

WALK 3 WEST *e-book*



*The third and
final volume
of the
best selling
local walks guide
containing a
further thirty
west country
walks
all within
easy reach of
Bristol and Bath,
and chosen for
their variety
and interest*



Wavering Down (walk 19)

Geoff Mullett

PDF file

This e-book has been laid out so that each walk starts on a left hand-page, to make printing the individual walks easier.

When viewing on-screen, clicking on a walk below will take you to that walk in the book (pity it can't take you straight to the start point of the walk itself!)

As always, I'd be pleased to hear of any errors in the text or changes to the walks.

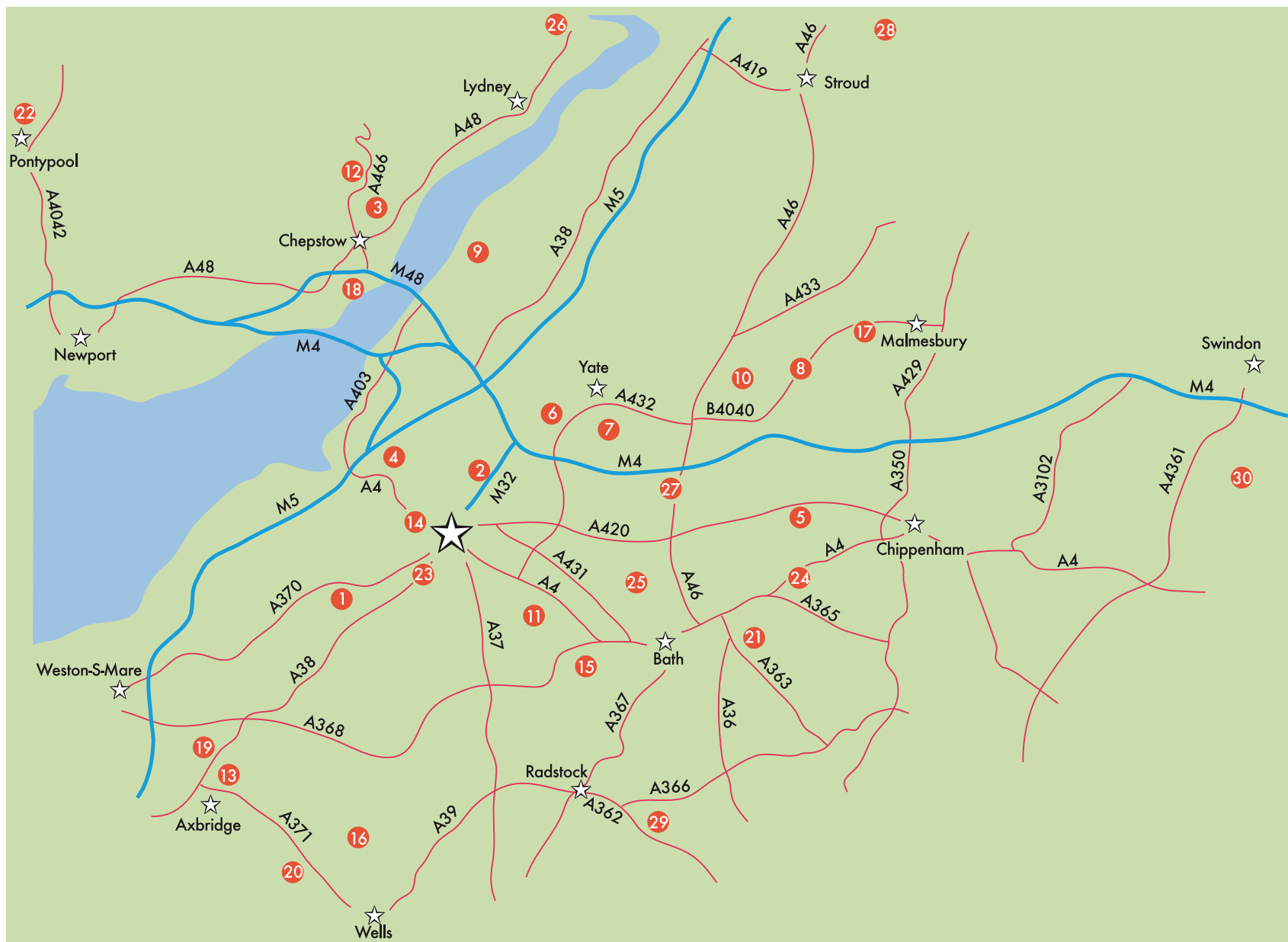
Happy walking!

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Geoff Mullett

The contents of this e-book are believed correct at the time of printing and the author has tried to ensure the accuracy of the maps and route descriptions; nevertheless, the author cannot be held responsible for any errors or omissions or for changes in the details given in this e-book or for the consequences of any reliance on the information provided by the same. So there!





Walk 1 – Barrow Court

Start Bourton Combe, Flax Bourton (ST508690).

Distance 3.75 miles

Refreshments None

Getting there A370 from Bristol to Flax Bourton. As you pass through the village, there is a minor road on the right. Soon after, and just before a traffic island, take a sharp turn left into Bourton Combe. Follow the lane to its end where you park.

An easy, undulating ramble over pasture and woodland paths with views over the city, and passing Barrow Court, with its gardens, both Grade II listed. There are a few stiles and a couple of muddy stretches. Allow a couple of hours.*

At the lane end, go ahead left, signed Barrow Church. Walk uphill with the hedge on your right to a kissing gate. Beyond this, go half left over the field and pass through a high, metal kissing gate at the far side. Keep in the same direction to a stile, climb this and walk with the fence on your right to climb a further stile ^A. Now continue onward, passing Barrow Court to your right.

Barrow Court stands on the site of a 12th century nunnery, though only the central portion of the house and an adjoining tythe barn remain from that era. The nunnery was converted into

a house in the early 16th century and over the next two hundred years was enlarged to its present form. Henry Gibbs, who lived at nearby Tyntesfield, eventually acquired the house in 1880. He began a major programme of restoration on the house, church and gardens, employing Inigo Jones to design the latter. The property is now divided into a number of private residences whose owners share the use of the communal gardens. These are best viewed from the footpath through the stone balustrades; there is no public access to the house and grounds.

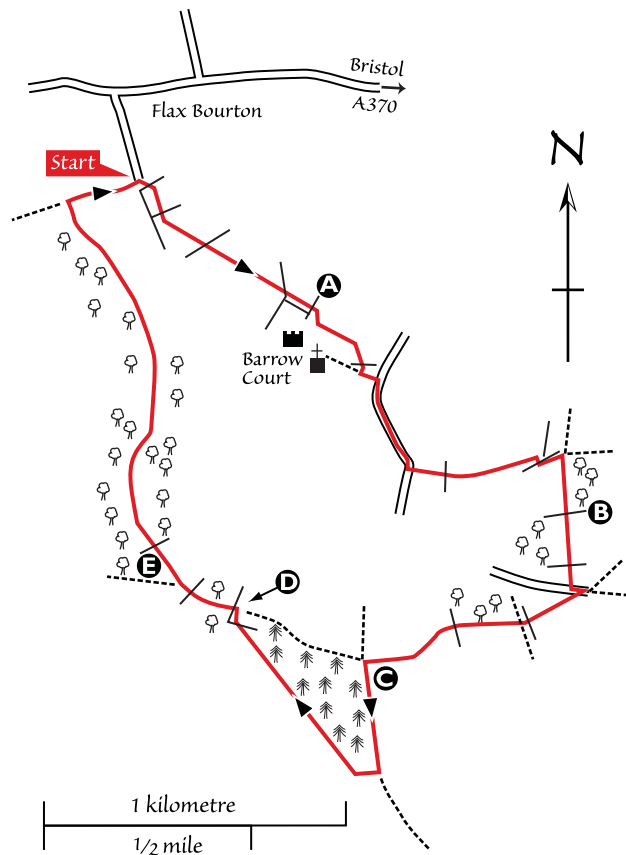
Keep to the right boundary to a climb a stile in the right corner of the field, which gives access to a surfaced path. Go left here (right will take you to Barrow Gurney church) to the road. Follow the road right, until you come to a footpath sign pointing left. Climb the stile and walk with the hedge on your right to another stile, go over and descend to the valley bottom, where you go through a field gate on the right, before continuing in the same direction, fence left, to a further gate with a waymark post. Go right here and walk ahead, parallel with woodland to your left, to reach a stile in the far hedge ^B. Now go ahead over two more stiles to reach a lane.

Walk left for a short distance to a junction, where you go through a metal gate on the right, then follow an ascending path, boundary left, to a gate. Pass through and continue, fence right, through a field gate, then onwards, aiming for the conifer plantation ahead. When you reach a signed path junction ^C turn left and follow the track with the conifers on your right. (If you find the route too muddy, you can walk ahead, conifers left, to a wall corner at ^D.) As the plantation ends, go right, then right again,



Barrow Court Gardens. Grade II* listed

Walk 1



walking now with the plantation to your right, and passing the 'Jubilee Stone'. Keep the boundary on your right to reach the field corner, where you climb a stile on the right and walk a few yards to a wall and a signpost **D**.

You now follow a track through woodland, with the wall to your right. Go through a metal gate, after which, the track splits with farm buildings in the fork **E**. Keep right here and beyond the farm, pass through another gate and follow the track through the woods, eventually descending to a T-junction. Turn right, the track shortly returning you to your starting point.



Walk 2 Purdown

Start Abbey Retail Park, Station Road, Filton (ST614787).

Distance 4 miles.

Refreshments Family-oriented pub and café near end of walk.

Getting there This is a linear walk so public transport is essential, one way at least. CityLine bus 70 runs frequently from the Centre via Gloucester Road, St Andrews, Ashley Down, Filton Avenue then on to UWE. Alight at McDonalds / Abbey Wood in Filton or park the car in the nearby retail park. The walk begins here.

A familiar view from an unfamiliar vantage point. This is an elevated linear walk through Stoke Park and over Purdown with the M32 motorway far below. The route continues along hidden lanes and quiet streets, passing by St Werburgh's City Farm (cafe and family-oriented pub) then on to Ashley Hill and a short walk to the bus stop.

From the bus stop, use the light-controlled crossing and turn left at the far side of the dual carriageway, walking with McDonald's on your right. Cross the access roads to the MOD complex and continue as far as the entrance to Hewlett Packard. Just beyond their gates, look left for a tree-lined footpath signed 'UWE North Entrance'

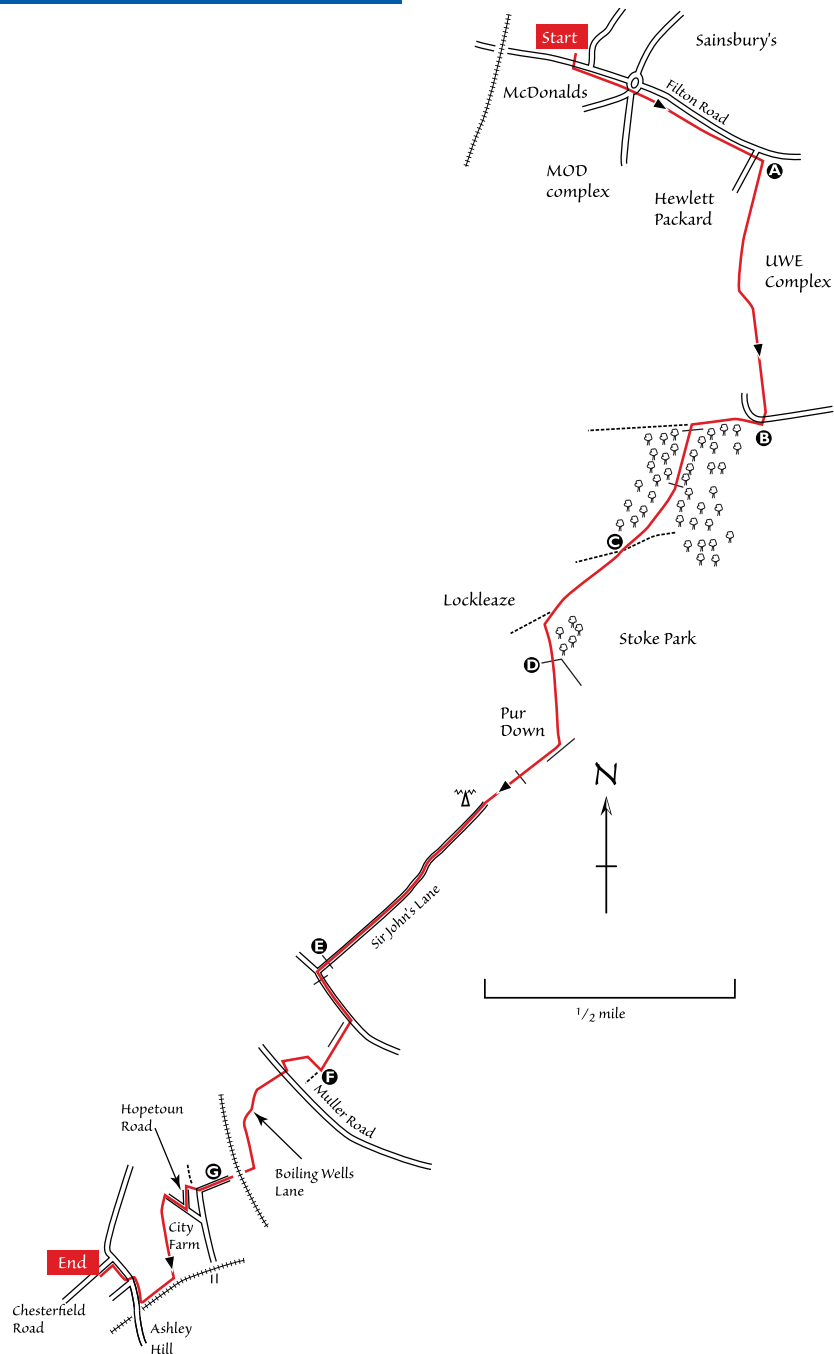
and follow it with the astroturf hockey pitches to your left^A. Continue to the end of the path to reach a road^B cross and walk right, passing the entrance to a new housing development on the right.

After about 150 yards, look left for a kissing gate, go through and follow the path running into the woodland, emerging via another gate onto grassland. Continue ahead keeping to the trees on your right then when the houses of Lockleaze come into view and the woodland boundary veers away to the right, go ahead to pick up a path coming in from the left^C. Walk roughly in the same direction on this lower path with a thicket down to your left and the M32 motorway beyond.

Just before reaching an old hedge boundary, take a cross path going down left and passing a burned-out tree stump on the right. Descend to a kissing gate in a declivity with woodland to your left^D pass through, then climb the grassland ahead on an obvious path. Aim for the high ground with the Telecom tower a little to your right. At the top of the rise, pass concrete foundations of wartime buildings on your right then as you reach a fence on the left, bear right and walk with it. There are fine views now across east Bristol and beyond to Lansdown Hill. Go through another kissing gate in a cross-fence, then follow a meandering route through further wartime relics to join Sir John's Lane



Mountings for WW2 anti-aircraft guns on Pur Down



Pass the telecommunications tower on your right (built in 1970 on the site of on the site of Purdown Barracks) and walk the length of the lane, eventually through metal gates **E** and with houses ahead, left through further gates to a track (still Sir John's Lane). Walk for a short distance with a high wall on your left, then opposite a building with a yellow security notice and double wooden gates, turn right into parkland. Walk straight ahead with a hedge on your right; good views here over the elevated section of the M32. When you reach woodland, turn right **F** by a waste bin and before a metal post, then walk with the hedge on your right until the ground drops away left to Muller Road. Descend and cross at the pedestrian lights, then go right for a few yards and take the surfaced path left (Boiling Wells Lane) and follow it, playing fields right, downhill then left, where it becomes an aromatic track as you pass smallholdings. You finally go right to pass beneath the railway.

Emerging from the railway tunnel, notice the unusual house on the right **G**. A few yards further, the lane turns sharp left into Mina Road but your route lies ahead, up a drive that connects with the parallel Hopetoun Road. Turn left here and walk to the end, passing the 'Farm' pub on the right. Go right into Watercress Road, with St. Werburghs City Farm on the left and at the road end by a painted information board, turn left and follow the lane, soon becoming a tarmac path, with allotments on either side. The path climbs gently to a sharp right bend with a metal kissing gate ahead; ignore the gate and follow the path right, climbing steeply now to reach the road. This is Ashley Hill, walk right and cross at the earliest opportunity. The next turning left is Chesterfield Road. This is on the route of the number 70 bus that will return you to your starting point.



Walk 3 – Lancaut

Start Castle Dell car park, Bridge Street, Chepstow (ST535942).

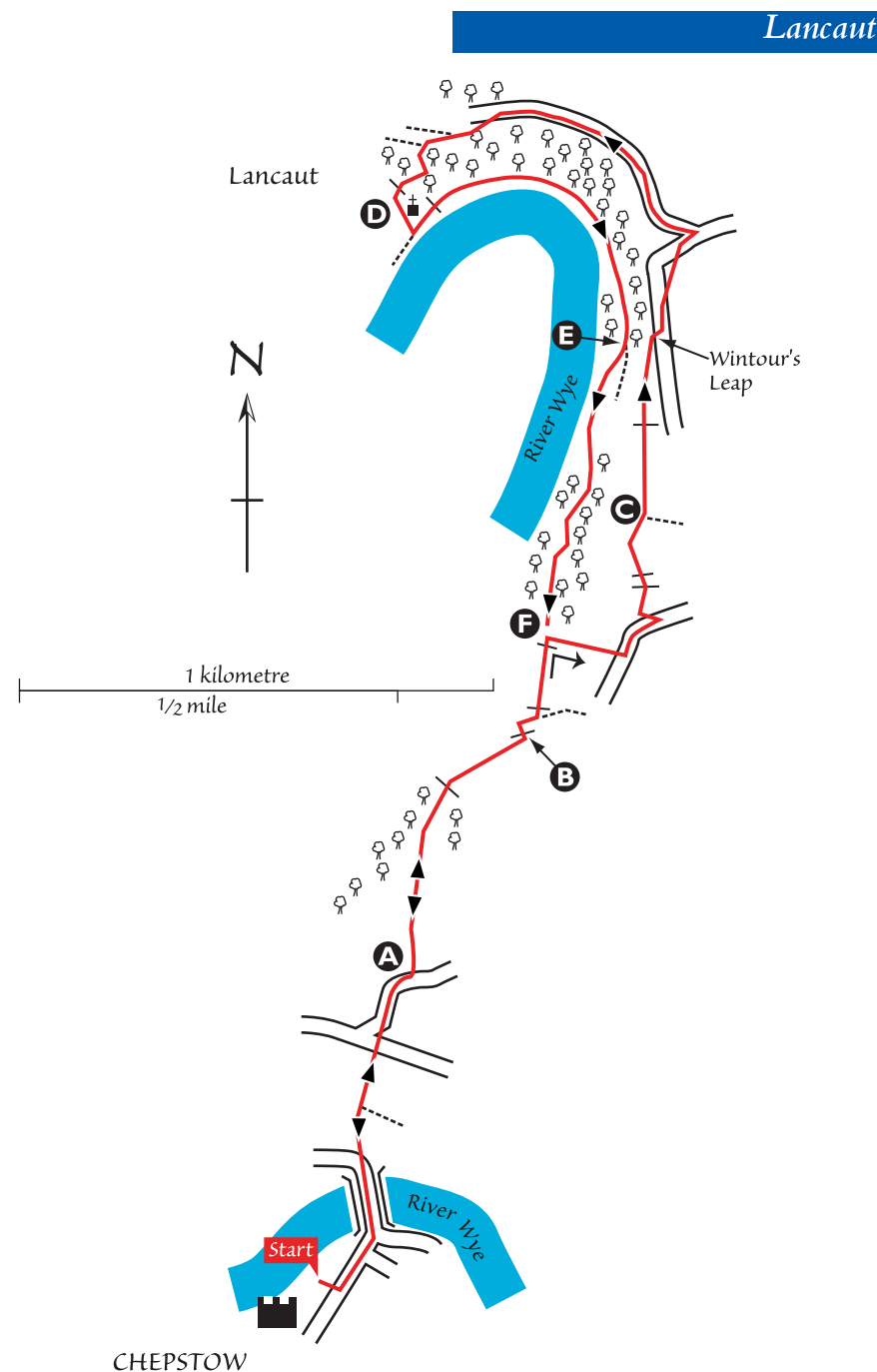
Distance 4 miles.

Refreshments Pubs and cafes in Chepstow, nothing en-route.

Getting there The walk begins in Chepstow, a short drive from Bristol leaving the M48 at junction 2 signed Chepstow. Follow signs to town centre then Castle Dell car park at the bottom of the town.

A fascinating walk along lanes and riverbank, crossing parkland and fields with dramatic views over the River Wye. The tiny hamlet of Lancaut with its ruined chapel is visited, also a nature reserve. Just a couple of climbs, but a short, rough stretch over boulders makes this a bit of an adventure. Children should be closely supervised at all times. Allow about 2.5 hours but an additional visit to Chepstow castle and nearby museum could fill the day.

From Castle Dell car park, turn left onto the road and walk to the bridge crossing the River Wye separating Wales from England. Beyond the bridge, cross the road and take the lane ahead signposted 'the Gloucestershire Way', climbing steeply to reach a road. Cross, and take the lane opposite heading towards a white house. Just before the house, pass through the kissing gate on the left signposted 'Offa's Dyke Path' **A**. Continue up the field, passing on your right the remains of a lookout tower, once part of Chepstow's defences.



At the far end of the field pass through a metal kissing gate and walk with the wall to your left along the edge of the field to go through a kissing gate at the wall end **B**. Follow the path to a tarmac drive, which you take for a few yards with the wall on your right before going through another gate on the left. Cross the field on the well-trodden path to the far side where you pass through through a kissing gate. Here, at a path junction go right, between metal fence and stone wall to reach a road. Turn left and walk with care (don't cross) to just beyond the right bend where, after a private drive, go left through a green gate marked 'Offa's Dyke Footpath'.

The path winds its way up hill, passing a pair of kissing gates, houses on the right then a bungalow on the left **C**. Here, with a quarry entrance on the left, continue on, soon getting dramatic views of the River Wye far below. Pass through another kissing gate after which there are possibilities for brief excursions left to the cliff edge – not for the feint-hearted – before the path reaches the road. Turn left and immediately left again to a parking area where you are rewarded with safer views of the river and surrounding countryside.

This is 'Wintour's Leap', named after Sir John Wintour who supposedly jumped from this spot to escape the Parliamentary forces in 1642!

Now continue left along the road, crossing to the safety of a grassed area. When you regain the road, cross with care and turn left after a few yards into a lane signed 'Lancaut'. Follow the lane, passing a house on the right with the name 'Spital Meend', the next field contains the site of a Bronze-Age fort of the same name, while separating the two is the course of Offa's Dyke, though you need to use your imagination here!

You leave the lane at the sign of the Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust. Here, take the path down to the left, going left again just beyond a pair of limekilns. Your descent continues on a clear path to reach a seat **D** a useful place to bring out the thermos as it marks the mid point of the walk.

Below, you will see the ruins of St. James's church, built in the late 12th century but abandoned in 1865.

