peninsula, and return to Easington by the sea shore. To reach the Humber shore, take the lane past the Tithe Barn leading southward away from the village. A mile of walking brings you to the Humber shore, and unless the tide is high you will see stretching in front of you vast tracts of mud flats, the reclamation of which many people think is desirable and

possible.

To the right of you extends for miles a glistening white chalk bank. The rock is not, however, native, but has been brought here to protect the land from floods at high tide. In earlier times, according to such ancient records as the Meaux Chronicle, the district has been the site of floods so disastrous that villages have disappeared.

The site of Burstall Priory is about two miles to the West, the name still being preserved in Burstall Lane and Burstall Bank at Skeffling. To your left is a strip of sand dunes known as Out Stray. Here you will get your first view of the sea holly which forms a very fine sight. Much Yellow Bedstraw also grows here. On sunny days lizards run actively about among the sand. At the end of the Stray commences a peculiar tortuous embankment called Long Bank, which crosses from the Humber shore to the sea shore.

Just south of this the land is subject to floods at high spring tides, the road from Easington to Kilnsea being at such times partly under water. One can easily recognise the parts that have been flooded, by the presence of salt marsh plants such as the Sea Wormwood, Sea Pink, Sea Spurrey, Shrubby Sea Purslane and others.

It is quite certain that the Romans had a station at Kilnsea, for frequently fragments of Roman earthenware and other evidence of Roman occupation can be or have been, found along the part of the Humber shore we are traversing. Soon after passing the point where the Easington road touches

the shore, the nature of the country changes. Sand hills take the place of clay, and we have entered upon the range of sand hills which, between sea and estuary, form the three mile long slender headland of Spurn Point. Like it we have nothing else in Yorkshire, and so peculiar are the conditions that obtain here that the forms of plant life and animal life are very different from those we are familiar with elsewhere in the county.

The spiny shrub with greyish leaves that is common in places is the Sea Buckthorn, unpleasant to walk among because of its long brittle spines. The large pink-flowered Convolvulus scrambling over the sand is the seaside species. The Sea Holly is plentiful. The grasses are of kinds that favour maritime sand hills, the most beautiful being the sand-binding Marram and Lyme Grasses. If permission can be obtained to ascend the light house a splendid view is afforded on a clear day of the mouth of the Humber Estuary.

Return may be made along the sea shore either on the beach or along the summit of the sand hills. The bird lover will not fail to notice the graceful Sea Swallows or Lesser Terns flying overhead, and Ringed Plover running about among the shingle on the beach, which with the Oyster Catcher and other kinds of birds are strictly protected against molestation. Well would it be if all forms of natural animal and plant life could be preserved from depredation.

Beyond the beacon of Kilnsea a small area of peaty mud, representing the bed of a former lake, is to be seen on the

beach at low tide. Here boulder clay cliffs come in again, which rise at Dimlington to a height of a hundred feet. Return to Easington can be made by the road from the Life Boat House.

There is a line of rails between Kilnsea and the end of Spurn Point. This is used by three types of conveyance - a land ship propelled by a sail, a steam locomotive and petrol driven motor. The locomotive is unfortunately a frequent cause of fires on the headland and there is scarcely a patch of the sand hills which has not been burnt over during the last year or two. On a visit to Spurn early in August, I noticed the long grass blazing in three separate places after the passage of the engine. It is a great pity, for considerable damage is done to the peculiar plant life of the sand hills and many of the equally peculiar and interesting forms of the smaller animal life suffer irreparable destruction.