Continue to the riverbank and walk left, with salt marshes and river to your right, then through woodland. At the bend in the river, the path begins to climb before a brief flirtation with the riverbank once again. Beyond ivy-clad stone structures, the path climbs again with towering cliffs to your left, the haunt of jackdaws and ravens. When the path levels out, look for waymarks and a path descending right **E**. (If you miss this and emerge from the woodland high on the quarry scree slope, retrace your steps and look for the descending path.)

Take this undulating route to reach the quarry base and a rock fall. You now have an exciting scramble following the yellow markers to the far side where your escape is along an ascending, overgrown path. Eventually, this widens to become a pleasant woodland walk to a final climb, after which you pass beneath a wooden footbridge. The gate ahead marks the point of your outward route **F**, but your return offers different vistas.

Once through the gate, retrace your steps across the field, turning right at the driveway then going left along the enclosed path. Beyond the next gate **B** you go right along the field edge to another kissing gate, then left, down the field to reach the gate by the lane **A**. Walk right along the lane to the road, cross and descend the broad path to reach the bridge. Beyond, a host of hostelryes offer refreshment at the end of your walk.



The 12th Century St. James' Church



Walk 4 – Blaise & Kingsweston

Start Blaise Estate car park (ST558786).

Distance 4.25 miles.

Refreshments Café at Blaise (start/end of walk) and tea shop at Kingsweston House (mid-walk).

Getting there The entrance to Blaise Estate is located on Kings Weston Road, between Henbury and Lawrence Weston.

This walk, is full of historical interest, and is for the most part on good paths and tracks although the section before Point G is likely to be very muddy. There are a couple of climbs, one fairly steep, but no stiles! The whole circuit should take a couple of hours to complete.

Blaise Castle Estate takes its name from a Gothic folly, built in 1796 on the site of an Iron Age hillfort. Blaise Castle House, now a branch of Bristol City museum, was constructed between 1795-6 for a wealthy banker, John Scandrett Hartford.

From the car park, head towards Castle House with the childrens playground on your left. Pass by the front of the house **A** and out onto the driveway which you follow for a short distance before turning right into Church Lane, then right again to reach the church.

Construction of Henbury church began in the late 11th century with additions continuing for almost 200 years. One interesting gravestone to be found on the right of the path leading to the church door is that of a negro slave, Scipio africanus, who was a servant to the Earl of Suffolk, Charles William.

Follow the path round to the back of the church where beyond iron railings you will find steps leading to a subterranean path. Walk with care to cross a stream, then climb the steps ahead and take the grassy path into parkland. In a few yards, as you reach apartments on the left, the path forks **B**. Head diagonally right, across the park towards the trees to reach the remains of a wooden bench, then go ahead crossing a path in a few yards and climbing steps to a higher track **C**. Turn right and pass a cottage on your left.

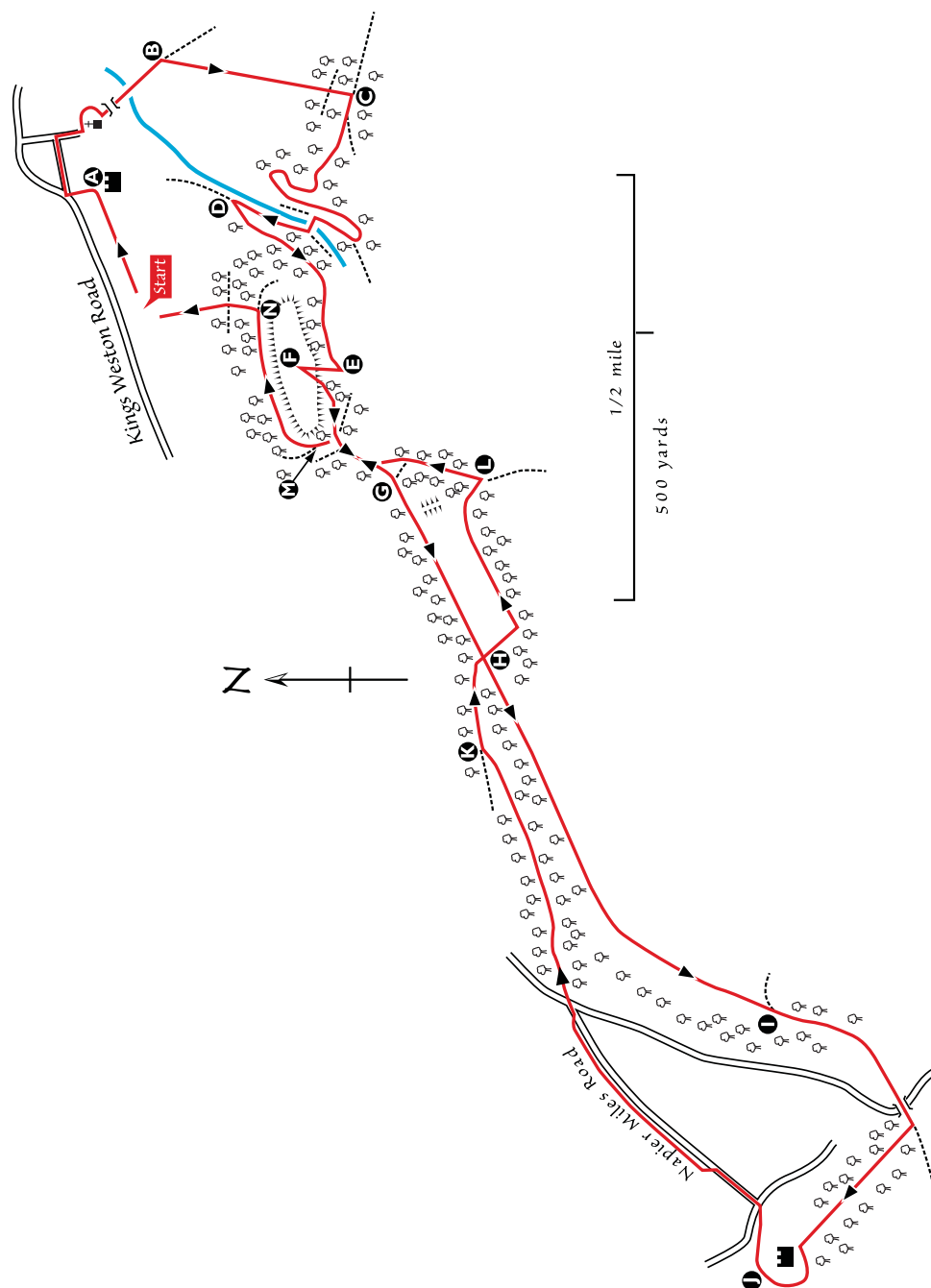
You are on the old carriage drive that runs from the gatehouse on Henbury Hill to Castle House. Designed by the landscape architect Humphrey Repton, it cut a swathe through undisturbed woodland in the days before planning permission was required. This woodland lodge was built around 1840 and replacing an earlier timber-root cottage.

Beyond the cottage the driveway forks, take the lower route along the surfaced path and follow it snaking around the edge of the valley and losing height to reach Stratford Mill. Cross the brook and follow the drive with the mill on your right, for about 120 metres to reach a stepped path joining from the left **D**. Take this, doubling back and gaining height with views of the mill far below on your left. Pass a grotto on the right then 100 yards further, your efforts will be rewarded with superb views from a railed vantage point known as Lovers Leap **E**.

Now continue forward (ignoring a path to the right) and climb the remaining short distance to reach Blaise Castle **F**.

With your back to the castle doors go half right passing a wooden bench on your right to a path descending through the trees and taking care on the slippery stones. Ignore paths left and right and continue ahead to reach an open grassy area which you cross keeping to the left then climb once more towards the trees, passing a redundant iron gate/fence post. Cross further paths and then go ahead taking the steepest path towards the steps. At the foot of the steps notice the boundary marker; here the Blaise Estate ends and the Kingsweston Estate begins. Climb ahead passing a redundant kissing gate to reach the open hill-top **G**.

You now have easy level walking for some distance and to your left you will see the earthworks of an early hill fort. Continue over cross-paths **H** eventually reaching a radio mast where you pick up a rough track **I** leading you in the same direction to



a footbridge crossing a road. Once over the bridge turn right to climb steps and then go ahead towards the stone building. From here walk ahead to Kingsweston House now visible in the distance.

Kings Weston House is a historic grade I listed building. It was built between 1710 and 1725 was designed by Sir John Vanbrugh for Edward Southwell on the site of an earlier Tudor house, and remodelled 1763 by Robert Mylne. A significant architectural feature is the grouping of all the chimneys into a massive arcade. The house passed through several generations of the Southwell family until the estate was sold in 1833 to Mr Philip John Miles for £210,000, and became the family seat until 1935 when, on the death of Philip Napier Miles, it was auctioned and bought by Bristol Municipal Charities and leased to the education authority for use as a school and later to become Bath University School of Architecture. It had various owners before standing empty for five years. It was then abandoned for five years until being renovated in 2000 as a Business and Conference Centre. In early 2013 the house was purchased by a businessman who intends to restore the house as a private residence.

Pass around the front of the house to the far side where the tea shop is located **I** then follow the tarmac drive to the road. Cross the road with care to Napier Miles Road and walk along this road passing the old stable buildings on the left and the fine pond opposite. To avoid walking along the road, take the footpath to the left just past the stable buildings and walk parallel to the road along the edge of the recreation field, exiting just before a cottage near the road junction. At the junction cross to a gated track in the woodland opposite and follow it climbing gently. Expect this stretch to be very muddy but frequent detours into the trees will enable you to avoid the worst of it.

At a junction of tracks **K** turn right and climb back on to the hill-top where you walked earlier **H**. Follow the track crossing your earlier route then head down the far side of the hill for a short distance turning left by a wall and a waymark post. Walk without deviation until the path swings round sharply to the left **L** where a minor path goes right. Continue to a fork in the track and here take the lower right path to emerge once more onto parkland. You now retrace your earlier steps, this time keeping to the right, then on entering the woodland ignore the first turning on the left but continue a few paces to a path junction and here go left. Almost immediately the track forks again and this time take the higher right option **M**.

Walk now bearing right round the hillside, soon passing the castle up to your right. Just past here look for a low entrance to a cave. Continue on and before the track swings up to the right take a flight of stone steps down to the left **N**. At cross paths continue down further steps ahead to reach the edge of the trees and the parkland. Ahead you will see the children's playground and to the left the car park where you started your walk.



Walk 5 – Ford

Start Ford, south of the A420 Chippenham road (ST840747).

Distance 4.5 miles.

Refreshments White Hart Inn at start/end of walk.

Getting there Ford lies just south of the A420 Chippenham road, a mile beyond North Wraxall. Take the signed right turn from the A420, passing the front of the White Hart and continue a short distance to the car park on the left. (Get permission to park from the pub – always granted.)

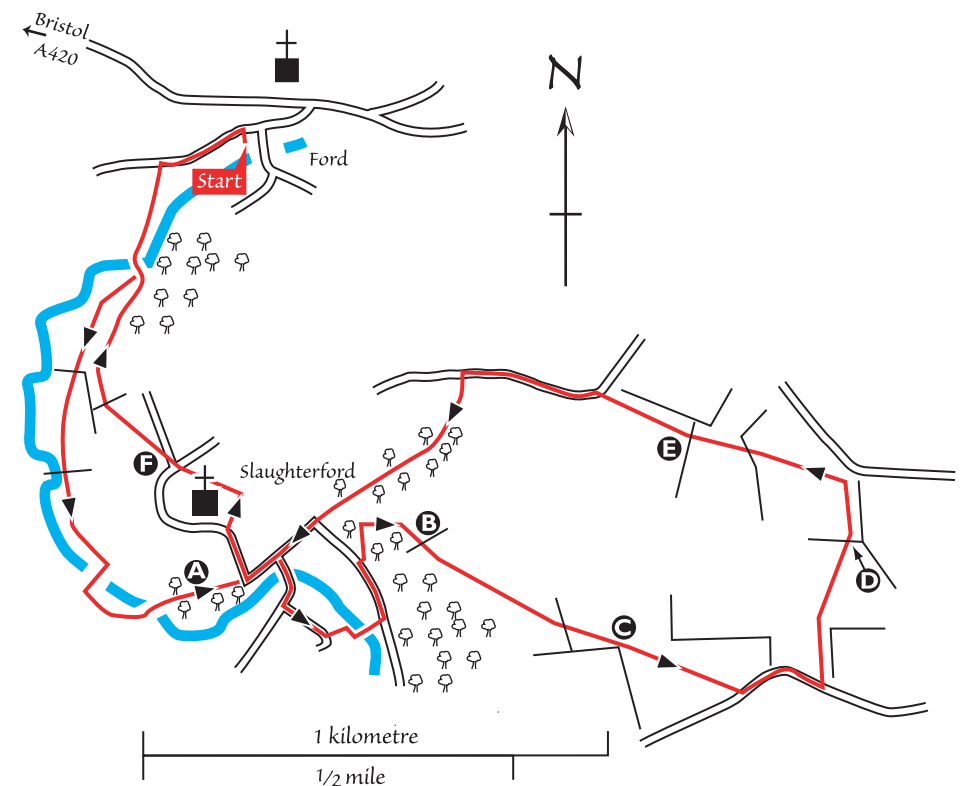
A gentle walk, just one short, steep ascent, visiting the honey-coloured villages of Ford and Slaughterford. Riverside, woodland and field paths, with a superb pub at the end (or beginning) of the walk. Allow about 2.5 hours.

From the car park, go left, along the road for 200 yards. Just beyond the village, climb a stile on the left into a meadow. Follow the path with the By Brook on your left, then cross it at the weir. In the following meadow, walk ahead on the lower ground with the brook to your right. Continue across a further two meadows to reach a gated footbridge over the brook. Cross, then turn left, walking with the watercourse and re-crossing via a stone footbridge. Now follow the path through woodland, passing the remains of a rag mill on your left **A** and eventually reaching a road.

Walk ahead for a short distance, turn right, following the road over the river. Now take the lane on the left, in just over 100 yards. Follow it to a right bend, where you go left, into another mill, where at least here, there appears to be signs of life!

The site here was originally a fulling mill, then a paper mill, relying on the By Brook for water power. In recent years, relentless pressure to re-develop the mill as an exclusive housing estate has incurred the wrath of the residents of Slaughterford who rightly fear for the tranquility of their valley.

Pass through the mill, going right then left and following the driveway over the brook to reach a road. Turn left and walk for about 150 yards, passing a property on the right, then looking for a footpath sign pointing right. Cross the stile here into woodland, then make your way on a pathless route diagonally up, away from the road. Struggle through the last barrier of bushes to an open hillside, then turn sharp right to continue



to an open hillside, then turn sharp right to continue the climb – woodland right – to reach a field. Keep right, with the wood to your right, to reach a stile **B**.

Cross, and go diagonally left over the following field towards a stile – at the moment out of view – near the far corner of the field. The stile is difficult to negotiate as the thoughtful landowner has put barbed wire across the top, so you might prefer crossing by the old horse jump, a little to the right. Once over, cut across the corner of the next field to the point where the boundary turns right **C**. From here, continue over the field in the same direction, losing height slightly, to reach a stile giving access to a road.

Turn left and follow the tarmac as it bears right, then after passing access to a field on the left, look left for a stile. Climb over and follow the right boundary until it makes a right turn. Here, climb across the field aiming for the top right corner **D**. Now walk with the hedge on your right as far as a road. Make a ninety-degree turn to the left here, and walk down the field (the road veering away to the right) to reach the hedge at the bottom corner. Just to the left, look for a stile hidden in the bushes. Beyond this, walk ahead keeping left of the field corner, to pass through a gap and into a



The By Brook, near the start of the walk

further field **E**. Now proceed along the right boundary to reach a road via an old gate.

Go left down the road, keeping an eye open for a bridleway on the left, beyond a broad grassy area. Follow this downhill, through a gate into a sunken track that you keep on (with some difficulty) until you eventually arrive at a road on a bend. Continue in the same direction, retracing for a short distance your outward route after passing the turning left over the bridge, but this time keep on the road, as it swings right. Walk on the elevated pathway as far as the gate on the right, then go through and aim for the church, passing to the right. Continue across the pasture with a farm on your right to reach a stile and steps down to a road **F**.

Cross over and go through the waymarked gate on the left, then walk diagonally over the field to a stile in the far corner. Climb this then follow the hedge on the left, losing height, to meet with your outward route and the re-crossing of By Brook at the weir. Continue along the well-worn path to the road, turn right and retrace your steps to your starting point.



Walk 6 – Iron Acton

Start The Globe Inn, Frampton Cotterell (ST667820).

Distance 4.5 miles.

Refreshments Pubs in Iron Acton (midpoint) and the Globe Inn (start/finish).

Getting there The starting point for this walk is Frampton Cotterell, north of Bristol. From the city, make for the Avon Ring Road (A4174) leaving it to go north on the A432 signed Coalpit Heath and Yate. After passing beneath the railway bridge, continue for about a mile through Coalpit Heath, then look for Church Road on the left. Take this for almost a mile to Frampton Cotterell church and the Globe Inn next to it. Park in one of the lay-bys or in Mill lane, between church and pub.

An attractive walk, outward over fields and meadows and returning on riverside paths. Generally level walking though with numerous stiles. Some paths may be muddy after heavy rain. Take a leisurely 2.5 hours.

Walk along Mill Lane and where it narrows, go right, through a wooden gate. Continue, through a metal gate and over the stile ahead, then cross the field veering slightly left to a gate in the far boundary. Climb the embankment then walk left, with a wire fence to your right.

Here, you are on the route of an old tramway. The Midland Railway constructed a single track line in 1868 from an iron ore mine near here, passing through Iron Acton to join the main line at Yate. The ore was then transported by train to South Wales for smelting. The mine operated from 1862 to 1875, until water seeping into the workings forced closure. The track was removed in 1892.

In a short distance, go right through a waymarked opening to enter a field and walk with the right boundary to a corner, then head across the field to a stile on the far side **A**. In the next field, go ahead, slightly left to a stile midway in the far boundary, then in this final field continue ahead, climbing another stile in the far boundary, to reach a lane.

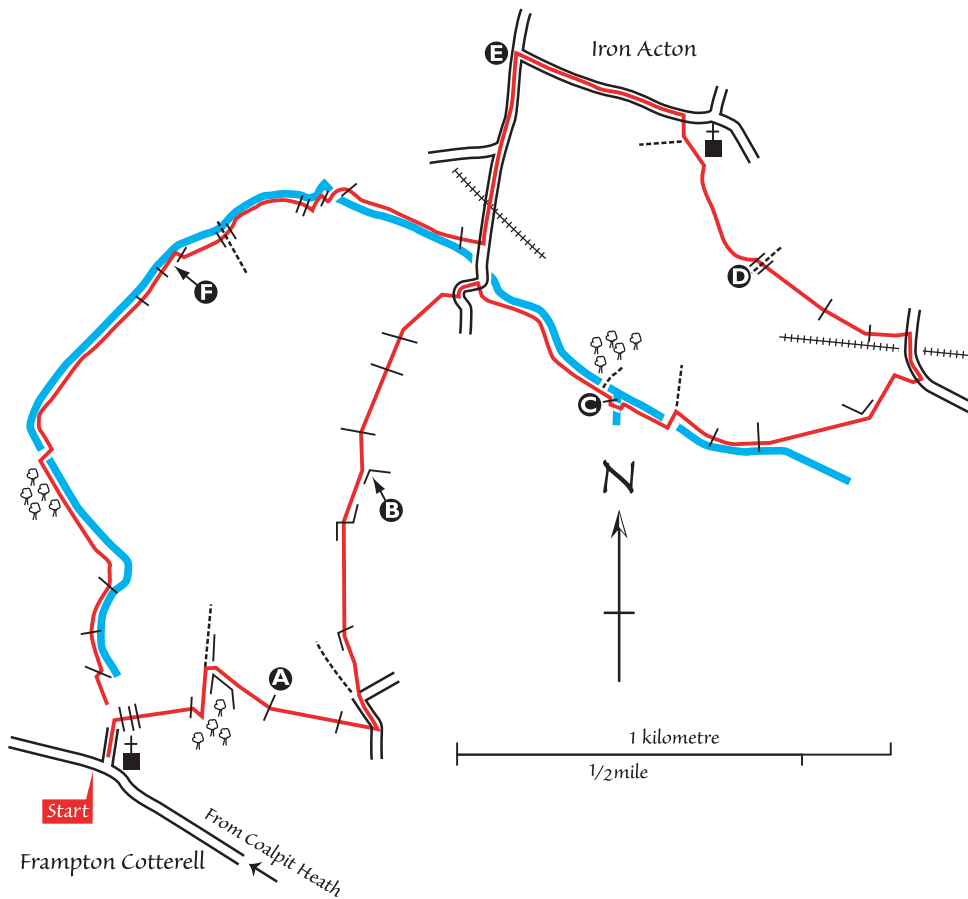
Turn left and walk to a right bend where a track continues ahead. Go up to the right and through a kissing gate, then follow the discernable path ahead, soon picking up the hedge on the left. In the top corner of the field, go through a kissing gate into a further field and walk now with the boundary right. Where this goes right **B** continue ahead to another gate, and onward over a couple of fields to a stone stile in a wall. Climb this and aim for the far right corner of the pasture and another stile. Beyond this, walk a few yards to a road.

Turn left and walk as far as the bridge. Take a signed path right and walk with the River Frome to your left to reach a weir **C**. Climb the banking and go down the other side, then look for a kissing gate in the bushes on the right. Go through, cross a footbridge and through another gate, then continue to Tubb's Bottom farm bridge. Cross this, then go right, walking with the Frome now on your right. Continue over a stile and further field, then after climbing another stile, follow the Right of Way diagonally across the field to the far left corner where you will join a track. Follow this through two gates to reach a road. Turn left and walk over the railway bridge, taking the steps down to the left immediately beyond the bridge and climbing a stile into a field.

Walk with the left boundary to a stile, then in the next field go half-right to another stile by farm buildings. Now follow the clear path ahead to climb a further stile, and another just opposite **D**. You are now on a narrow (and often overgrown) path that runs at the back of houses. Ignore a possible right turn, but continue a few yards further to walk with a wall on your left. Eventually, you pass through a squeezer stile into a churchyard. Go ahead, passing the church on your right, but before descending to a road, look back at this 14th century church and its unique preaching cross, the only one to be found in a churchyard.

At mid-point in the walk, you may want refreshment. The lamb in is a short distance along the road to the right, but the walk continues left, passing the defunct Rose and Crown and reaching the White Hart, a family-orientated eatery **E**.

Turn left at the White Hart and follow the road, going straight on at a junction where the main road bends right. Cross the railway – there was a station here years ago and the tramway from Frampton Cotterell joined from the right just beyond the crossing – and walk to a waymarked stile in the wall on the right. Climb over and go ahead, crossing a stile and walking with the river left. The route guides you up to another stile and onto the tramway again, for a short distance before descending right via stiles and steps. Follow the path, climbing a pair of stiles, then walk around the field edge to climb a further pair of stiles with track between. Continue to a stile on the right, climb and pass a green barn **F** then follow the clear path over stile and footbridge,



past a redundant stile and into a more open field. Keep right, around the edge to a metal footbridge at the bottom of the field. Cross this to enter a wooded area.

Keep to the path as it follows the river, sooner or later reaching a meadow on your right. Walk around the edge to reach a stile, then continue along the field edge to another stile. The path takes you to a kissing gate, beyond which, you walk through a contractor's yard and out, onto a lane with the church ahead. This is Mill Lane, and your outward route, so go ahead to reach your transport.



Walk 7 – Westerleigh

Start Village green, Westerleigh (ST699797).

Distance 4.5 miles

Refreshments 2 pubs in Westerleigh, start/end of walk.

Getting there Avon ring road (A4174) turning north at the Folly Roundabout signed Westerleigh. Follow road into the village, parking by the church.

An easy, almost level walk (just one climb), of field paths and tracks, with a short stretch of road. The route follows in part, the Avon & Gloucestershire Railway known locally as the Dramway, and there is much historical interest en-route. Allow about 2.5 hours.

Park at the village green by St James Church, opposite the New Inn, then walk along the road with the pub right and the church behind you. Go left at the track (signed 'Coalpit Heath' and 'Railway Path') and follow this surfaced route for some distance, crossing a little-used railway line and eventually reaching a lane **(A)**. Cross, and continue in the same direction until your route climbs to meet a surfaced road.

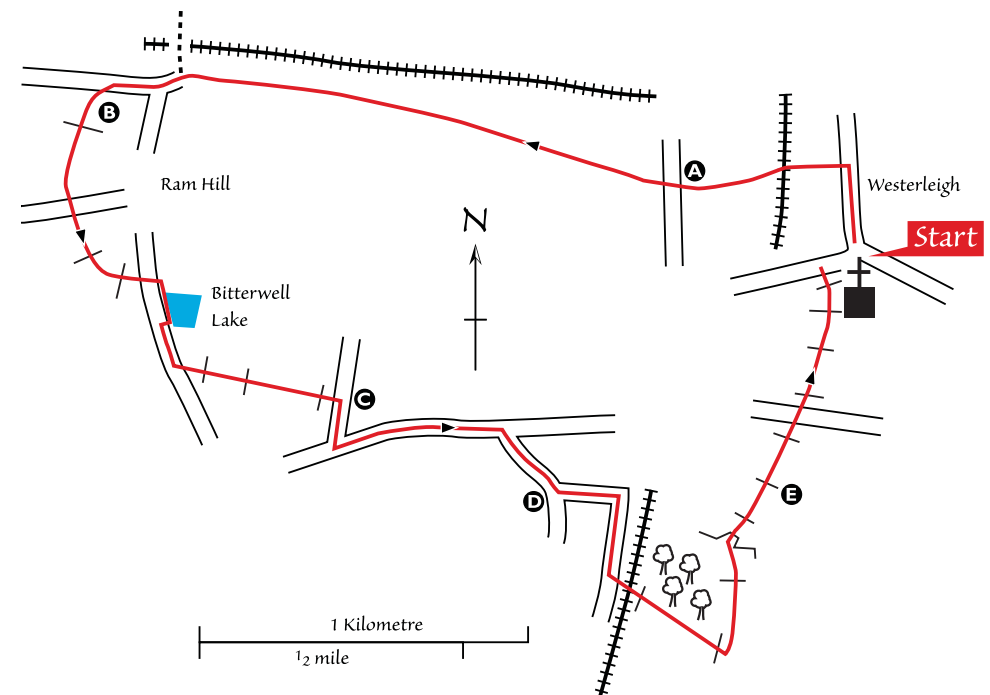
On your right are the remains of Ram Hill Colliery. This mine, sunk in the 1820s to a depth of 558ft, was once the hub of 19th century coal mining in Westerleigh parish.

Westerleigh

The site is located at the heart of the North Bristol Coal Field and holds the remains of the steam engine house, the horse gin, the mineshaft, the Dramway terminus. The Dramway (the local name for the Bristol & Gloucestershire Railway), was built in 1828 and was probably the last railway in England designed to use horses as a means of locomotion. The colliery closed in the 1860s, along with other pits in the area. In 2006 the Ram Hill Colliery site was given scheduled monument status by English Heritage.

Continue ahead along the road signed 'Dramway Footpath', and ahead again at a road junction. On reaching a gated track on the left **(B)** take this, but not before looking back into the field on the right, over the gate. Here, you can make out the line of the tramway, which crossed the road here and is the track you now follow.

In a short distance, where the track bears right to a house, continue ahead on a path and through a kissing gate. As you pass by the cricket clubhouse, notice the limestone blocks set into the ground. The holes held the iron 'chairs' that in turn secured the railway tracks. When you reach a road, site of another coal pit, cross, and go through the kissing gate, then walk down the field, boundary left. Climb another stile and continue to a metal gate with stables beyond, pass these to reach a road. The Dramway continued ahead; you turn right.



Walk 7

On your left now is Bitterwell Lake, once used to soak pit props. You can usually walk alongside the lake parallel to the road, returning to the road via a metal gate. Follow the road for a short distance, passing a cross-track – another branch of the Dramway from Henfield Colliery – to the signed path on the left. Go through the gate and follow the path through two further gates to exit at a road **C**. Turn right and walk to the main road. Go left here and walk with great care along the overgrown verge, eventually going right into Oakleigh Green Farm Lane. Follow this road, turning left before the entrance to the slaughterhouse **D** and walking round the perimeter fence to a gated railway crossing on the left. (Note that the construction of a cycle path will cause the route of the footpath here to alter slightly in the future.)

Beyond the railway, pass through a kissing gate then go ahead up the hill, keeping roughly left to reach a metal gate at the top. Go through, then head left towards the farmhouse. Climb the stile by the gate, cross a stretch of waste ground with the house to your right, then continue over the field to a stile hidden in the far side of this irregularly-shaped field. Climb this, and in a short distance another, then cross the field to a third **E**. In the next field, keep in the same direction with a house up to your right. At the far side, climb a stile and take the steps down to a road. Cross over and take the track ahead, climbing a stile by a field gate, with Westerleigh church in view. Follow the obvious path towards the church, climb a stile and walk ahead through a kissing gate to enter a playing field. Exit this left of the church and follow the path to the road, with 'Ye Olde Inne' to your left. The village green is to your right.



Walk 8 – Luckington & Sherston

Start Luckington village green (ST833840).

Distance 5 miles.

Refreshments Pubs in Luckington (start/end of walk) and Sherston (mid-point of walk).

Getting there M4 to junction 18, then north on A46. At traffic light by the Cross Hands pub, go right, onto the B4040. Keep on this road through Acton Turville, to arrive at Luckington.

An easy, almost level walk along field paths and lanes, visiting the attractive stone-built village of Sherston, with a return along riverside paths.

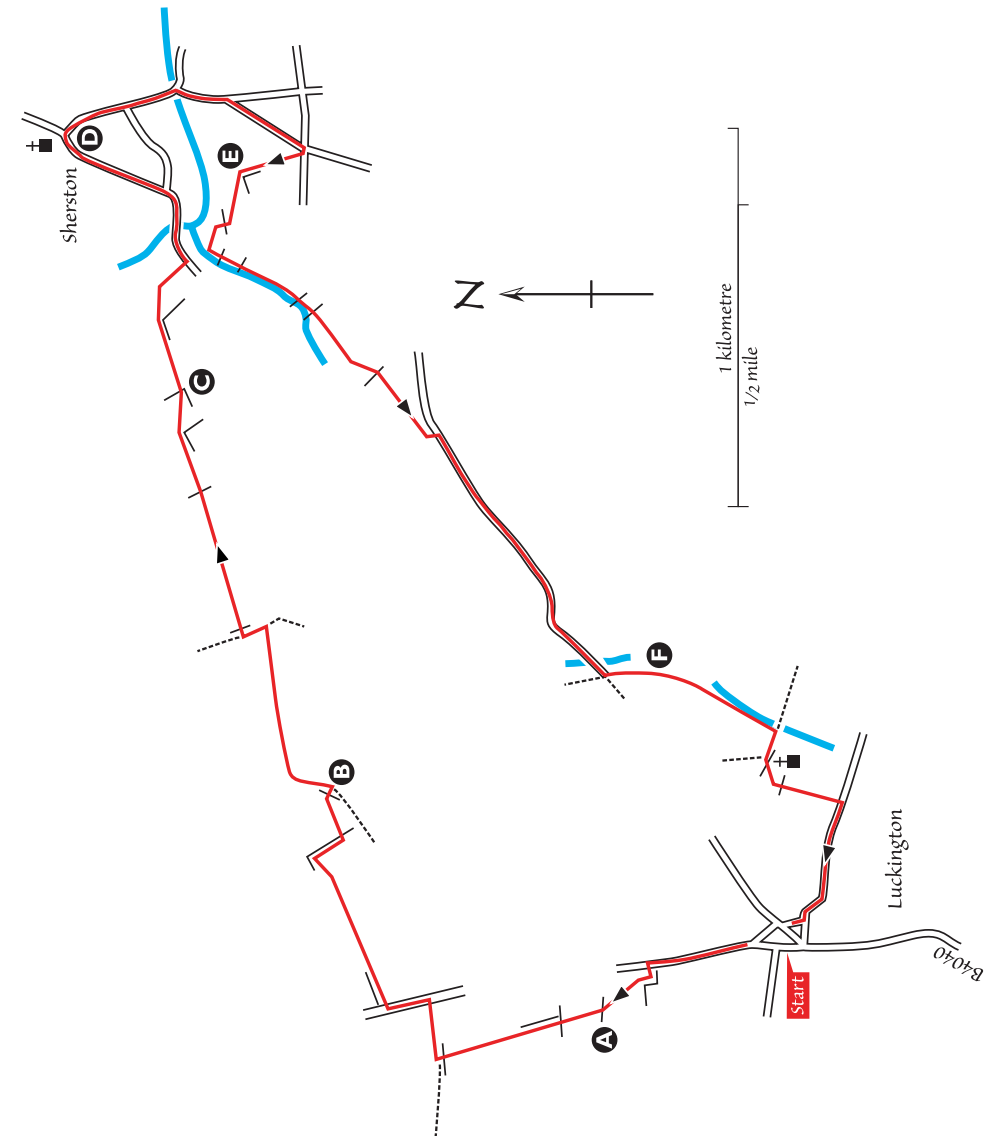
Note that this walk can become a 'figure-of-8' by combining it with walk 10.

From the village green, cross to the telephone box and take the Sopworth road, passing the pub over to your right. Just beyond Northend on your left, take the signed footpath left, climbing steps into a field. Turn right at the top, then go half-left across the grass to climb a stile in the opposite boundary **A**. Go ahead now to the next field and from there continue, boundary right and climb a stile at the far side to reach a farm track. Walk right, to the road.

Turn left along the tarmac for a short distance, then climb a stile on the right to enter a field. The right of way goes across the crops to a stile mid-point in the far

Luckington & Sherston

boundary – you might want to follow the field edge, boundary left, to reach it! Either way, climb the stile then walk diagonally right over the pasture towards the remains of a gate next to a tree, in the right boundary. Beyond is a track **B** go left along it to a T-junction, turn left and in a few yards go right, over the fence or barbed wire.



Head directly over this pasture, either side of an old boundary hedge, aiming for a green metal gate at the far side, marked by a pair of tall wooden poles. Once through the gate proceed, boundary right, to the far right corner and through another gate ❸. Continue, with the village of Sherston ahead, soon descending to a grass track that swings right, passing a cottage to reach the road.

Follow the road towards Sherston, passing Grove Road to your right and following Brook Hill to the village centre. Walk along the broad High Street to the far end, keeping right at the post office to reach the Rattlebones Inn, a suitable mid-walk refreshment stop ❹.

Your return route is right, beyond the pub, along Noble Street, which descends to cross the river. Here, turn right and climb Thompsons Hill, keeping right at a junction and continuing to crossroads. Turn right, then immediately right over a stile into a grassland. Follow the left boundary to its end ❺ where you descend half left to a gate in the hedge just left of the factory. Continue your descent, walking left with the river to your right.

Just past a footbridge, go through a kissing gate and follow the rough, riverside path to a further gate and in a short distance, another, where you enter a meadow. Walk



One of the fine farmhouses passed on the walk.

ahead now on a level route, to a waymarked pole directing you up and left. At the top of the meadow, climb the stile into a field and walk to the far left corner, either side of the vegetable patch, to reach a lane. Turn right and follow the lane to its end, where you cross a ford to a junction. Go left and walk past cottages on the left ❻ then over a causeway with stream to your left, and passing a fine house on the right. Beyond here, turn right towards the church with the entrance to Luckington Court ahead.

The church and Luckington Court were used in the filming of the BBC's adaptation of Pride and Prejudice.

Go through the gate into the churchyard. Follow the path around the church, leaving via a gate then following the path ahead with Luckington Court to your right, to reach the road. Turn right and follow the tarmac back to the village, bearing right to the village green and a little further to The Old Royal Ship, a fine end to the walk – real ales and a comprehensive menu!



Walk 9 – Oldbury & Littleton

Start Lay-by opposite the Anchor Inn, Oldbury (ST608923).

Distance 5 miles.

Refreshments The Anchor Inn at Oldbury and the White Hart at Littleton (half-distance).

Getting there A38 north, passing B4061 on left to Thornbury and continuing to left turn signed 'Oldbury Power Station'. At first roundabout turn right into Morton Way and keep on this road to its end. Here, at staggered crossroads, go ahead, still following the Power Station signs, and continue for 1.5 miles to a left fork signed 'Oldbury-on Severn'. Take this, eventually reaching a T-junction by a phone box. Go left to reach the Anchor Inn and park in the lay-by opposite, (but not in the pub car park unless permission is obtained).

A simple, mostly level walk, following country lanes, field paths and an interesting stretch along the River Severn, but basically, a good excuse for a pub lunch!

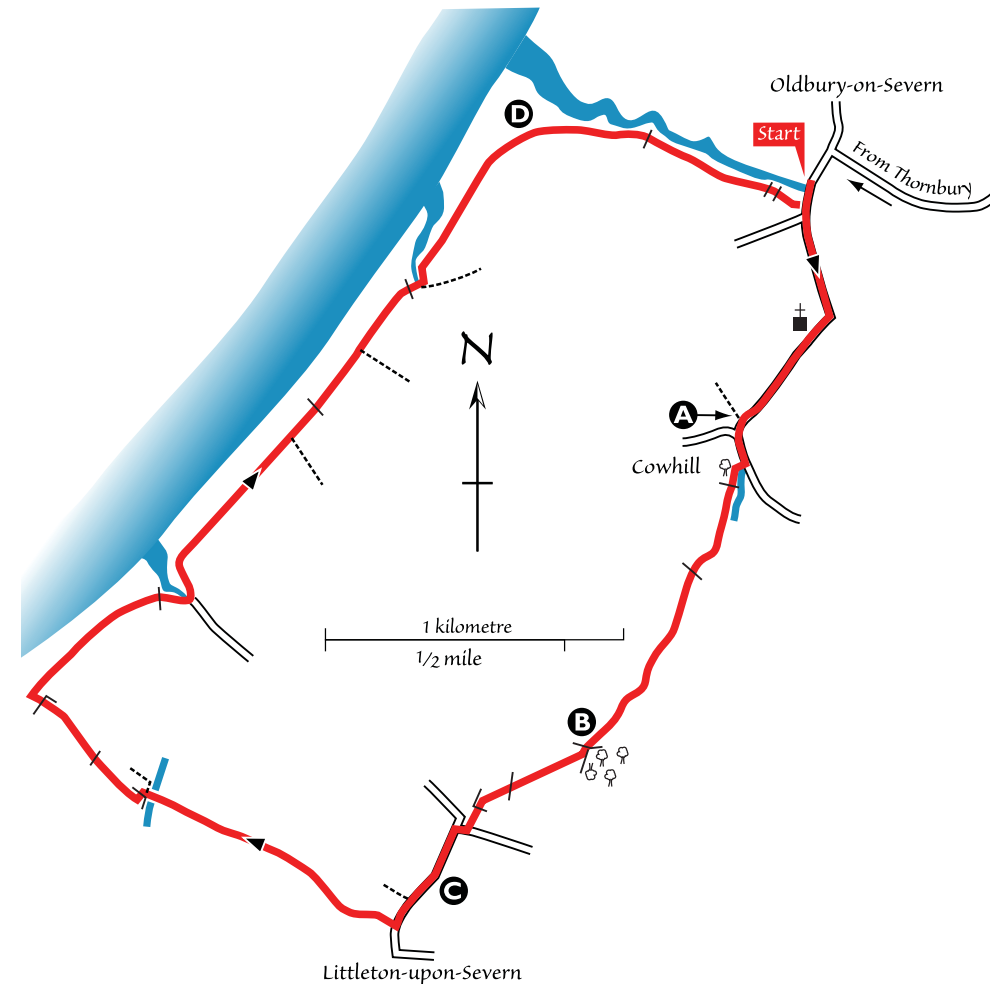
Your route is initially along the lane, walking south with the pub to your left. This climb is the only one on the walk and lasts for 600 yards, to reach the church of St. Arilda, a local Saxon saint.

The 13th century church once had a steeple but following violent storms in 1783 that badly damaged the walls and roof, the steeple had to be removed. Ravaged by fire in

Oldbury & Littleton

1890, the only original features are the north porch and 15th century tower. It is thought this hill, with its fine views across the surrounding countryside, may have pre-Christian associations; Roman coins have been unearthed in the churchyard.

Having taken in the view, return to the road that now descends to the cluster of houses that is Cowhill. As the road bends left, you pass a bridleway **A** then a minor lane on the right. A short distance further, opposite Star Farm, go right at a footpath sign, through a wooden garden gate and keeping the stream to your left, walk through the garden to a stile. Cross into an orchard then keep left with the stream, exiting via a stile.



You now have a series of fields to cross and the path hugs the left boundary as far as a farm gate where you enter pasture. Keep left again, eventually passing through another gate with woodland to your left **B**. Cross this third field diagonally right, to a field gate in the fence halfway down the right boundary. Climb, then continue in the same direction to the bottom right corner of the field. Pass through a more serviceable gate, keep right and continue to a stile that gives access to a road.

Cross the junction and follow the road in the direction of Elberton and Olveston for a short distance to arrive at the White Hart pub **C**. With its stone-flagged floor, Young's Bitter and a large and varied menu, there can be no greater temptation to finish the walk here. Pity about your car in Oldbury!

Having supped and dined, you now have to carry you stomach a little further down the road, taking the lane on the right, opposite the chapel. This soon becomes a track, follow this until it turns right beyond Littleton Rhine, and here, climb the stile next to the gate. Proceed now in the same direction crossing the field to a stile. Climb over and continue on to the far right corner of the meadow where you cross a footbridge with care then proceed a few yards further to the top of the dyke.



St Arilda's church

Away to your left is the Severn Bridge, but your route takes you right, towards the distant Oldbury power station, either along the dyke or if it is dry enough, closer to the mudflats. These are a haven for wading birds in winter, while the pretty Sea-spurrey flowers here in late summer together with a variety of sedges that grow from the mud.

Easy walking now, just three kissing gates to break your stride, following the dyke as it turns inland **D** opposite the sailing club across the creek. Leave the dyke now, descending right and following the right boundary to climb a stile. Continue to a pair of stiles by farm buildings, beyond which a track leads you past stables to the road. Turn left, and the Anchor Inn (and your car) are a few yards away.

Oldbury, though quiet now, had a busy past. The Iron-Age fort, the Toot (or lookout) indicates an early settlement and it is thought that the Vikings also settled here. Certainly, Oldbury had a small port, in use from prehistoric times until the early part of the 20th century, with a wharf opposite the Anchor Inn. Coal from the Forest of Dean was unloaded here, with Oldbury bricks and tiles making the opposite journey. The brickworks produced a distinctive range of brick, tiles and pantiles between 1870 and 1900.



Walk 10 –Badminton

Start Village hall car park, Great Badminton (ST805825).

Distance 6 miles.

Refreshments Pub in Luckington, mid-point of walk.

Getting there M4 to junction 18, then north on A46. At traffic light by the cross hands pub, go right, onto the B4040 for 1.5 miles, then left, signed Badminton. At T-junction, go left, then immediately right, then left into Haye's Lane. Car park on left 100 yards further, by the Memorial Hall.

An easy, almost level walk of parkland and field paths, with some walking on quiet roads from the estate village of Great Badminton, with its wealth of historic buildings, to the attractive village of Luckington. Allow about 2.5 hours.

Note that this walk can become a 'figure-of-8' by combining it with walk 8.

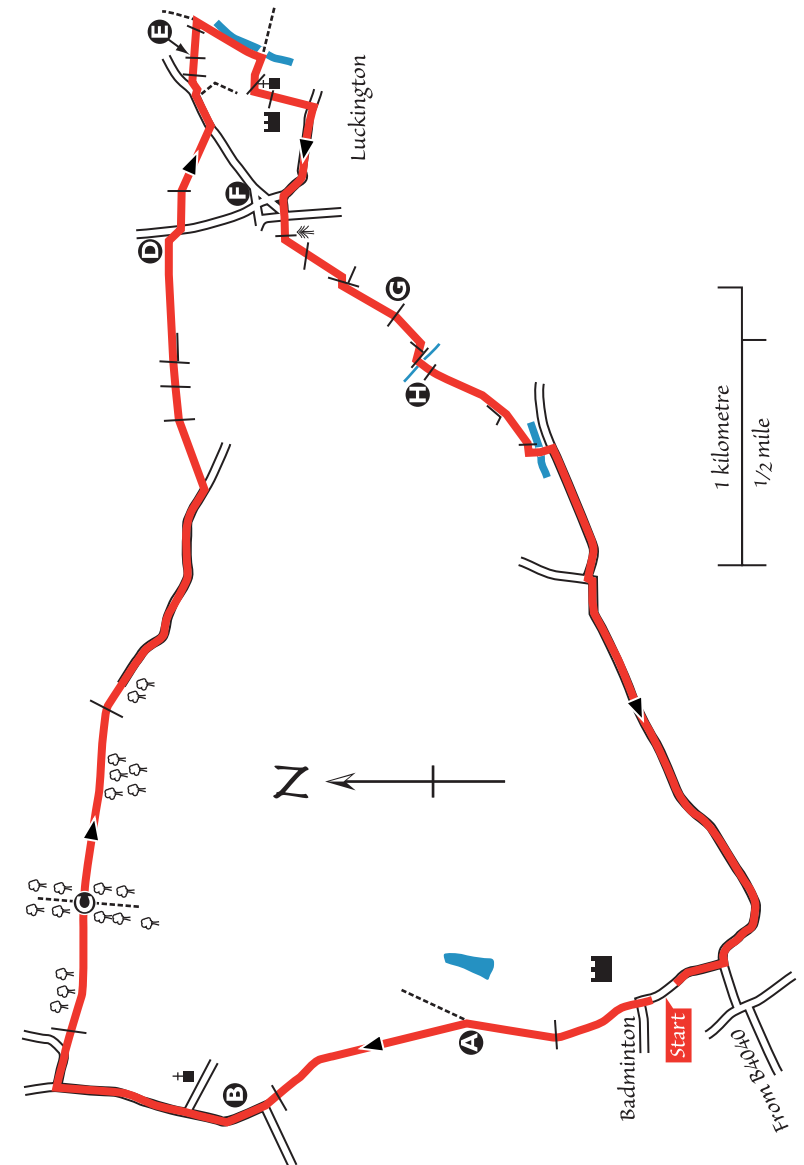
With your back to the Memorial Hall, go left, along the road, then ahead at a junction. Pass kennels owned by the Beaufort Hunt on the left and continue to enter Badminton Park. Follow the driveway, taking the left fork at a point where a small lake is off to your right **A** then continue without deviation, to the far end of the park where you go through a gate to reach a road.

Keep on in the same direction, passing an ancient stone dovecote in a field on your right **B** then ignoring a turning on the right. When you reach a waymarked footpath

Badminton

sign pointing right, take the surfaced driveway, going ahead through a gate onto a track where the drive swings left.

Keep on this track, crossing a surfaced drive **C** and eventually passing through a gate. A short distance further, the track becomes a lane, which you follow as far as a footpath sign



Walk 10

on the left. Go through the field gate here and walk diagonally over the field to a stone stile in the far hedge. Climb this and cross the field to a further stile, then on again for a short distance to climb another. Continue now, boundary right, climbing another stile by farm buildings, then finally dropping down to a lane **D**.

Walk right for a few yards, going left through a signed field gate and continuing ahead, boundary right, to a stile on the far side of the field. Climb this and head diagonally right, across the field, aiming to the left of the squat church tower to reach a stile giving access to a road. Turn left along the road as far as a driveway on the right, just before the bend. Don't follow the drive, but instead walk across the grass a short distance to a track leading to a stile by a gate; climb this to enter a field. Walk across, heading towards the roofs of cottages and squeezing through the new paddock fence **E**. Continue ahead, climbing a stile at the far side and dropping down to a lane.

Walk right, soon on a raised causeway with stream left, and passing a fine house on the right – the rectory. Beyond here, turn right towards the church and go through the gate into the churchyard. Follow the path around the church, leaving via a gate then following the path ahead with Luckington Court to your right, to reach the road. Turn right and follow the tarmac into Luckington village, bearing right to the village green and a little further, to The Old Royal Ship **F** a suitable lunch stop – real ales and a comprehensive menu!

To continue the walk, go to the road junction by the Post Office, and climb steps to a signed footpath that you follow between properties. Climb a stile, then go half-left, with a wall and conifers to your left, then continue across the field, picking up the stone wall on your right. Climb a stile in the far right corner, then walk left alongside the wall to a stile in the field corner **G**. Climb this, and then go half-right to reach a kissing gate in the lower, right corner of the field. Beyond this, walk a short distance to a stile, cross this and a stream beyond, then walk ahead, boundary right, to a further stile **H**. Climb over and keep with the right boundary to a corner, where you go ahead across the field, down to climb a stile in the bottom right-hand corner. Now go left, crossing a stream, then through a field gate to reach a road.

Straightforward walking now, following the road back to Badminton, with glimpses of the House away to your right. The three-day horse trials follow a course that crosses this road – look out for the horse jumps either side of the road. Take the turn on the right as the road bends left to return to the Memorial Hall.



Walk 11 – Queen Charlton

Start Bath Hill East pay & display cp on the east side of Keynsham (ST656683).

Distance 6 miles.

Refreshments None en-route, but a good choice at the end of the walk in Keynsham.

Getting there A4175 into Keynsham, then follow 'Through Traffic' signs on B3116.

Cross the river and turn right into Bath Hill East car park.

An interesting walk to the gem of a village, along riverbank, field paths and tracks, plus some road walking. A couple of short climbs and some wet and muddy stretches.

Park in Bath Hill East pay & display car park on the east side of Keynsham. Near the entrance, cross the river by means of a wooden footbridge, then walk with the River Chew on your left for a short distance before crossing another bridge with ornamental ponds on the right. (Watch out for the crocodile!)

Follow the tarmac path to a road, and then continue to a T-junction with Chew Cottage ahead. Turn right, then left at the junction, and walk ahead to Albert Mill. Follow the footpath signs as they first direct you up to the right and through the courtyard, then left through a passageway to emerge by the restored waterwheel.

Albert Mill was the last of a considerable number of dyewood mills that operated in Gloucestershire and north Somerset a century ago, supplying dye to the local textile firms

and manufacturers of gloving leather. More than a dozen woods were used, mostly from South America and the West Indies, giving a wide range of colours, especially when the various chemicals used to fix the dyes were added. Power was provided by two eighteen-foot cast iron water wheels, together producing about fifty horsepower.

As years went on, the business turned more and more to making chemical dyes, but the traditional dyes from wood were still being regularly produced until 1939, and occasionally since then, when special orders came in. However, with increasing awareness of the need to conserve the hardwood forests, the logs became steadily more difficult to acquire and when the mill's stock became exhausted, this once flourishing industry came to an end.

Follow the path with the millrace down to your left and continue into woodland on a riverside path. Pass through a kissing gate, then follow the riverbank, passing further gates and eventually walking with a fence on your right. As you approach cattle pens with a lane beyond, go through a kissing gate on the right ^A then continue in roughly the same direction, contouring round the bottom of the hill with the lane down to your left until you reach a kissing gate. Go through to exit the field.

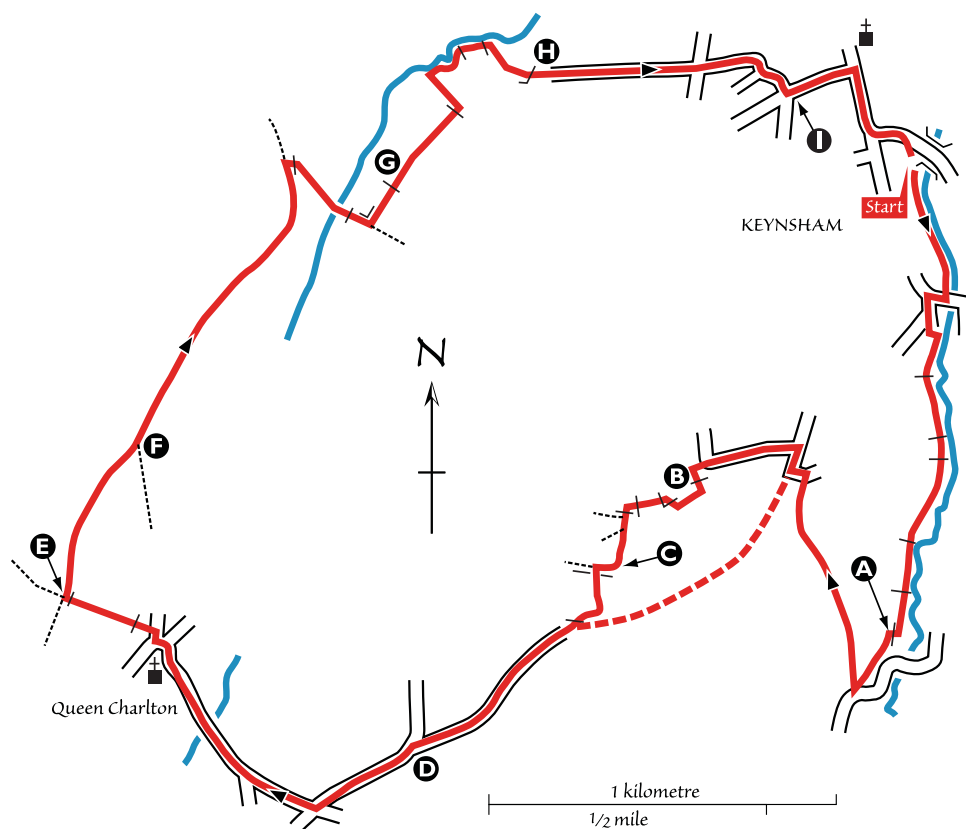
Your route now is sharp right, climbing the roughly surfaced track until you reach houses with allotments on the left. Turn left to reach a junction. From here the preferred



The River Chew, near Keynsham

path goes left, alongside the allotments, but it takes a brave walker to negotiate the dense blackthorn bushes further down the path. Alternatively, go right into Park Road then first left into Dunster Road. At a right bend, go ahead on the concrete driveway towards school gates **B** turning left just before, and walking with the school on the right to climb a stile. Now follow the hedge round to the right to reach the field corner where you must negotiate a two-bar fence, followed by another, then continue in the same direction with a housing estate to your right, eventually reaching a stile. Climb this and follow the tarmac path behind houses for a few yards to the back of garages. Turn left here and go through a kissing gate with information board.

Walk ahead, with hedge on the left, keeping to the defined path as it bears right at the bottom of the field **C** then in a short distance pass through a broad gap in the hedge on the left and continue with plantations either side. At the bottom of the field go right and walk with hedge left to a field gate. Pass through the farm gate to reach a lane. Go right and follow the tarmac to a road where you turn left **D**.



You now have a tricky 400 yards of road walking. The verge on the left offers better protection so be aware of traffic coming from behind and walk to a junction. You must now cross on an almost blind bend to take the (much quieter) road to Queen Charlton. Walk this road with care, passing a turning on the left and eventually reaching the village with St. Margaret's church on the left.

This pretty, tranquil village, sandwiched between the busy suburbs of Keynsham and Stockwood, boasts a medieval cross on the green and an 18th century manor house just beyond the church. Opposite the manor, a Norman arch has been re-erected in the field wall; it is thought that this may have been the former south doorway of the church.

With your back to the church gates, leave the village via the lane to the left of the green, but just walk for a few yards to a grassy path between cottages on the left. A notice informs you that this was a medieval footpath between the village and Whitchurch. Go through a kissing gate, then continue with the wall on your right to the far side of the field where, beyond another kissing gate, you descend to Engine House Lane **E**.

Turn right and follow the track for almost a mile, first passing a stile on the right **F** then field gates. As the track broadens and starts to descend, continue for about 300 yards then as the track levels off, look for a stile on the right. Climb over, then taking notice of the footpath direction sign, go back half-right, climbing the hillside. In the distance, you will see a well-defined path on a further hill; aim for that and you will discover a valley with stream that you cross via a footbridge. Beyond the bridge, turn right and in a few yards turn left, around the bushes and go ahead a few yards to climb a near derelict stile. Now, negotiate the bog and keep to the hedge on the left, going left with it in a short distance (don't climb the hill) and walk along the valley bottom. When you reach a stile, cross, and continue in the same direction over boggy ground with a pond over to your left **G**, until you reach a stile in a wire fence in front of you. Climb over and go left, down the field, turning right at the bottom and walking with a stream on your left. In the far corner of the field, ignore a footbridge on the left and climb the stile by a metal gate, then proceed to another. Climb into the paddock then turn right, climbing the hillside with the hedge on your right, to the top of the field. Climb the stile here and follow the enclosed path to reach a road **H**.

Urban walking now for the remainder of the route! Walk down the road passing Broadlands School to crossroads. Go ahead into Culvers Road and follow it, bearing right by a set of garages, then left, then right again to reach staggered crossroads **I**. Turn left into Charlton Road and on, to the High Street. Now turn right, crossing when convenient and turning left at the roundabout. Now cross again and walk with the road on your left, down the hill to the car park and your starting point.



Walk 12 – St. Arvans

Start Car park and picnic site on right of A466, 1 mile beyond St Arvans on the Tintern road. (ST526971)

Distance 6 Miles.

Refreshments None.

Getting there M48 to junction 1, then north on A466. keep on this road, passing Chepstow racecourse on the right. At St Arvans, the road bears right and soon takes a twisting route. Look in a short distance for car park signs on the right.

A walk of woodland and pasture, with most of the hard work done in the first mile – thanks to 365 rough and uneven steps, that give fine views over the River Wye. Allow a good three hours.

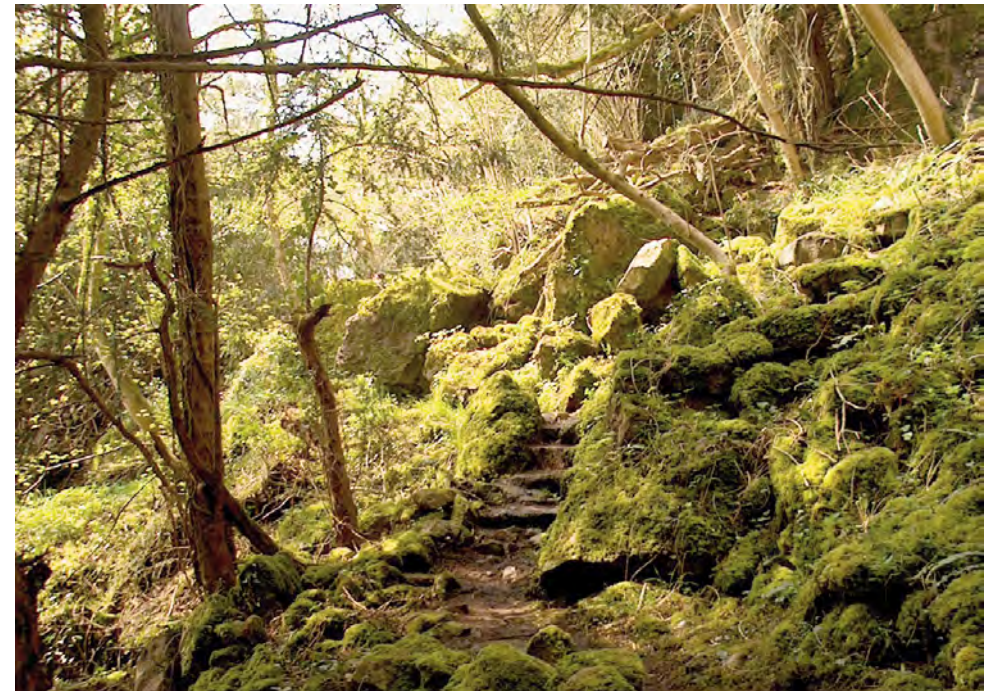
From the car park, cross the road heading for the ‘365 steps’. Take the path right at the quarry, meandering through woodland, but soon climbing through moss-covered rocks. There are plenty of opportunities to take a breather and eventually the path levels out and you reach a T-junction **A**.

Turn right and follow the ‘Wye Valley Walk’ signs, soon passing a stunning viewpoint down to the right. Keep on this easy path for just over a mile, before crossing a ditch

to enter an Iron-Age fort. This becomes more noticeable as you leave it, via a steep, twisting descent. Continue a little further to leave the woodland via a stile **B**.

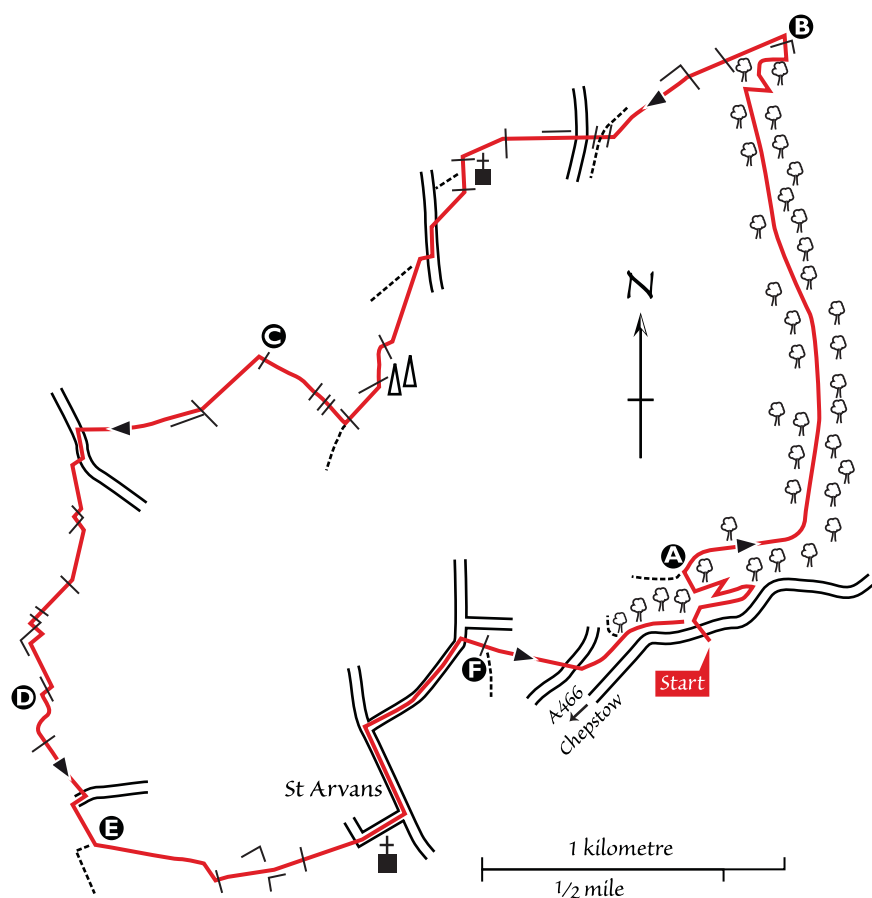
Turn sharp left and walk with the boundary on the left, then drift gradually downhill, beneath power lines, to climb a stile in the cross-fence. Continue to the next fence and another stile, then from here, walk near the bottom of the field, boundary right, until you reach a stile. Climb this and descend to a sunken track, then climb the stile opposite into a field. Walk a short distance to a further stile, cross this, and the lane, and another stile, then walk up the following field, signed Penterry Church. Beyond the next stile, go half left towards the church, crossing a stone stile to reach it.

With your back to the church gate, your route is ahead, to climb a stile in the opposite hedge, then crossing the following field aiming for the radio masts. In the top right corner, climb the right hand of a pair of stiles, descending to a lane. Go left for a short distance, then go over a stile on the right into a field. Climb ahead to a way-mark post, then head up towards the masts, passing through a gate as to reach them. Proceed to a stile by a gate on the left, then follow the track beyond towards the farm buildings.



Climbing the 365 steps

Beyond the metal field gate go right, along the drive with the farmhouse down to the left. Pass through a pair of metal gates either end of the green barn, then walk ahead, boundary right. At the field corner, pass the metal gate **C** then go left, over the field and passing a pond to the left. At the cross-boundary, go through the middle, waymarked gate and walk in the same direction, boundary left, to reach a road. Go left for a short distance, then take the driveway on the right. Go through the gate on the left signed Rogerstone Grange, then diagonally up the field to the far corner. In the next field, go left, through the hedge, then resume your previous direction, picking up the left boundary and going through a field gate in the far corner and over the stile ahead. Now walk around the field edge, boundary right, as far as a stile up in the right bank **D**.



Climb the stile, turn left and contour the field, descending beyond the reservoir and climbing a stile in the left boundary to reach a driveway. Walk to a junction where you turn right, then soon fork left following the waymark arrows. Follow the track with barn conversions to your right, and after a short climb leave the track going left **E** and walking along the field edge with the boundary left. Your route eventually bears right and soon after, you climb a stile on the left. Now walk ahead up the field to the far centre where you pass through into a further field and walk with the boundary on the right. Cross a stile into a further field and continue through a gate, onto a residential road. Walk ahead to a junction.

Now turn left and walk up the hill, turning right at a lane signed Penterry. Continue the climb, eventually taking a grass track on the right by a whitewashed cottage, just before a road junction. Walk to a stile, cross and continue ahead, ignoring a waymarked path down to the right **F**. When the road away to the right comes into view, cut across the field diagonally right to meet it at a stile by a field gate.

Cross to a waymarked track and follow this, soon on a downward route, to reach the quarry encountered at the start of the walk. Turn right to the road and cross to your transport.



Walk 13 – The Strawberry Line

Start Picnic site on A371 near Axbridge. (ST424548)

Distance 6.5 miles.

Refreshments Two pubs in Shipham, half-distance.

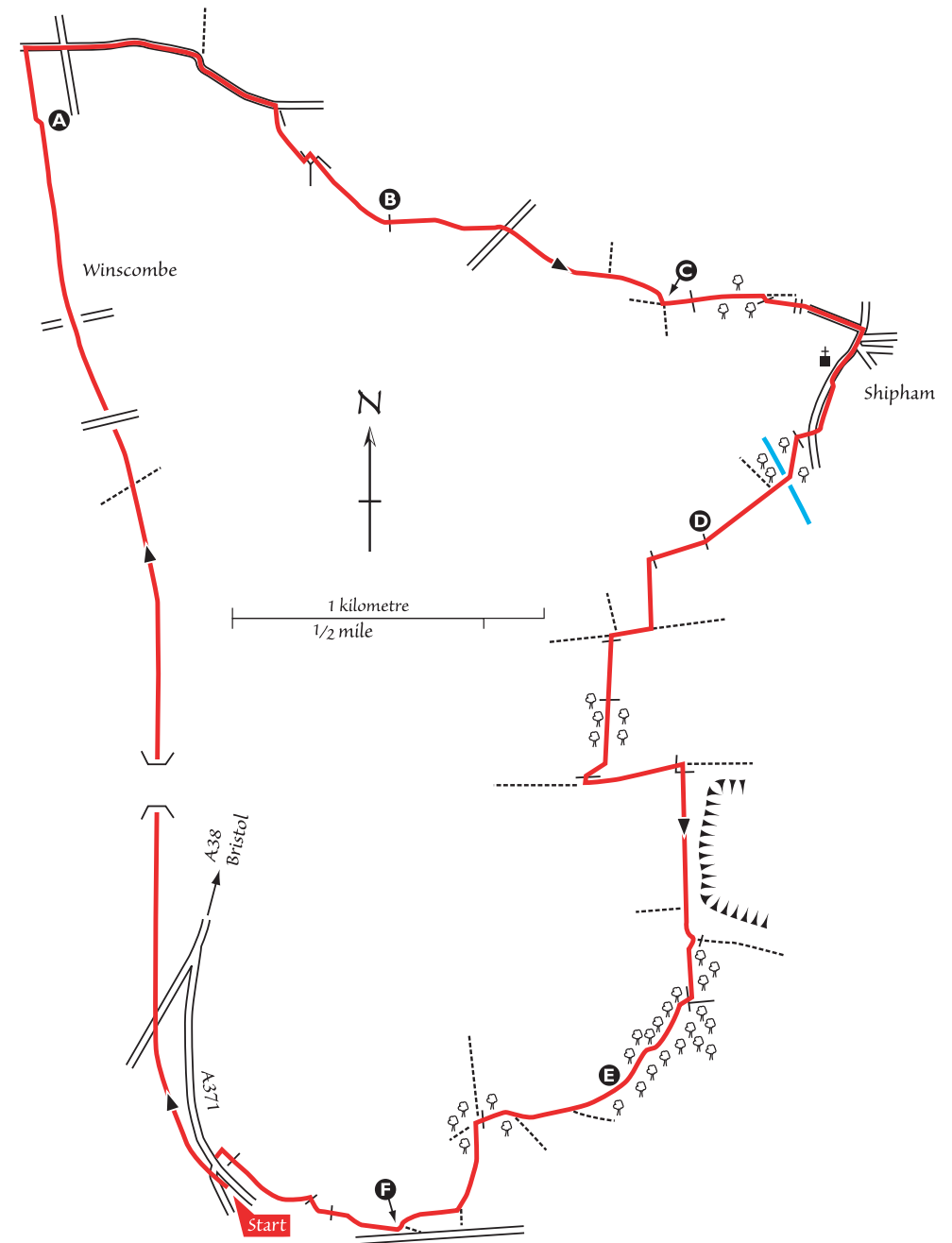
Getting there A38 south from Bristol. Beyond Sidcot, fork left onto A371 to Axbridge, then in a short distance look for signed car park on right.

A lovely walk, initially following the old 'Strawberry Line' railway, then returning over the Mendips with superb views across the Somerset Levels. Much of the route is on good, level paths, though there are a couple of climbs – one steep with steps – and a steep descent. Allow 3 – 3.5 hours of walking.

Leave the car park on the path passing the information board. Cross the road and pick up the Cheddar Valley Railway path opposite. Follow this to the busy A38, cross with care, then continue on the route of the old railway, passing through Shute Shelfe tunnel to eventually reach the old Winscombe station. Notice the timeline along the edge of the platform and the section of Brunel's broad-gauge rail track, unearthed during restoration work.

This railway path runs from Yatton to Cheddar. The line originally extended to Wells and opened in 1870. A variety of goods were carried, but it became so heavily used by

The Strawberry Line



the strawberry growers of the Cheddar area that the line became known as the 'Strawberry Line'. The line finally closed, after years of decline, in 1963.

Continue past the enigmatic 'Strawberry Special' sculpture to ❶ where the path veers away from the trackbed, local residents having claimed the land as their own. A short distance further the path forks – take the higher one to the left, soon to reach a lane with cemetery on the left.

Turn right along the lane, go over the bridge and walk to the road. Cross to Shipham Lane and follow this for a half-mile, until you come to a footpath sign on the right. Climb the stone stile into pasture, then walk, keeping to the left boundary, to a stile on the left near the field corner. Climb this, go right and climb another by a gate, then follow the hedge on the left for the length of the field. At the far end, go over another stile ❷ and follow the path, passing a house on the right, to a driveway that leads to a road.

Cross this road with care and walk ahead up the drive, soon becoming a track, then a driveway again as you reach a small group of dwellings with Winterhead House on the left. At the junction ❸ go left and walk to a metal gate, then continue until you are on a narrow path. Now, look for a path forking up to the right and take this, going through a kissing gate. Follow the path to the far side of the field where you go through a wooden kissing gate, then on to a metal one that gives access to a residential road. Follow this to the main road, turn right and in a few yards, you reach the village green at Shipham. This makes a good mid-point break. There is the Miners Arms on the right, or the far superior Penscot Inn, a traditional coaching inn dating back from 1450, a little further along the road before the church.

Your route from here lies along the main road, passing the church on the right. Keep to the pavement on the left until you pass beyond the raised section, then drop down to the road, cross with care, and double back to reach a stile with a 'West Mendip Way' marker on the left. Climb this and walk down the grass, boundary right, to a further stile. Beyond here, the path descends to the valley bottom where you cross a footbridge, and then climb steeply with the aid of steps, to regain the height you have just lost. Beyond the steps, keep in the same direction, fence right, to the field corner where you cross a stone stile ❹. In the next field, walk straight across to another stile with farm track beyond. Go left here and follow the track to a junction, turn right and walk to a metal gate and stile on the left, just past an electricity pole. Climb over and walk up the field keeping to the right boundary. Continue, passing a field gate, until you reach open ground with a gate in the boundary ahead. Now look for a stone stile a little to the right, climb this to reach an old drove-road.

Follow this left, until your route is barred by a collection of old gates. Negotiate these, then turn right and cross the stile, then walk along the track with a quarry on your left. The track becomes a surfaced driveway, and as it swings left through metal gates, drop down to a path on the right, initially between a fence left and tumbledown wall on the right. Keep on this vague, downhill path, with wall right, until you have to cross it via a stile. Now look for a path ahead, running away from the wall and contouring the hillside. Follow this through the coppice, eventually emerging to an open area where you have fine views over the Somerset Levels ❺. Keep on the grassy, downhill path, ignoring a path joining from the left, beyond which, you reach a wall and fence on the left. Continue, to climb a stile and turn left at the track beyond. Now go downhill, passing a gate, your route eventually levelling out and bearing right. The old Axbridge station can be seen from here, beyond the road, The 'down' platform and trackbed now forming the route of the Axbridge by-pass.

At a T-junction ❻ with the bypass beyond, go right and walk with houses on the right to the end of the tarmac, where you cross a small parking area and go through a field gate into allotments. Follow the track keeping to the fence on your right, then go right with it, eventually reaching a stile. Cross, and walk left. The track ends at a stile giving access to the road. Turn left along the verge for a few yards, before crossing to the car park and your starting point.



Walk 14 – Bristol's Harbourside

Start Start at Bristol City Centre by the Watershed complex (ST585726).

Distance 6.5 miles (can be shortened to 3.5 miles).

Refreshments Numerous pubs and cafes.

Getting there —

A walk from the city, out into the countryside and back again. The longer walk has one steep climb on a paved surface and a rough descent, more than compensated by the stunning views. The shorter walk is completely level on surfaced paths and makes for an easy, enjoyable circuit of these historic docks.

Your outward route takes you past the Watershed complex with the floating harbour on your left. Continue along the water's edge and crossing the Amphitheatre, with the Lloyd's building to your right. Redevelopment around the old gasworks site is complete, so walkers can now keep to dockside for most of the circuit. With that in mind, continue to Capricorn Quay, where the statue of Samuel Plimsoll can be seen **A**. Brunel's SS Great Britain, the world's first iron-hulled passenger liner was built here and launched in 1843. Nearby, the replica of John Cabot's 'Matthew' can be seen (if not sailing off-shore).

Samuel Plimsoll (1824-1898) became a Liberal politician, and developed a keen interest in safety at sea. His campaigning led to the Merchant Shipping Act of 1876 instructing

the 'Plimsoll Line' to be painted on the hull of every ship to mark its load line and giving the Board of Trade greater inspection powers.

Now continue along Mardyke Western Wharf and beyond a floating restaurant, after which you are on Poole's Wharf, now a modern housing development **B**. Cross the wooden footbridge and after passing the Pump House pub, climb the steps to the swing bridge. Cross the road with care and descend the steps opposite. You are now walking with the Cumberland Basin to your left and the imposing Plimsoll Bridge ahead. Beyond the bridge the walk can be shortened by crossing the footway over the lock gates to your left **C** in which case jump ahead to **G**.

However, if you are feeling energetic continue alongside the River Avon as far as you can before taking to the pavement and passing the derelict Victorian pier on your left. Now cross the busy road with extreme care to reach a row of cottages called The Colonnade, built in 1786 **D**. Pause to read the information plaque on the wall on No 1 then walk on past the entrance to Clifton Rocks Railway

This was a water powered funicular railway constructed with great difficulty inside the cliffs of the Avon Gorge in order to reduce its visual impact on the picturesque surroundings. It

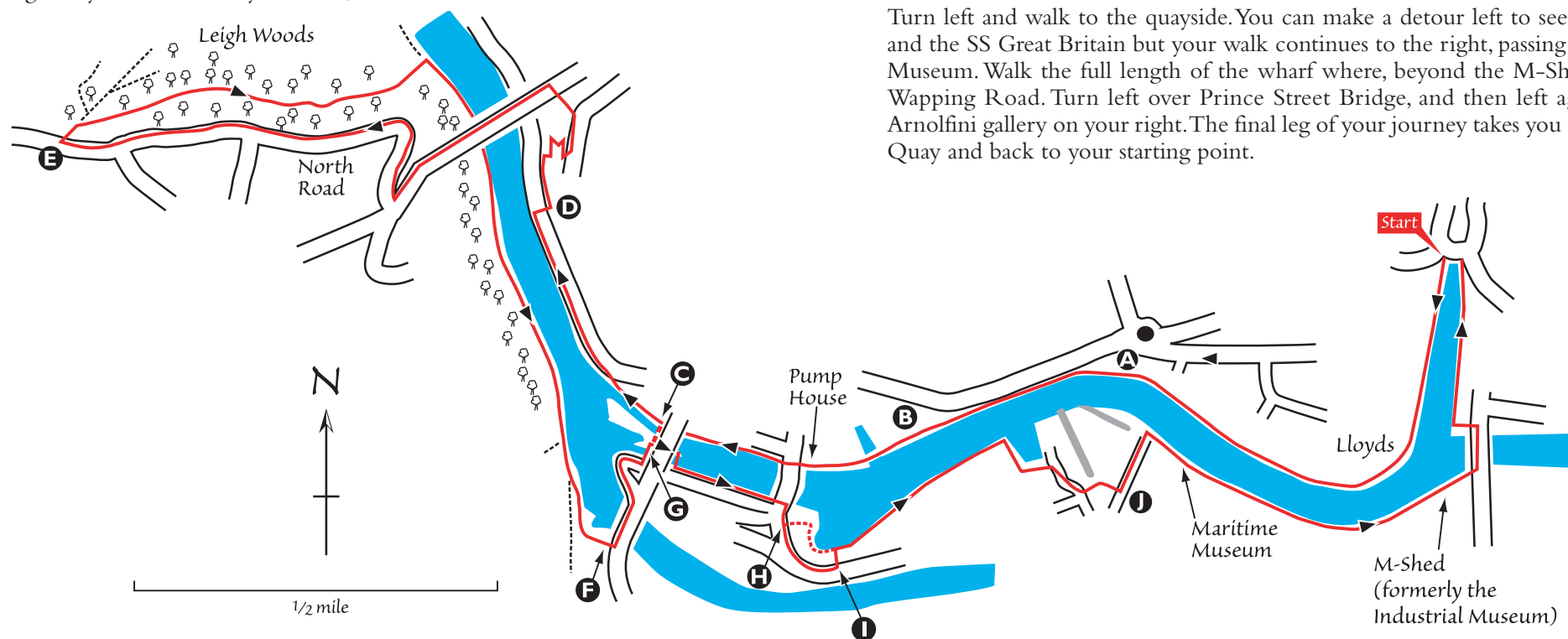


Yacht belonging to Tony Bullimore, feared drowned after his boat capsized in the Southern Ocean in 1997 while taking part in a round-the-world solo race.

opened in 1893 and operated for 40 years before lack of use forced closure in 1934. During WWII, it became a secret transmission base for the BBC, but since then, the tunnel been empty and disused, although a Preservation Group is trying to restore the railway.

Where the pavement ends, steps lead you to a zigzag path upwards to the rarefied atmosphere of Clifton. With your climb over pause for breath and admire the view before walking across the grass to the Suspension Bridge. Cross the bridge and into Bridge Road then take the first turning on the right (North Road) and follow this as it bends round to the left to reach the entrance to Leigh Woods on your right **E**. The information board shows you a map of the area and you will see your route ahead shown as Nightingale Valley, this is the path that leads off to the right and you soon find yourself on an exciting descent through the woodland eventually emerging on the banks of the Avon downstream from the Suspension Bridge.

Turn right and walk under the bridge, continuing to reach an open grassed area with Avon Bridge ahead. Take the steps on your right up to the road **F** turn left and keep to the footway as it bears left after crossing the river, eventually arriving at a wooden footbridge on your left, which you cross **G**.



Now turn right (or left if you are following the shorter route) and walk beneath the bridge then cross the concrete footway and walk now with the Cumberland Basin on your left as far as the Nova Scotia pub. Cross to the pub and walk right, with the pub to your left. You have a choice of routes here. A left turn, signed 'Harbourside Walk' **H** is the more interesting route, taking you through the Underfall Boat Yard. (The Yard is named after the sluices ('underfalls') that control the level of water in the harbour.) However, this is sometimes closed due to activities in the yard. The other route follows the pavement, which bears left to enter Cumberland Road. In a short distance turn left into the Cottage Inn car park **I** then right through metal gates to pick up the quayside of Baltic Wharf.

Easy walking now along the harbourside until you reach the marina; here you must turn right, then go left across the top of the slipway to a road. Turn right here and follow the road for a short distance, bearing left towards the Bristol Diving School which is passed on your right, eventually reaching Gas Ferry Road with the former offices of Aardman Animation opposite **I**. (They are currently situated a short distance to the right). The building was originally a banana-ripening warehouse for Fyffe's.

Turn left and walk to the quayside. You can make a detour left to see the Matthew and the SS Great Britain but your walk continues to the right, passing the Maritime Museum. Walk the full length of the wharf where, beyond the M-Shed, you reach Wapping Road. Turn left over Prince Street Bridge, and then left again with the Arnolfini gallery on your right. The final leg of your journey takes you along Narrow Quay and back to your starting point.



Walk 15 – Priston

Start Stanton Prior Church (ST677627).

Distance 6.5 miles.

Refreshments Pub in Priston (restricted midweek opening) mid-point of walk.

Getting there A37 from Bristol, then left onto A368 to Bath, joining A39. Beyond Markesbury, take signed right turn to Stanton Prior. Restricted roadside parking near the church.

An undulating, but not difficult walk starting and ending in the little village of Stanton Prior, and passing through Priston. Field paths and tracks – some muddy stretches – and quiet lanes. Allow about 3 hours.

With the church on your left, walk back along the road to the right hand bend and there, take the waymarked byway on the left, through a gate, then along a track, through a further gate and continuing to a road **A**.

Cross, and continue in the same direction for a short distance to a further road. Here, go right for a few yards before taking the second gate on the left and following the field edge, keeping to the left boundary as far as a stile on the left, cross and go diagonally left, down to climb a further stile in a cross-fence. From here, follow the left boundary down to another stile in the valley bottom. Climb this, and negotiate the

small stream, then go left, looking for a footbridge through the bushes in the corner of the field **B**. (There is a waymark on this stile which points straight on, across the field, but bearing slightly left towards the stream. There is no path there, so ignore the waymark and follow the instructions, turning left.) Beyond the bridge, climb the stile and walk up the left edge of the field to a further stile giving access to a lane.

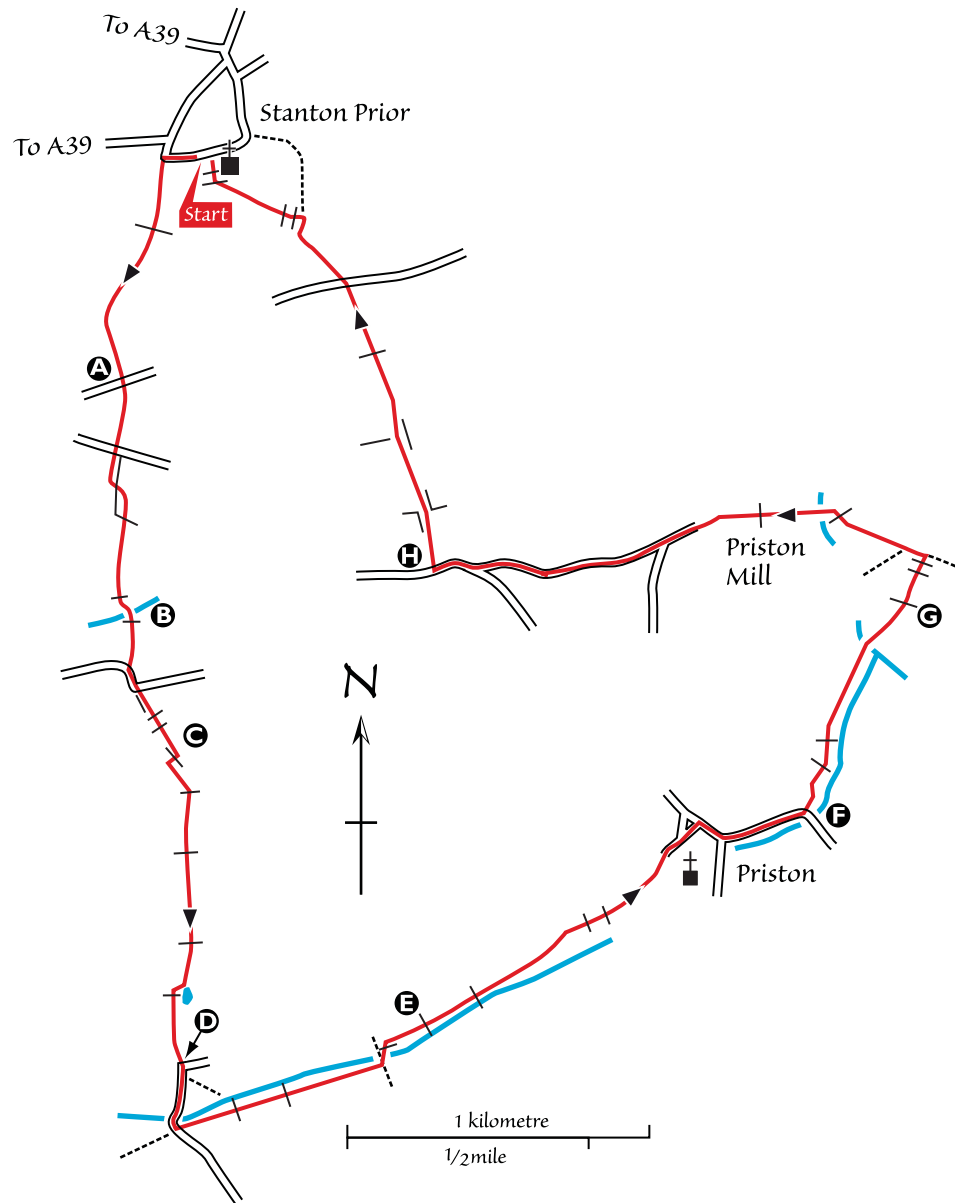
Go left, and walk for a short distance to the bend in the road, where you climb the stile on the right by the second gate. Walk up the field, hedge right, climbing a stile to enter a spinney. Exit this via another stile, then keep to the right boundary as you skirt Priest Barrow on your left **C** to reach a stile. Climb over, turn left and follow the field edge, boundary left, to a further stile in the far left corner. Keep on in the same direction, through a gate, then a pedestrian gate set in a metal field gate, eventually reaching a pond at the field corner. Veer right, to climb a stile, then keep on in the same direction, to a farmhouse at the far left corner and a lane beyond **D**.

Walk downhill, ignoring the stile on the left, to the valley bottom where you cross a stile on the left by a gate. Walk with stream left, ignoring a footbridge to your left, then crossing a small ford. Climb a stile by a gate, then onward through a further gate, and over a bridge. Beyond here, you reach a farm track. Go left, over the stream, climb the stile and walk right, with the stream now down to your right.

Climb a stile by a gate **E** then another stile (ignore the waymark here), after which take a gently rising route away from the stream to reach the top of the meadow with the tower of Priston church coming into view. Keep in the same direction, climbing a further stile, then follow the track into the village. Follow the lane, passing the church, then ahead at a fork with a school on you left. At a T-junction, the village green and Ring O' Bells pub are to your left. (Pub open for food Tuesday to Sunday lunchtime.)

The walk continues going right at the T-junction, following the road downhill and round to the left. As the road bends right crossing the stream **F** climb the stile on the left and follow the track, walking round to the left of the water treatment works. Beyond a further stile, you walk through a plantation, exiting by another stile and walking along the field edge, woodland right. Continue to a concrete footbridge, cross and walk across the following meadow to a stile on the far side **G**. Now contour the next field, veering left and climbing another stile, then walk up past a corrugated barn and continue a short distance to a track.

Turn left, walk to the track end and enter a field. The path here follows the electricity poles down the hill, veering right at the last pole to reach a stile in the hedge. Cross and turn left, shortly going over a footbridge and stile. Now head towards the mill,



reaching it via a kissing gate. Follow the driveway ahead with the buildings to your left.

A few years back, walkers could explore the mill and enjoy tea and cakes at their cafe, but that has given way to the lucrative 'corporate events' market, so now you just have to walk past and wonder! There has been a mill on this site for over 1000 years. The mill is still in working order and possesses a fine 25ft diameter waterwheel, installed in 1850.

Beyond the mill, walk along the lane, keeping right at a fork and passing another road joining from the left. A little further, go right onto a bridleway, just before a stone barn **H** and follow it up the hill, entering a further field where you go ahead, hedge right. Carry on through to a third field that you exit via a gate, onto a track. Follow this to reach a road.

Cross straight over and take the track running downhill. This becomes deeply rutted and muddy in places, but you have an escape route halfway down, where you must look for steps and a kissing gate up to your left. Walk through a small plantation, leaving by a gate at the other side. Now descend the hillside diagonally to reach a kissing gate in the lower, right boundary. Cross the meadow and go through a gate in the stone wall, then follow the path beyond, climbing a stile to enter the churchyard. From here, you access the village street and your transport.



Walk 16 – Priddy & Rodney Stoke

Start Priddy (ST528508).

Distance 6.75 miles.

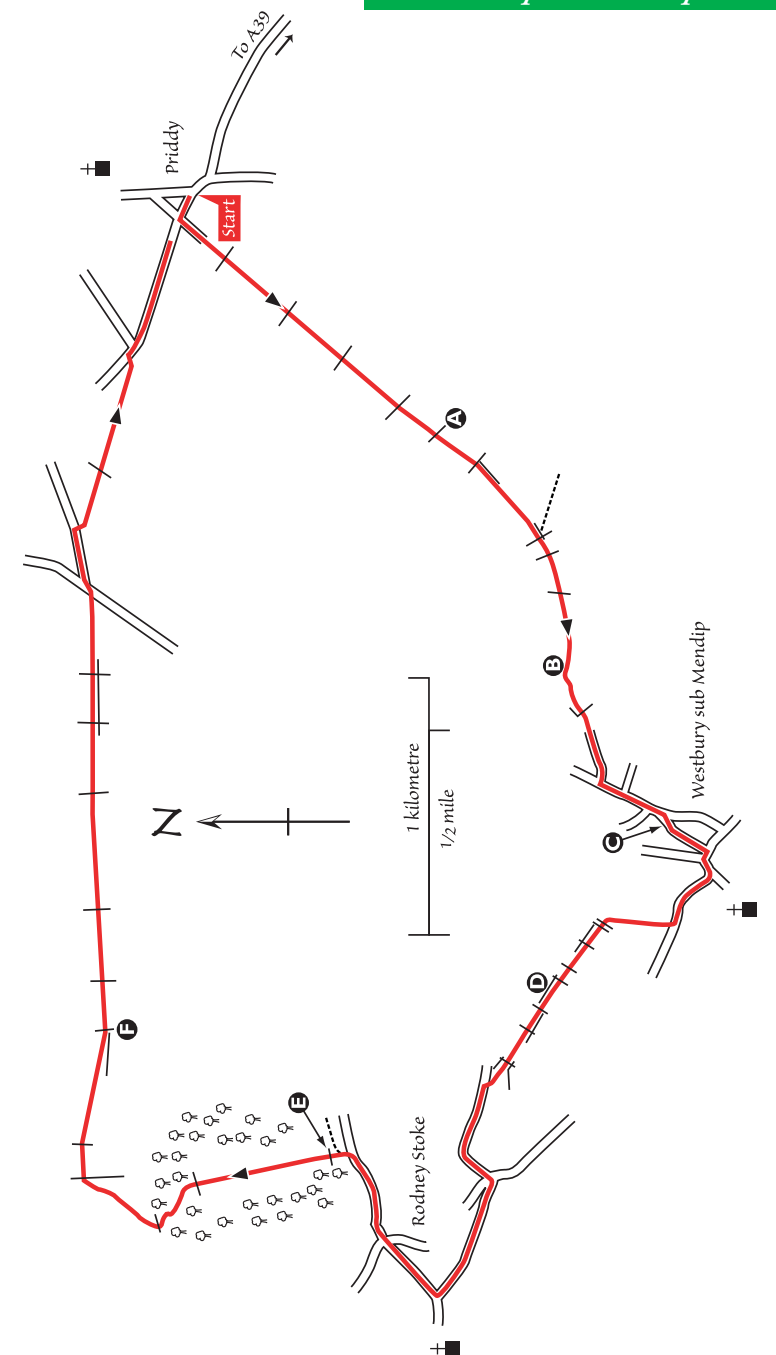
Refreshments The New Inn at the start/end of the walk has a fine selection of Real Ales and a good bar menu (a long wait at busy periods). Nothing en-route.

Getting there The village of Priddy, situated high on the Mendips is located between Bristol and Wells along a minor road off the A39. From Bristol, take the A37 then A39 towards Wells. After traffic lights at Green Ore, take first turning right signposted Priddy and park around the village green.

A snapshot of the Mendips is to be found on this walk. The starting point, Priddy, is the most isolated village on this range of hills and the views over the Somerset Levels on the first half of the walk are superb on a clear day. The route then follows the West Mendip Way back to Priddy. Easy walking, but with one fairly long climb and numerous stiles. Allow 3.5 hours.

Priddy, once the centre of the Mendip mining industry is home to an annual sheep fair that moved from Wells in 1348 when the Black Death was rife in the city. At this medieval market on the village green, Mendip sheep are bought and sold and the thatched shelter with its hurdles has now become a feature of the village.

Start by the New Inn on the green. Walk up the road with the pub on the left and take the first turning on the left, passing a 'No Through Road' sign. Where the tar-



mac ends, climb the stile into a field and follow the waymark directing you straight ahead. Cross this, and three further fields to a stile on the far side of this fourth field **A**. Beyond, continue ahead, the ground dropping away on your right. Climb the next stile, and walk with an old boundary on your left, then ahead to reach a wooden stile in the far left corner of the field.

Ignore the stone stile on the right, but climb the wooden one and with the vista opening up in front of you, go ahead towards the trees and further stile. Cross and go slightly right on a well-defined path, losing height, to another stile in the wall ahead, cross and follow the waymark in the same direction down the hill. Don't get carried away on this easy descent though! As you pass a line of bushes on the left (an old field boundary) **B** veer half-left, towards a barn near the lower left corner of the field. Pass through the gate in the field corner, then keep left to reach a lane.

Walk ahead, turning left into Stancombe Lane. Pass Mares Lane left, Drappel Lane right, then take the next right into Free Hill **C**. Continue to a junction with telephone box and here turn right, then immediately left into School Hill. In a few yards turn right into The Hollow and follow this lane for about 400 yards, passing Hollow Farm on the left, then looking for a stile in the hedge on the right.

Cross, and climb to the top left corner of the field walk and on reaching this, go left to climb a stone stile. Now go ahead across the top of a succession of fields, passing a brace of telephone masts on the right **D** and eventually exiting right, onto a lane. Turn left and walk to the main road (A371). Cross with care to a minor road opposite, Millway, and follow the road to a junction where you turn right and walk up to the main road. Cross to Scaddens Lane and walk for 300 yards, taking a left turn beyond Scaddens Farm, opposite a wooden field gate on the right.

In a few yards, veer left onto a track. At the track end, climb the stile into a meadow surrounded by woodland **E**. Go straight ahead, climbing steadily up the centre of the field, to a stile by a field gate at the top. Beyond the stile you are in the Rodney Stoke Nature Reserve. Follow the path winding up between the trees to exit at the top of the Reserve via a stile.

Now go half-right towards trees on the horizon, then aim for the left of the hedgerow to a yellow-painted stone stile. You join the West Mendip Way here. Climb the stile then go slightly right to cross another, then walk ahead, picking up the wall on your right. Continue, crossing a further stile with a house to your right **F** then head out across a series of fields following the clear waymarks and climbing a final stile to reach a road.

Cross to the lane directly opposite and follow it to a point where it kinks left. Here, look right for a stone stile by a gate. Climb this and directed by the waymark, cross the field to another stile. In this field, continue in the same direction, veering slightly to the left and eventually joining the left boundary. Continue to the field corner where a stile affords access to the road at a junction. Follow the road right to the village of Priddy and your starting point.



The hurdles on Priddy village green



Walk 17 – Easton Grey

Start High Street, Sherston (ST853858).

Distance 7 miles.

Refreshments The Rattlebones Inn at start/end of walk.

Getting there M4 Junction 18, then north on A46 for about 4 miles before turning right onto A433. Follow this for 3.5 miles then turn right onto minor road, signed Sherston. Park in Sherston High Street.

An easy walk in the south Cotswolds along quiet lanes and field paths, passing through the pretty village of Easton Grey and returning along the ancient Fosse Way. A generally level walk, allow about 3 hours.

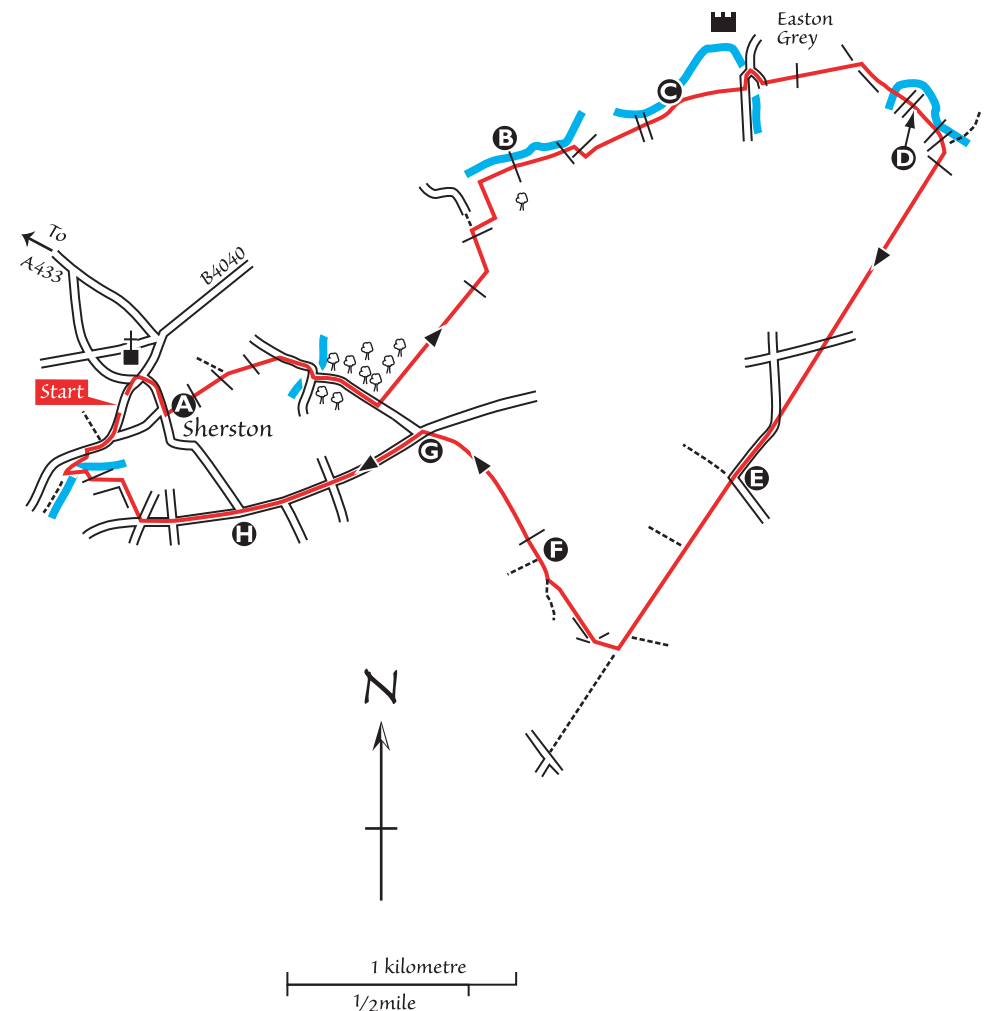
From Sherston High Street, go north, passing the Rattlebones Inn, turning right immediately after into Noble Street. Keep left as Grove Road forks right, and climb steps on the left. Cross a residential road **A** and go ahead on a tarmac footpath and through a kissing gate. Follow the path to a further gate, then go diagonally right on a well-defined path to climb a stile in the wooden fence. Now go ahead between stables and a stone barn to a further kissing gate and road beyond.

Turn right, walking downhill and turning left immediately after the bridge. Climb the road ahead with woodland on the left. Where this ends, go left through wooden

Easton Grey

gates into Pinkney Park. Follow the track through the parkland, leaving via high metal gates and keeping to the left boundary eventually arriving at a field gate. Beyond, take the track right, continuing to a stile on the left before reaching the field ahead. Climb over and walk, boundary right to a further stile at the bottom of the field. Cross, then pick up the left boundary to reach another stile **B**.

Climb over and walk ahead with the boundary on your left. Go over another stile then walk up to the right to reach a wooden gate, pass through and turn left, heading to the



far side of the field. Keep to the high ground with woodland to your left, eventually reaching a pair of stiles and cross a footbridge. Beyond these, walk ahead with pheasant enclosures on your left. Keep with the left boundary, ignoring the stile on the left **C** beyond which you follow a wooden fence with views of Easton Grey House away to your left. At the far side of the field, take the track descending to a road. Turn left and cross the bridge to enter Easton Grey.

The stone bridge is 16th century, and the 18th century Easton Grey House, best viewed before the bridge, was the summer retreat of Herbert Asquith when he was Prime Minister between 1908 and 1916.

Beyond the bridge, turn right and follow the road up hill. At the top, follow the footpath sign left, along a track and through a gate into a field. Continue ahead to a stile in the fence; climb over, and cross the following field in the same direction to reach a gap in the far boundary. Pass through and turn right, walking with the boundary on your right, and keep in this direction descending to cross the river, then ahead past a ruined mill, through a gate then over a stile **D**. Now walk along the edge of a field with the boundary on your left, climbing a stile on the far side then following a sunken path ahead to a further stile.



Easton Grey House, home to Lord Asquith

This is the Fosse Way, a Roman road, thought to have been constructed hastily through hostile territory to join the military bases of Exeter and Lincoln.

Turn right and climb the track that soon levels out, then continue to a road. Cross over and take the track ahead to a further road that you follow left, leaving it as it bends left **E** to continue ahead on the track. Keep in this direction for about half-a-mile to a footbridge on the right with a handrail (just after a footbridge on the left without a rail). Beyond the footbridge, the Right-of-Way is obstructed and you are guided by fences either side to a further field. Go ahead, again between fences, to a track. Take this, passing a polo field and horse track on the right **F**. Beyond here, continue through a field gate and along a path, picking up another track that you follow to the road **G**.

Walk left along the tarmac, over crossroads and ignoring a left turn signed Hullavington. At the next junction, fork left along a minor road **H**. The next left turn is Commonwood Lane; ignore this and continue to crossroads. Here, go over and climb the stile on the right into a field. Follow the left field boundary to its end, then descend half-left to a gate in the hedge, just left of the factory. Continue your descent, walking left to a footbridge. Cross, then go right to reach a stile and kissing gate at the far end of the meadow. Beyond, walk right along the road, climbing Brook Hill to reach Sherston High Street and your starting point.



Walk 18 – Portskewett

Start Black Rock Picnic Area, Portskewett (ST511880).

Distance 7 miles.

Refreshments The Portskewett Inn at mid-point of walk.

Getting there M48 leaving at Junction 2, then north on A466 to roundabout and left, on the A48 signed Newport. The road goes over the motorway, half-a-mile beyond here turn left at a roundabout onto the B5245. Almost immediately, take left turn signed Portskewett and follow the road for about 1.5 miles, turning left into Black Rock Road. Follow this to its end and park at the picnic site.

An easy, almost flat ramble along field paths and lanes, following the bank of the Severn Estuary and passing an ancient fort, the remains of Brunel's broad-gauge railway and the fishing grounds of the Black Rock Lave Net Fishery. Allow about 3 hours.

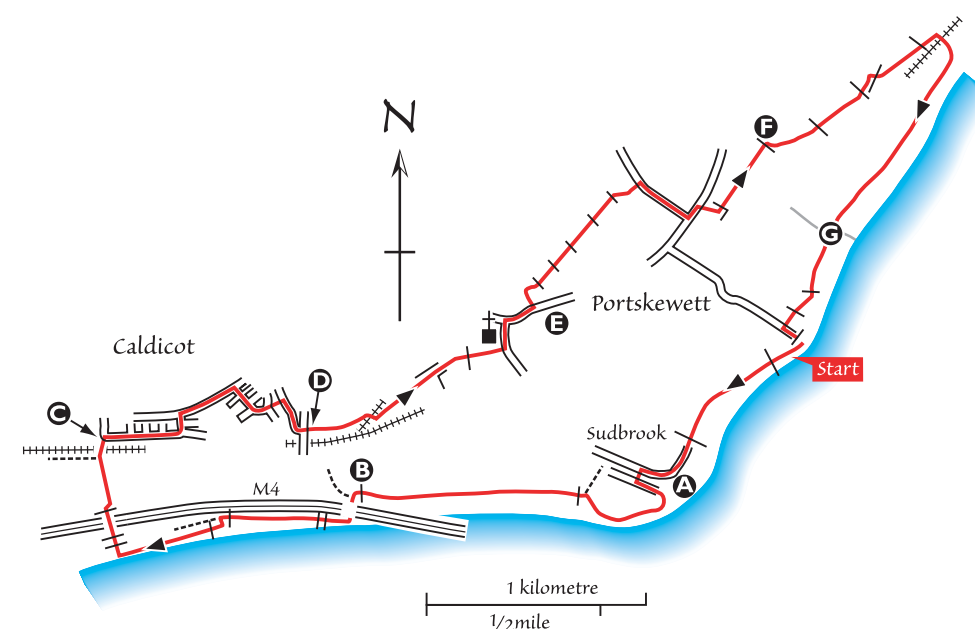
From the car park, walk down to the river bank and read the information boards that set the scene for this walk, then turn right and head towards the motorway bridge. Pass through a kissing gate and follow the path to reach a residential road. Continue, bearing right at the pumping station **A**. A short distance further, go left, over the level crossing to Camp Road.

Most of Sudbrook was built as a new village for workers on the Severn Tunnel, construction beginning in 1873. The railway brought coal to the pumping station, built to pump water from the tunnel. The complex comprised three large brick engine houses for the six Cornish beam engines, and ventilation towers. Electrically powered pumps replaced the steam engines in 1962, and the chimney stacks taking smoke from the furnaces were demolished in 1968.

Walk left, Camp Road becoming Old Row, then a footpath. You soon reach the ruins of a chapel and pass through Sudbrook Fort. Thought to be late Iron-Age, now much eroded on its seaward side. Follow the narrow path to reach a kissing gate with surfaced path beyond and continue, with a paper mill to your right. Keep on the path to reach a further gate **B**.

The paper mill was opened in 1958 by the Wiggins Teape Group. This site was picked because of the large amount of water that was available from the pumping station. The mill closed in 2006, with soaring energy costs and a fall in sales being given as the reason.

Fork left here, passing beneath the motorway then bearing right, walking with the foreshore to your left. Pass through a pair of kissing gates, then onward to reach another gate. Beyond this, leave the surfaced path and climb the dike on the left, then continuing through a kissing gate. Keep to this elevated route until you draw level with a footbridge over the motorway. Go right to cross this, then beyond a gate, follow the surfaced path



over open ground beneath sets of power lines. After a further gate, you reach a driveway, go ahead here, over the railway, to enter a housing estate.

Having crossed the railway, notice the green railings on the left. Here, the main rail line to London Paddington enters the Severn Tunnel. At 4.5 miles, it was the longest mainline railway tunnel within the UK for over 100 years.

You are on a bend in the road ㉔ cross over to the road opposite and follow this, walking parallel to the railway beyond the bungalows to your right. Ignore turnings right and left, continuing as the road finally bends left to meet a main road. Turn right here and walk ahead until you reach a right turn, 'Denny View'. Take this, crossing to the left side of the road, and follow the road that eventually bears left. Just beyond 'Estuary View' on the right, go ahead on a tarmac path to a road. Go right here and walk to a junction at the end of the road. Cross left here, with a level crossing on your right, and go over a stone bridge ㉕ with 'Pill House' on the right. At the end of the road, continue along a path with industrial units either side, then a railway on the right. The path leads you across the track, beyond which you follow the path over grassland to the far left corner of the field.

The disused railway just crossed was the link to the main line from the Royal Navy Propellant Factory in nearby Caerwent. Built in 1939, this massive site was used for the production of nitroglycerine, nitrocellulose, Tetryl and cordite for the Royal Navy.

Continue on to reach a playground, cross the car park and go through the wooden gate. Now go ahead to the right of the church where a gate gives access to a road.

Turn left and walk to a junction. Go right here, crossing the road and walking as far as a wooden bench. Just a little further, on the right ㉖ the Portskewett Inn makes a handy mid-point refreshment stop. Your walk continues up to the left by the bench, along a tarmac drive. Follow this bearing right to reach a kissing gate. Beyond, walk across the pasture with the fence to your right. Keep in this direction through a further four kissing gates, then aim for the right side of the brick bungalow and through a further kissing gate to reach a road. Turn right and walk to a junction, then go left for a short distance before crossing to a metal gate on the right. Beyond the gate, take the track to its end where you climb the remains of a stile on the left, adjacent to a gate.

Now walk the length of the meadow, passing beneath power lines and climbing a metal stile in the far left corner ㉗. Follow the path, boundary left, to its end where you climb a stile to reach a field corner. Go ahead along the top left edge of the field, passing pylons and descending to a stile. Climb over and go ahead over a concrete bridge, following the farm track, then in a short distance, climb a stile on the right.

Now go diagonally across the field aiming for the old Severn bridge in the distance. At the far end of the field climb a stile just to the right of the pylon, then in the following cropped field go diagonally right to the far corner. Cross the footbridge, then a stile, and walk over the railway, climbing a further stile at the far side. Go ahead to climb the dike.

Fine views now, as you turn right and follow the elevated path, passing through a kissing gate and climbing a stile to cross a stream ㉘ with Charston Rock visible at low tide. At the end of the dike, you reach a low stone wall. Climb over and continue for a short distance to a kissing gate. Cross the following field bearing right to go through a kissing gate next to a metal gate at the top of the field. Go ahead on a cinder track, over a disused railway, to reach a lane. Turn left towards the car park, but before going into it, continue on through a gate and down to the foreshore.

At low tide, you can just make out the foundations of the jetty that marked the start of Brunel's 19th century broad-gauge railway into Wales. People travelling to South Wales left the train at New Passage, on the far side of the Severn where a pier stretched for 400 yards to the low waterline. There, travellers boarded a ferry for the three mile journey to the Portskewett pier, thence on again by train.



Foundations of Brunel's 19th century jetty.



Walk 19 – Wavering Down

Start King's Wood car park on Winscombe Hill (ST421559).

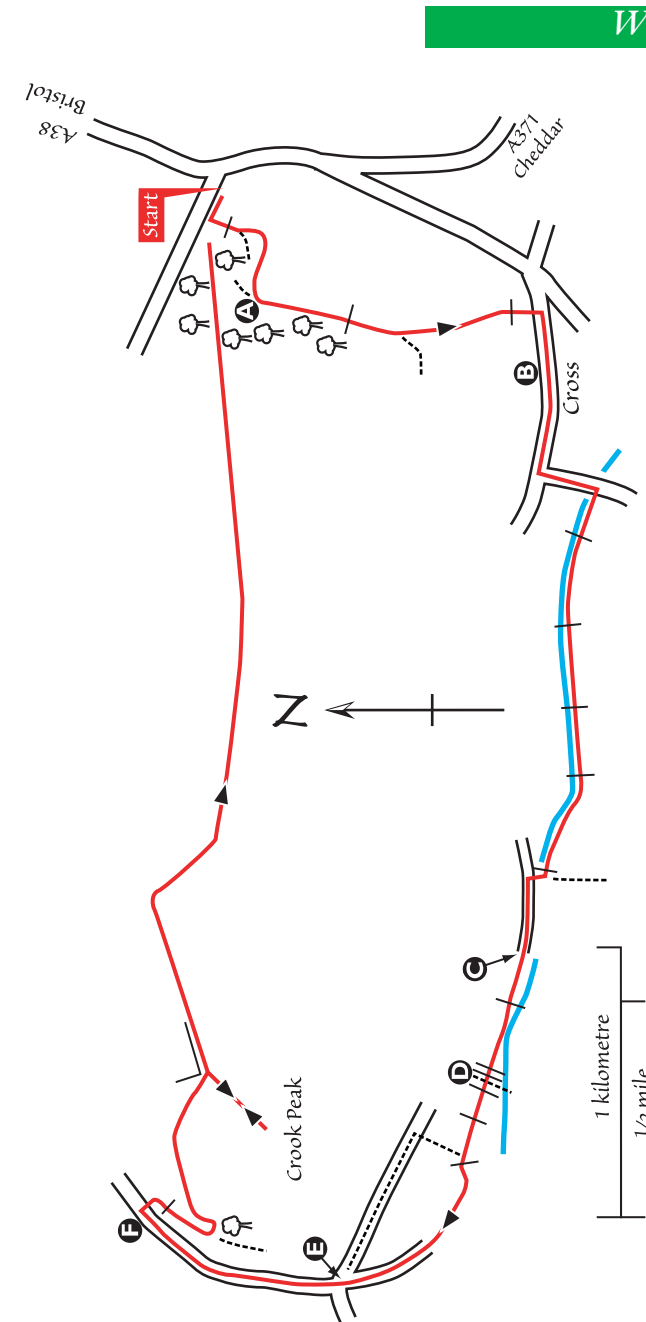
Distance 7.5 miles.

Refreshments None suitably placed en-route, though 'White Hart' in Cross, is not far from the start.

Getting there A38 south. Just under a mile past right turn to Winscombe (A371), take minor road right and in a short distance enter car park on left.

An easy outward leg, initially woodland then field edge paths bordering the Somerset Levels. The return involves a steep ascent of Crook Peak, followed by an undulating route over Wavering Down with superb views on a clear day. An overgrown stretch in mid-summer might necessitate a detour (indicated in the narrative). Allow a good 4 hours.

Leave the car park via the gate into King's Wood, immediately turning left. Follow a broad path downhill, soon reaching a pair of gates and passing through the one on the right and continuing on a level course to a fork. Here, take the narrower left path and start to descend, turning left at a path junction **A** then passing through a gate. Continue, with a boundary of ancient lime trees to your left and passing a minor fork up to the right, after which you leave the woodland to fine views of the Somerset Levels ahead. Continue to a gate just above the village of Cross, pass through and descend to the road.



Walk 19

Turn right and follow the road, passing the 'White Hart' **B** then continue to a road junction.

The comedian and comic actor Frankie Howerd, who died in 1992, lived in this village. The house, 'Wavering Down' is 100 yards ahead on the right. Following the death of Howerd's partner in 2009, the property was subsequently sold.

Here, turn left, signed Highbridge, and walk to a bridge over a watercourse. Immediately beyond, on the right, climb a stile and walk with the water (Cheddar Yeo) on your right. Keep in this direction, climbing a succession of stiles, until one gives access to a track where you go right, soon reaching a road. Turn left and follow the tarmac that eventually becomes a track **C** continue, through a gate and into a field. Walk ahead, boundary left, over a couple of stiles and through two gates to reach a cross track **D**. Go through the gate opposite. Continue with the left boundary and over another stile.

At the far side of the next field, you need to drop down to the left to locate the stile. Beyond here in summer, the path can become very overgrown and the occasional



View to Wavering Down

Wavering Down

fallen tree doesn't help. Although there is under 200 yards to walk, if it all becomes too much, retreat to the stile and walk up the field edge keeping to the left boundary to reach a road. Turn left and follow it for a half mile and cross roads **E** where you meet the intended route. If the going is reasonable, follow this narrow path, passing an information board. A short distance further, the path opens out to a track that soon becomes a lane. Continue ahead to cross roads **E** go straight over along Barton Road.

Pass Webbington Farm on the left, 'The Lodge' then 'The Paddock' both on the right, eventually reaching a telecoms masts on the left **F**. Here, a path doubles back on the right. Follow it along the signed bridleway and start to climb. Go through a gate, beyond which there is a gentle ascent on a pleasant woodland path, but after the path doubles back left, the climb starts in earnest! Before long, you will see the rocky summit of Crook Peak away to the right and you could blaze a trail to it. Better though, to follow the well-used path until you reach a wall corner. Here, you can detour right to the peak.

Crook Peak is a landmark for miles around, and was used as such by ships negotiating the Bristol Channel. It was also the location of one of the beacons that signaled the arrival of the Spanish Armada.

The walk continues from the wall, following it towards Wavering Down, at over 690 feet, the highest point on the circuit. On reaching the trig. point on the Down, the remainder of the walk is all downhill, keeping the boundary to your left, with the last stretch a delightful descent through mature woodland, that leads you back to the car park.



Walk 20 – Nyland Hill

Start Rodney Stoke church (ST482498).

Distance 7.5 miles.

Refreshments None.

Getting there Rodney Stoke lies on the A371. Stoke Street runs southwest across the Somerset Levels. Follow this and park carefully near the church.

An easy level walk across meadows, country lanes and farm tracks. Often wet underfoot and with a couple of muddy stretches. An optional ascent of Nyland Hill is to be recommended to understand the workings of the Somerset Levels. A good walk for nature-lovers, with much wildlife to be seen.

On the bend in the road by St Leonards's church, cross the stone stile and walk ahead to a kissing gate. *This old gate marked the crossing point of the Yatton to Wells railway. Opened in 1870, a variety of goods were carried, but it became so heavily used by the strawberry growers of the Cheddar area that the line became known as the 'Strawberry Line'. The line finally closed, after years of decline, in 1963.*

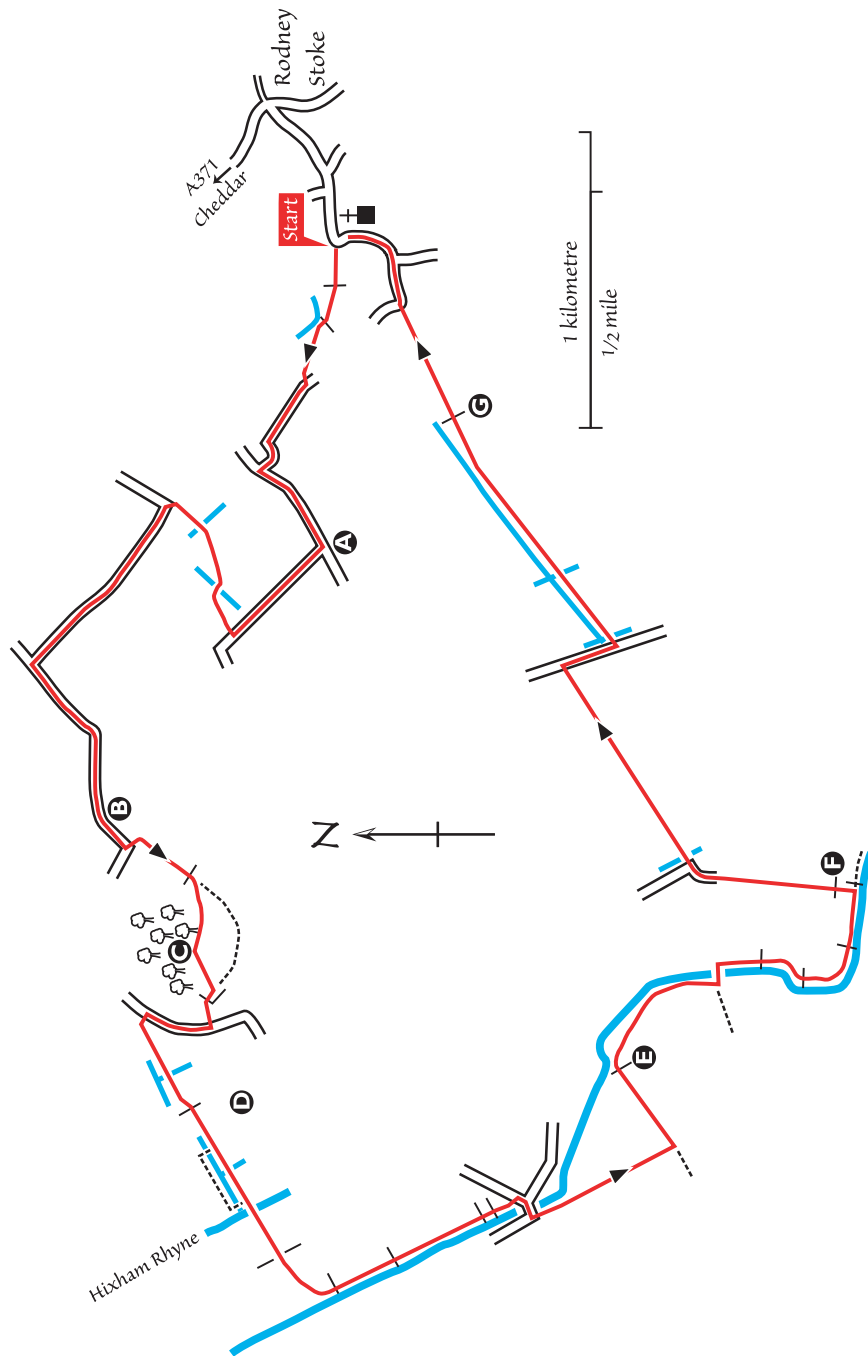
Beyond the gate, go half-right to a stile with stream to your right. Cross the field diagonally, aiming for the white house where you cross a further stile to reach a road. Walk right and follow the road to a T-junction **A**. Turn left, then right at the next junction, the road soon becoming a poorly surfaced lane. (Look in the ditches

for the white Little Egrets that have made this area their home in recent years.) Just before a left bend, go through a metal field gate on the right between stone pillars, then go half-right over boggy ground to a footbridge. Cross, then go half-left to another bridge by an electricity pole. Beyond here, go ahead to a kissing gate and lane beyond. Turn left, following the tarmac with sewage works to your left, to a junction with a road. Turn left, following this road and passing Batts Farm on the left **B** then at a sharp right bend, go left along a track signed Rookery Farm.

The track bears right, passing a couple of cottages, then starting to climb with Nyland Hill up to your right. Beyond a field gate, you reach the open hillside. You have a choice of climbing up to the right to reach the summit **C** or contouring around the hill.

*Nyland Hill is one of the few highpoints that rise up out of the Somerset Levels. It would have been an important place of refuge when a sudden flood devastated the area in 1607. In earlier times, the hill belonged to Glastonbury Abbey. In the pre-Norman period, it is thought to have had a chapel and probably a hermitage. At this time, it would have been surrounded by marshland. From the summit of Nyland Hill, there are fine views over the Somerset Levels. Looking southwest, a medieval duck decoy can be seen **D**. When the Levels were drained (drainage ditches can be seen covering most of the fields) the abundance of wildfowl, an important source of meat and feathers, decreased. From the seventeenth century, a number of these decoys were built to attract and catch wildfowl. This one has a roughly square pool with six channels or 'pipes' leading off, where the birds were caught.*





Leave the hillside via a stile by a field gate, then follow the track down to a further stile and road beyond. Turn right and keep to the road as far as the next farm, where a signed path directs you left, through a pair of field gates. Walk ahead across the pasture and over a footbridge, then continue in the same direction. Notice the meandering depression to your right.

This is the original course of the River Axe, thought to have been diverted sometime before the seventeenth century into a straight, four-mile channel further to the south as part of the ongoing drainage programme.

Pass through a metal field gate and cross a ditch, then continue ahead keeping to the right boundary to cross stiles and footbridge in the far right corner. (Note that in late summer, this crossing is likely to be impassable due to an overgrowth of brambles. If this is the case, retrace your route to a gate on the left, go through and turn left. Now keep to the ditch on your left to reach a gate where you turn left again, regaining the original route at Hixam Rhyne.) Keep in the same direction now towards gates where you cross Hixam Rhyne, and onwards to a gap in the hedge in the opposite boundary. From here, veer left across the pasture to reach a large watercourse. This channel carries the diverted River Axe.

Walk with the channel on your right, going through two gates and climbing a stile. Beyond the next gate, you pass farm buildings on your left as you continue ahead to a road. Turn right, crossing a bridge, then go immediately left on a track to Cricklade Farm. Follow the track for some distance beyond the farm buildings until you reach a T-junction where you turn left and walk to a gate and waymarked stile **E**.

Beyond here, follow an increasingly muddy track right, with the watercourse merging on the left. Continue to a footbridge, cross and turn right, walking with the channel on your right. (This stretch is a favourite haunt of kingfishers.) Continue past a redundant stile, and on, going through three gates within gates and keeping the watercourse to your right. Before the fourth gate, look left for a metal field gate at the end of a track **F**. Make for this and go through to Whitesome's Drove. Follow this track, passing barriers and gates with farm building to your left, then beyond a house on the right, bear right with the track then as it goes left, leave it to turn right, going over a bridge. Now follow a broad track with the Mendip hills ahead in the distance. When you reach a lane, turn right and walk as far as a waymarked footbridge on the left. Cross, then walk ahead aiming for Rodney Stoke church tower, visible in the distance. Keep on in the same direction, crossing a couple of footbridges then heading towards a gate in the middle of the far boundary **G**. In this final field, cross to a gate and stile with a road beyond. Walk ahead, crossing the railway bridge, then follow the road round to your starting point at the church.



Walk 21 – Monkton Farleigh

Start Brown's Folly Nature Reserve car park (ST797663).

Distance 7.5 miles.

Refreshments The 'Kings Arms' mid-point of walk. Swann Inn before Point F (Closed Mondays)

Getting there A4 Batheaston bypass, east of Bath, turning right at roundabout onto the A363. In a short distance, fork left, signed Bathford and follow ascending road through village. There are two sets of traffic calming chicanes along this road and beyond the second set, look right for easy-to-miss road, Prospect Place. (The turn is just before double blue garage doors on the right.) Follow this narrow, steep road uphill to small car park on the right.

An undulating ramble along woodland and field path (muddy after rain), and quiet country lanes. The walk passes through a nature reserve containing the remnants of Bath Stone quarries and mines, used in later years for military purposes. Monkton Farleigh is reached mid-point of the walk, a pretty village of Cotswold Stone dwellings with a fine, historic pub.

From the car park information board, take the path up the hill, climbing steps and following the 'Pepperpot Trail' waymarks. At the top of the steps, turn right and follow a generally level path passing assorted mine workings and quarries, eventually going through a kissing gate to reach an open area. There are fine views from here

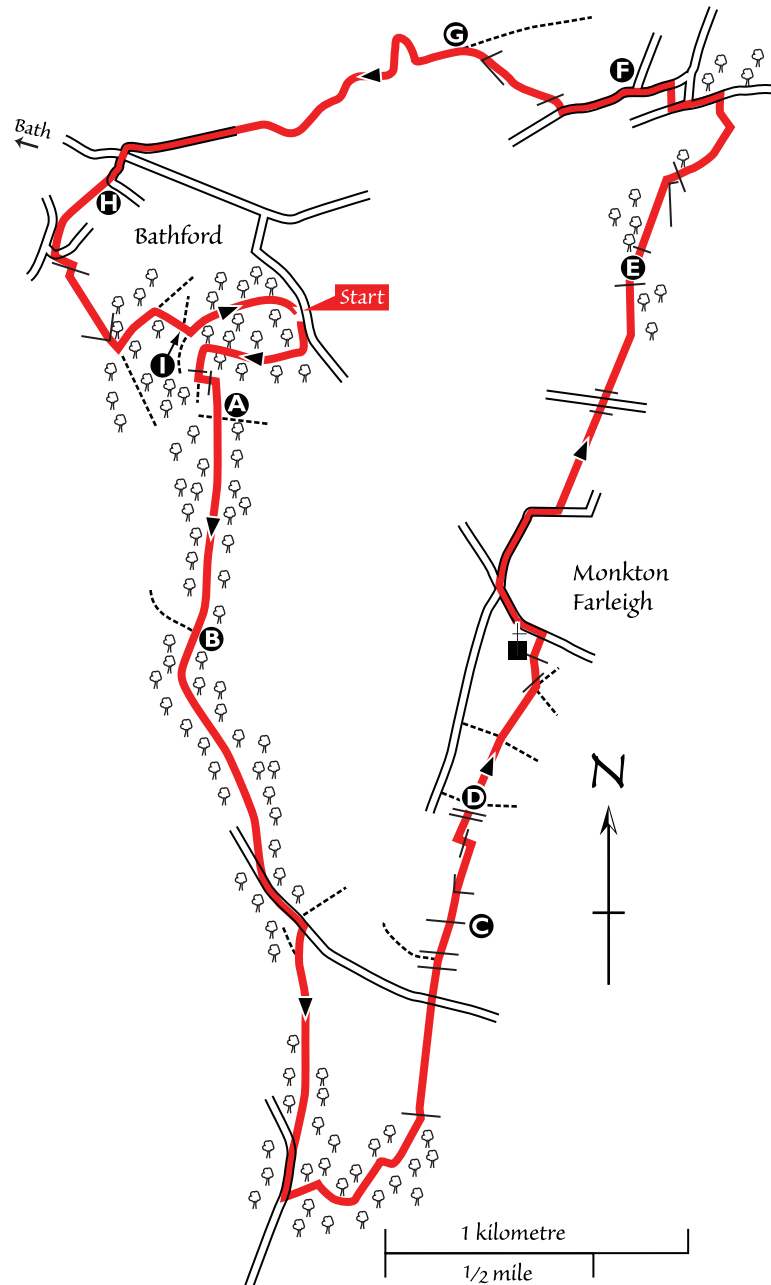
over the Avon Valley. Take the steps up to the left, pass through a further gate, then turn right, walking with the fence on your right to reach Brown's Folly **A**.

Built of Bath Stone by Mr Wade-Brown, the owner of the mines you have just passed, it was intended to advertise the quality of his stone at a time when the fortunes of his company were in decline. The mines took on a new lease of life in the 1930s when work began to create the largest ammunition depot in Europe. Started approximately in 1936, and used right until the 1950's, the expenditure in the 1940's alone is estimated to be in the region of 49 million pounds, (roughly £5 billion today). The site was enormous, covering 80 acres underground and housing over 12 million tons of ammunition. Part of this complex is used today by a company specialising in the safe (underground) storage of documents.

Continue in the same direction, abandoning the 'Pepperpot Trail' that descends right **B** and eventually climbing a stile to reach a road. Turn left and walk with care along the road to 'Dry Arch House'. Cross the road here and take a descending footpath a little further on the right, just before reaching Wiltshire! Ignore a path going back to the right, but continue to an open area, where there are more great views towards Claverton and the American Museum beyond.

Keep on this path to reach a quiet road. Walk ahead as far as a metal gate and footpath sign on the left. Take this path and follow it, ignoring turnings right and left, until you finally bear left at a waymark to reach a gate and stile. Beyond, walk ahead, hedge right, to a road. Cross to a farm gate and climb the stile on the left. Walk up the drive, over another stile, then pass the farm house on the left and climb another stile, ignoring a waymarked gate on the left by the cottage. Walk ahead over the pasture with wooden railings on your left to reach a further stile **C** where you cross into the next field. Continue ahead to the nearest corner of the next field, then keep in the same direction with the boundary to your left. Climb the stile in the top left corner to enter a paddock, then walk for a short distance, hedge right, to climb two stiles and proceed to a farm track **D**.

Cross the cropped and unsigned field ahead aiming for the furthest power pole at the far side, beyond which you drop down to a roughly surfaced track at a bend. Follow the track ahead, houses left, paddocks right. When you reach a footpath sign go left, through a kissing gate in the hedge to enter a small field. Go diagonally across to a stile in the far corner, climb this and follow the narrow path ahead with Monkton Farleigh church on the left, to reach a road. Turn left and walk along the road to a junction. You need to go right here, but a short distance ahead is The Kings Arms, a magnificent 11th century building, that makes a useful mid-walk refreshment stop.



So, back to the right turn, signed Kingsdown and Bath. Follow this road as it bends right, then just beyond the barns, go through a metal kissing gate on the left. Walk ahead, boundary right, to a stile, climb over and proceed to the road. Cross, climb a further stile, then continue in the same direction. After the next stile, you pass beneath power lines **E** then a little further, you pick up woodland to your left. Keep an eye on the waymark arrows that soon direct you over to the right, towards a stone boundary wall. At its corner, follow it right to climb a stile by a gate, then go ahead with the boundary on the left, picking up a track that leads to a road.

Walk left with care passing the Swan Inn, then just beyond, take a path descending steeply to a lower road. Follow the road left, passing Wormcliffe Lane on the right **F**. Stay on the road for a further 300 yards, then take a driveway on the right signed Ashley Road. Pass through a gate and continue downhill, soon on a field-edge path, keeping the boundary on your left. At the bottom of the field, the path veers left, follow it to reach a bridleway **G**. Turn left and follow this muddy, twisting route that eventually becomes a surfaced road, leading you to the main road at Bathford.

Turn sharp left, then right into Dovers Park. In a short distance, just before the school **H** take a tarmac path on the right and walk with the school and its playing fields to your left. As this path turns left, go straight on over grass with bungalows on the left. Continue, passing lockup garages, to reach a road. Go left here, cross the road, then take the signed footpath up, alongside properties with a hedge to your right. When you reach a stile on the right, climb over and head across the field to the far top corner where you climb a stile to enter the nature reserve.

Take the path up to the left, ignoring the one ahead. Follow this undulating path until you reach a waymark post on the left, and here, take a minor path to the right, keeping on it as it climbs through trees to a set of steps. Follow these, ever upward, passing another set joining from the left. A few yards further, you pass a white waymark post on the right that confirms your location **I**. Continue to climb until you reach a broad cross-path. Go left and follow this path without deviation to arrive at your starting point.



Walk 22 – Goytre Wharf

Start Goytre Wharf car park (SO311064).

Distance 8 miles.

Refreshments Cafe at Goytre Wharf, start/end of walk.

Getting there Goytre Wharf lies on the Old Abergavenny Road, north of Pontypool and west of the A4042. From the A4042 take the turning north signed Mamhilad. Pass through the village, then two miles further look for the signed entrance on the right.

A superb walk of hilltop, woodland and canal path, visiting a Roman road, an old industrial landscape and a spring with a legend. two lengthy, but gentle climbs. A visit to the small museum at the start sets the scene for the walk. Allow around 4 hours plus stops.

The Brecon to Newport canal was built between 1797 and 1812. This area has become very popular over the past few years, so much of the historic atmosphere has been lost, but the small museum is worth a visit to learn of the canal's history. Old limekilns and the Lengthsman's cottage still exist, as well as other relics from a more industrial past.

From the car park, go left and follow the road to the canal. Your route now lies down the path, passing the limekilns on the right, and going under the bridge **A**. Beyond here, turn left and take steps up to the canal, then turn left along the towpath, walking with the canal on your right. You now have a couple of miles of level walking, passing under a number of bridges, some carrying roads, others just farm tracks. The bridges are numbered (on the

reverse side from the direction you are walking). You first pass beneath number 74. Just after number 65, you pass a cottage fronting the towpath. You leave the canal beyond the next bridge, number 64, climbing a stone stile on the left, and then crossing the bridge **B**.

Go through the first gate on the left, entering a field, and then walk diagonally across to the far top corner where you cross a stile and footbridge into a further field. Walk ahead along the right boundary, at the far side crossing a stream by footbridge, then negotiating a boggy area to reach a meadow with a farmhouse ahead. Go half right, over rough ground to climb a stile by a gate. Now walk ahead to a further gate with barns off to the left **C**. Go through the gate and walk half-left to pick up a grass track, passing trees surrounding a hollow. The track leads you up to stile beside an old gate, negotiate that, then continue upwards in the next field to reach the trees **D**.

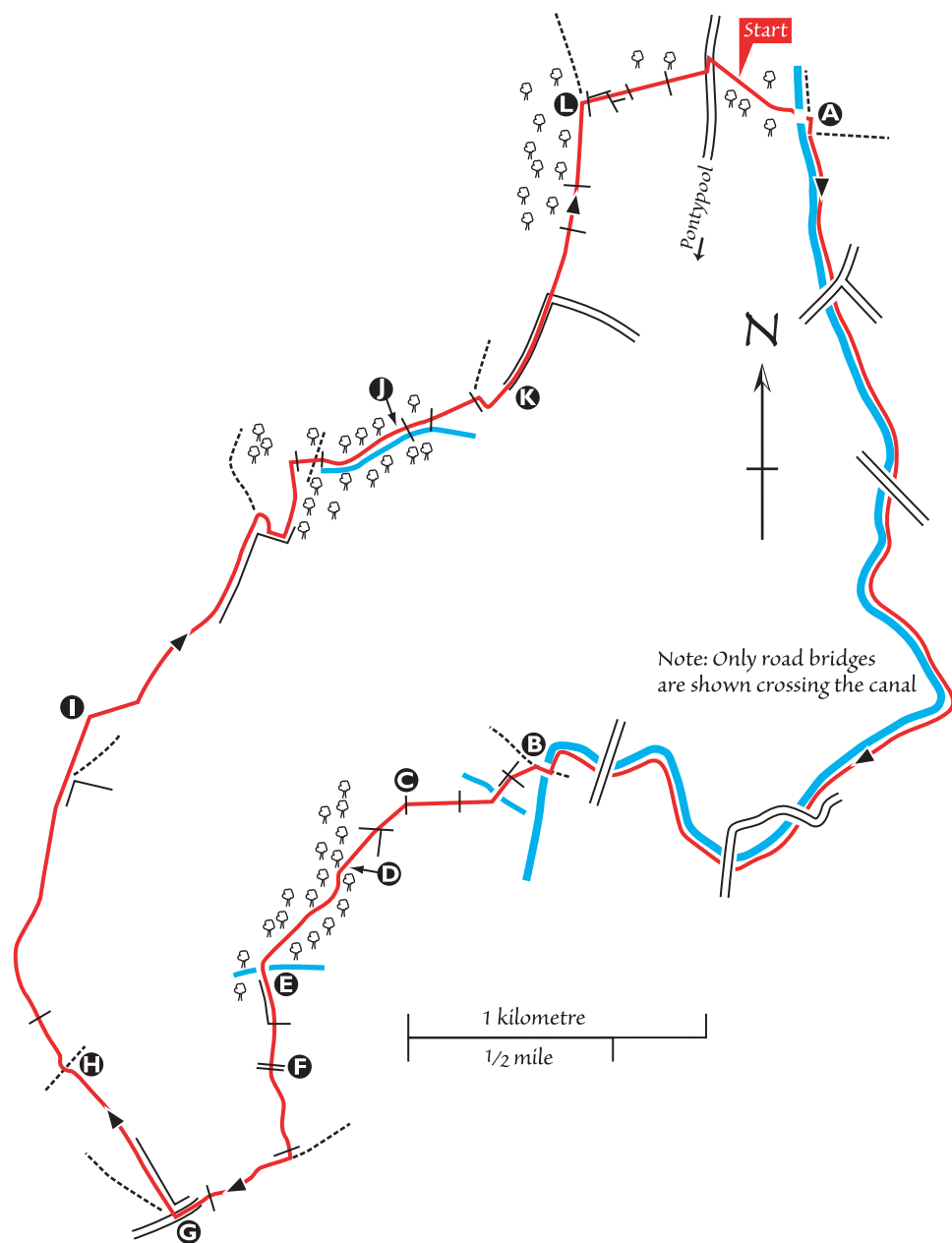
Follow the top of the field looking for a path that slants up into the woodland, just as the ground drops away ahead of you and marked by a wooden post with a waymark. The path climbs steadily in the same direction, with occasional waymarks and eventually, you should hear the sound of running water. Cross the stream and climb the stile ahead, then walk up through the trees, veering left, to a field **E**.

Here, there are two fields separated by an old hedge boundary. You need to be in the lower one so you can walk ahead with the boundary on your right. Pass through to a further field and keep to the top of this one to reach a gate **F**. Go through, and soon through another, then look for the waymark post ahead and down a little. Follow the arrow, passing through another old field boundary and continuing your descent towards conifers, then look ahead for a stile near the bottom of the field.

Climb the stile to a cobbled track. This is thought to be the remains of a Roman road, now despoiled by motorcyclists. Follow the track upwards until you reach a gate. Pass through and continue to a tarmac driveway, then follow this ahead to a car park on the left **G**.

A little further beyond the car park stands the Folly Tower. The original tower was constructed in the 1760s by a local landowner who owned Pontypool Park, above which the folly stands. It was renovated in 1831 and as it provided a vantage point over the local area, it quickly became popular with visitors. Being open to the elements, it began to fall into a state of disrepair during the late 1930s, and in 1940, the War Office ordered that as a security measure, the folly should be demolished. This was in the belief that its presence would be a landmark for the Luftwaffe seeking to raid the nearby Royal Ordnance Factory. After several abortive attempts to get the folly rebuilt, work finally got underway in 1990 and it was officially opened in 1994.

At the car park, turn right and head uphill, keeping the boundary wall to your right. After a short climb, you descend to cross the driveway to a house, off to the right **H**. Cross over and climb again to a stile in a gate, and then continue upwards, keeping to



the right. As the wall on the right bends to the right, strike out towards the highest point where you will arrive at a trig. point **I**. There are fine views from here – to the left, across the valley, you can see the remains of the Abersychan open cast mine. Your route from here lies down to the right (east) and off the ridge path. In summer, you have to blaze a trail through the bracken to reach a lower path – the one you were on when following the line of the wall. On reaching this, go left, soon reaching boundary walls on your right. Keep with these for a few hundred yards to pass the wall corner. Beyond here, go right at the first junction, which doubles back.

It's worth mentioning that the rights of way on the OS map are incompatible with the paths on the ground in this area. Having walked this on a number of occasions, I was surprised to see on one visit, a route carved straight down the hillside a few yards beyond this junction. If this is still clear, take it to reach the trees and fence at the bottom of the hill. If it is overgrown, follow the track mentioned in the last paragraph!

Follow this track down to a farm gate. Don't go through, but turn left, downhill, keeping to the right boundary. Bear left with it, ignoring a stile and gate on the right and passing beneath ancient beech trees. At the bottom corner of the field climb a stile on the right, then continue downhill to reach a cross-track. Go left, then immediately right on an overgrown path, to continue your descent in the same direction, and climbing another stile, then with a stream on your right, reaching the 'Holy Well' on the left **I**.

The 'well' is fed by water from a spring on the slope above, and issues from a square stone structure in the side of the hill, flowing into a stony pool. A Mr Thomas Thomas of Cardiff visited the well in 1890 and described as a Medieval wishing well, finding pins, slate pencil stubs and buttons that had been tossed in by visitors making a wish. However, the well was in place long before that. It probably held some religious significance in pre-Christian times, and the Romans legions who came to this area would have been aware of it.

To continue, climb a stile and follow the path down to another stile giving access to a field. Climb diagonally across the grassland to a stile – not the one immediately visible – but a lower one hidden in the trees ahead. (It doesn't matter if you go for the higher one, it just means extra climbing.) Beyond the stile, take the path down to the right, soon bending left with a fence and gardens beyond. This path drops down to a tarmac lane with the gate to a property immediately right **K**. Follow the lane left, going ahead at a junction and passing a cottage up to the left before going through a gate ahead. Continue, over a stile, then follow the wooded path until you reach a stile on the right, next to a farm gate **L**.

Climb over into a field, then follow the left boundary to climb further stiles, keeping in the same direction to reach a road. Go left, then in a few yards right, at the entrance for Goytre Wharf. Follow the road back to the car park.



Walk 23 – Maes Knoll

Start Car park on Dundry Down (ST556668).

Distance 8 miles.

Refreshments Dundry Inn at start/finish.

Getting there There are several routes to the starting point on Dundry Down. For those unfamiliar with the area, take the A38 out of the city, turning left into Dundry Lane just before a reservoir on the right. Follow the lane up to the church where you turn right at T-junction. Car park on right just before left bend on Dundry Down.

An energetic walk from the outskirts of the City, deep into the Somerset countryside. You will be rewarded with some of the best views over the city and beyond as well as a fine vista south from an Iron-Age fort. A couple of climbs, numerous stiles and a few locked gates to scramble over, but well worth the effort! Allow four hours plus stops.

From the car park, go down the road towards the church and at the road junction, turn left and walk down the hill, forking right by the letterbox into Hill Road. Already, you have dramatic views north across the city and beyond. Where the tarmac ends, continue beyond two sets of metal barriers to reach a gate **A**. Go through, then walk with a hedge to your right. As you approach a road ahead, go through a gate and climb over a bank to reach the road. Cross over and follow the lane ahead in the same direction to reach Broad Oak Hill, where you go straight ahead along Middleway Lane.

Pass through metal gates and over a stile into a field, then go ahead to climb another. Now walk in the same direction with the hedge on the left, soon passing an Ordnance Survey trig. point in the undergrowth **B**. In the far corner of the field, descend left to climb a stile, then cross to another in the far hedge. In the next field, go ahead to a corner then walk with the hedge on your right to reach a stile on the right **C**. Climb over and walk with the high hedge to your left almost to the top corner of the field where you climb a stile on the left. Continue with the hedge on your left to reach a stile giving access to a track.

Cross the track and climb a stile on to Woodland Trust site (Mannings Wood). Follow the path ahead as it curves to the right and in a few yards you arrive at a spring issuing forth from hillside **D**. Here is the source of the Malago Brook. Stop awhile and read the inscriptions in the stonework.

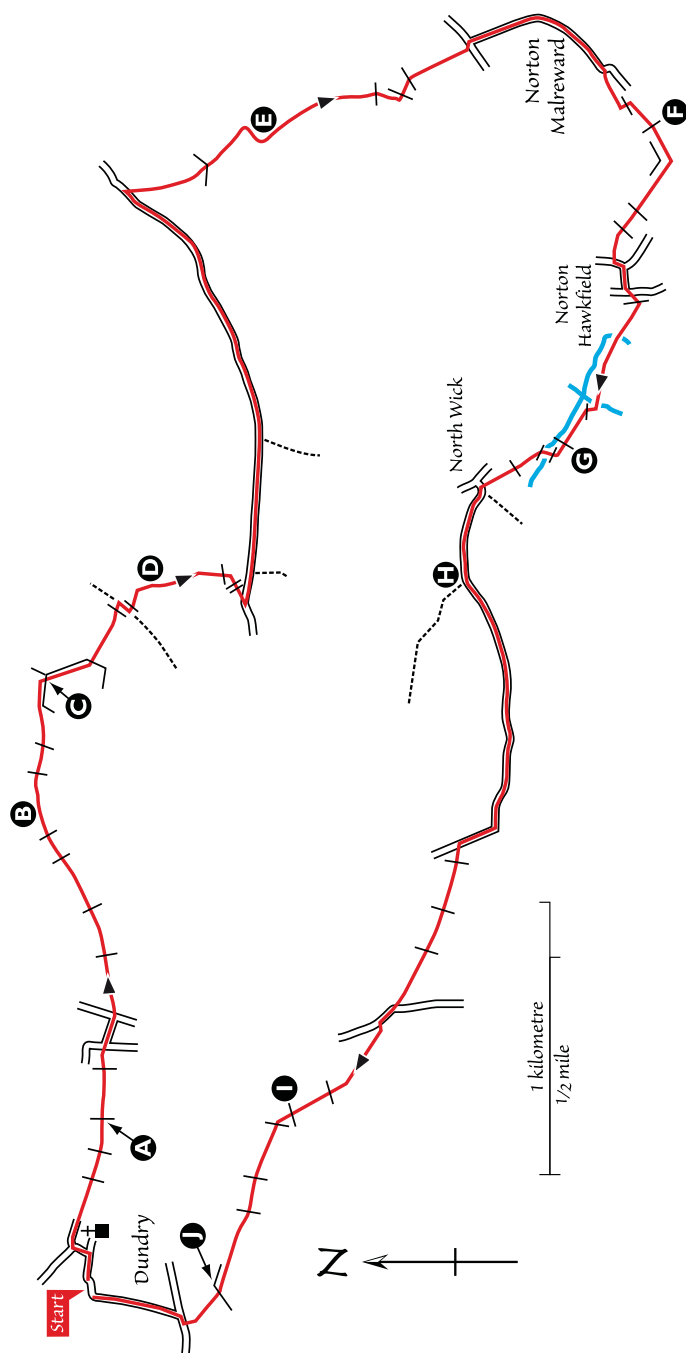
The Malago is a tributary of the Bristol Avon. The river's course has been much altered in the past and much of it has been culverted and diverted into storm drains as it flows beneath Bedminster into Bristol Docks.

Continue now across the stream, climb the hill and walk with plantation to your right then a hedge. Keep on this path to a gate and stile, go over stile turn right and follow track. Climb two gates to reach a metal barrier by the lane. Turn left and follow the lane for a mile, the monotony of the tarmac being relieved by fine views to the north and south, where Chew Valley Lake dominates.

You have been climbing gently along this lane and now, when you begin the descent, look right for a waymarked gate as the road bends right (just beyond a field entrance on the right). Go through and follow the path contouring the top edge of the field to another gate in the far top corner. Beyond, walk left with woodland left, then go right between the fields following the ramparts **E** soon veering left again and now following the right side of Maes Knoll, an Iron Age hill fort, from where you get a fine, if windswept, view.

Maes Knoll covers over 20 acres and is thought to have been built around 250BC by a branch of the Celtic Dobbuni tribe. It was built for defensive purposes and consists of a fairly large flat open area, roughly triangular in shape, that has been fortified by ramparts and shaping of the steep sided hilltop around the northern, eastern and southwestern sides of the hill.

You will enter at the western end of the fort, made across a narrow neck of the ridge of high land, and consisting of a massive ditch and bank, known as 'The Tump', around 15 metres high from the ditch to the top. To the east from this fort can be made out sections of the western end of Wansdyke, which is usually thought to start, or terminate



here at this fort. The views from here on a clear day are remarkable, north to Bristol, east to Bath and the Cotswold Hills, and south over Chew Lake and the Mendips.

Walk the length of the fort following the ridge to a gate. Go through and then as the ground ahead drops away cross the field to a gate in the hedge on the left, follow path to a wooden seat which makes a good picnic spot with fine views over the valley. Go through the gate below the seat and follow path downhill with field boundary on right to reach the road. Go left and immediately right to Norton Malreward.

Continue through the village, then beyond Chalk Farm Close, go through a kissing gate on the right, just before a left bend (Waymarked as the Forest of Avon Community Forest Path). Walk to another kissing gate on the left by a path diversion, pass through and continue, following the waymarks beneath trees, to another gate **F**. Keep on the waymarked path, fence right, around the field and through a field gate to enter Park Farm. Go straight ahead through another gate and into the farmyard. Waymarks direct you half-left, between the barns to a kissing gate. At the lane beyond, go left then immediately right. Follow the lane, taking a rough track on the left to a junction where you cross and go through kissing gate.

Follow waymarks to the field corner and another gate, after which go right following a well-defined path with fence to the right. Cross a footbridge and continue, to cross another near the right corner of the field. Now go through a gate and walk with the stream on the right to cross another short bridge with two gates **G**. Look now for a footbridge on the right, go over, then in the meadow beyond follow a well-defined path half-left to a further gate and onward, through another to reach a lane. Walk left, keeping to the road as it bears right, and continue to Yewtree Farm on the right **H**. Footpaths beyond the farm are cropped in summer and deeply ploughed in winter, and an absence of waymarks make for hard going, so continue the laborious climb up the road, eventually reaching a sharp right bend. A short distance further, pass through a kissing gate on the left, then cross to the gate opposite.

Now continue to a stile ahead, and keep on this course, over a further stile to reach a road. Walk right for a short distance then cross to a stile up to the left, beyond which, walk with the hedge on your right to the top corner of the field to a further gate. Now walk towards the telecom tower and climb the stile on the left of the compound **I**. The following short path gets very overgrown, but soldier on between wire fences to a driveway. Cross the stile ahead to a meadow then walk left with hedge on the left, through an old wooden gate and further meadow. Continue on to a metal gate that you must climb, then onward with hedge on your right. When you reach the field corner **J** take the track between houses to a road, Winford Lane. Turn right, then left into Downs Road, which will lead you back to your starting point.



Walk 24 – Box Hill

Start Box – Selwyn Hall car park (ST823686).

Distance 8 miles.

Refreshments Quarryman's Arms on Box Hill, mid-point of walk.

Getting there A4 east from Bath. On reaching traffic lights at Box, keep left on the A4. In a few yards pass 'The Bear' pub then look for a turning left, Valense Terrace, and a sign to Selwyn Hall. Follow this driveway to the recreation ground car park.

A gem of a walk along riverbank and through woodland, passing manor houses and hamlets in hidden combs. A couple of ascents – nothing too strenuous. Allow about four hours.

Walk back to the main road and turn left, passing through the town. The road crosses the railway with Brunel's dramatic tunnel portal on the right. Continue a little further, turning left at a footpath sign at 'The Bassets'. Take the right fork and pass through wooden gates at the end of the lane, then follow footpath signs bearing right to a stile. Cross to enter a field, then go ahead, exiting the field via another stile. Now go diagonally left, walking with fence on the right and a bungalow down to the left. Climb a stile by a metal gate **A** into another field. Continue with the fence on your right to a further stile, beyond which, follow the well-worn path as it descends to another stile. Walk the length of the following meadow, to the far left corner where you climb a stile, then go ahead keeping left through a farm complex **B**. Turn left at

the farm drive and go ahead crossing the brook via a bridge. A short distance further, you come to a fork, go right, towards Saltbox Farm.

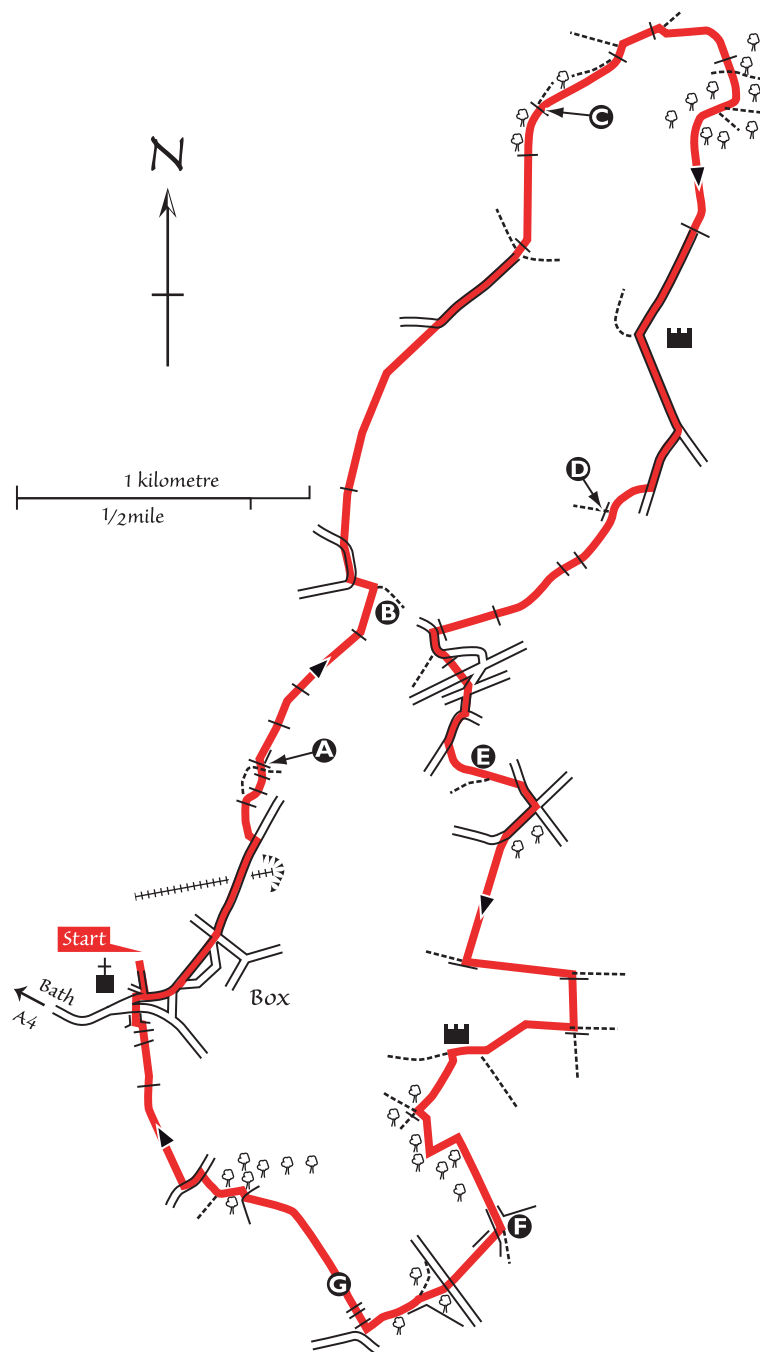
As you reach the farm, the lane bears left. Go right here, through the left-hand of a pair of field gates with the 'Macmillan Way' waymark. In this meadow, go right to cross a ditch, then walk with the ditch on your left and the brook right. At the far end of the meadow, go through a gate and continue ahead, keeping in touch with the brook on your right, and aiming towards farm buildings. An electric fence often crosses this field, if this is the case, pass through the adjoining gate and continue to the far boundary. Here, go through the gate to reach a lane. Follow the tarmac ahead, passing a farm on the left, and then the driveway to Widdenham Farm House on the right. Here, ignore the track up to the left but continue a short distance further to where the lane descends sharp right. There is a stile ahead, climb this, then contour the hillside with the brook down to your right. At the far send of the meadow, go through a gate and continue on to the next gate **C** where you take the lower, right-hand path.

You are now walking with fences either side, and these lead you to a further gate, beyond which, cross the brook and continue to a metal gate. Go through and follow the track up to the right, passing through another gate and into woodland. Ignore tracks left and right, some gated, but continue, eventually emerging from the wood. There are fine views now across the valley to the tower of Colerne church, a mile or so to the west. When you reach a gate, go through to join a lane and follow this, ignoring a track on the right as the lane bends left, to reach Rudloe Manor.

Officially occupied until recently by the R.A.F., Rudloe Manor, a listed 17th century house was once home to the Defence Communications Network and one of several sensitive military installations sited in the area.

Passing the manor, continue for 300 yards then take the lane on the right. Walk downhill passing Folly Cottage, then on reaching a farm entrance, veer right and follow the narrow bridleway between the farm boundary left, and fields right. (Note: there are noisy dogs in the farm garden.) Ignore a stile on the right **D** and continue, going through a gate then in a short distance, another. Keep on, passing through a further two gates before descending to a lane where you turn left. In a short distance at a kink in the lane, look for steps ahead and climb to a stile. Beyond, walk up the field, boundary right, to reach a road.

Cross this busy road with care and climb the steps opposite, then continue your ascent along Barnetts Hill, keeping right at junctions to reach the 'Quarryman's Arms, a good refreshment stop.



The building was originally a number of Quarrymen's cottages in the early 18th Century, before being converted into a public house in the 1850's.

To continue, with the pub on your right, take the lane forking left, passing 'The Old Post Office' then bearing left with cottages left. The lane becomes a path and at **E** you pass huge disused quarry, now the location of an extended garden with tennis courts, workers toiled here in the 1830s providing stone for Brunel's railway tunnel. Continue on, ignoring a path joining from the right, to eventually reach a road. Turn right and walk for a short distance to a junction where you go right again. Walk for 150 yards to a bend in the road where you pass through a kissing gate on the left into a field. Follow the path across the field to the far side, then turn left, walking with the wall on your right. Look for a gap in this wall after about 400 yards and go through, following the clear path across this further field and onto a driveway at the far side.

This is the driveway to Hazelbury Manor, a sprawling Elizabethan house occasionally open to the public. Walk right, along the drive passing a green barn and entering the manor grounds. Follow the driveway to the right and with the house now ahead, go left, passing a pond on the left then an enclosure where Golden Guernsey goats, a



Golden Guernsey goats at Hazelbury Manor

vulnerable rare breed, can sometimes be seen. Beyond here, fork left at a bridleway sign and follow the descending track to a junction with gate and stile ahead. Ignore these, but turn left and cross the bridge with a pond on your left. The track climbs, going left then round to the right, eventually reaching an open area of grassland with paths left and right^F. Continue ahead for a short distance, then climb a stile concealed in the hedge on the right and walk downhill keeping with the right boundary. At the bottom, go up via steps and a stile to reach a road.

Cross with care, going slightly left to a footpath sign to enter woodland. Follow a path up to the right where you will meet a sunken track, that you drop down into. Continue your ascent left, bearing right at a high wall and soon passing a new, Cotswold stone house. When you reach Blue Vein Farm, turn right just before it and follow the clear waymarks through a gate, then ahead to climb stiles in a fence and a stone wall.

You are now in a large field^G. Walk ahead on a gradually descending route, aiming left of the water tower on the distant horizon. As you near the bottom of the field, alter course for the lowest, left corner where you will find a stile in the wire fence. Cross and descend left, through woodland to reach a grass path. Follow this between cottages ignoring paths left and right, to reach a tarmac path with 'Washwell Cottage'



Brunel's Box tunnel. Just under two miles in length, it opened in 1841

on your left. Climb ahead to a road and turn left. Follow the road uphill for a short distance, then go right, over a stile, just before reaching the houses.

Follow the path between fields with the town of Box becoming visible down to your right. When you reach a stile by a gate, climb over, then follow the descending path to a market garden, climbing the metal barrier and continuing down to the greenhouses. Pass these, climbing a stile, then veer left to a narrow path between walls leading to a road. Cross over and follow the path ahead to a lower road, the High Street. Cross to Valense Terrace and the car park.



Walk 25 – Lansdown

Lansdown

Start Lay-by on the Wick–Bath Road near the Grenville Monument (ST721702).

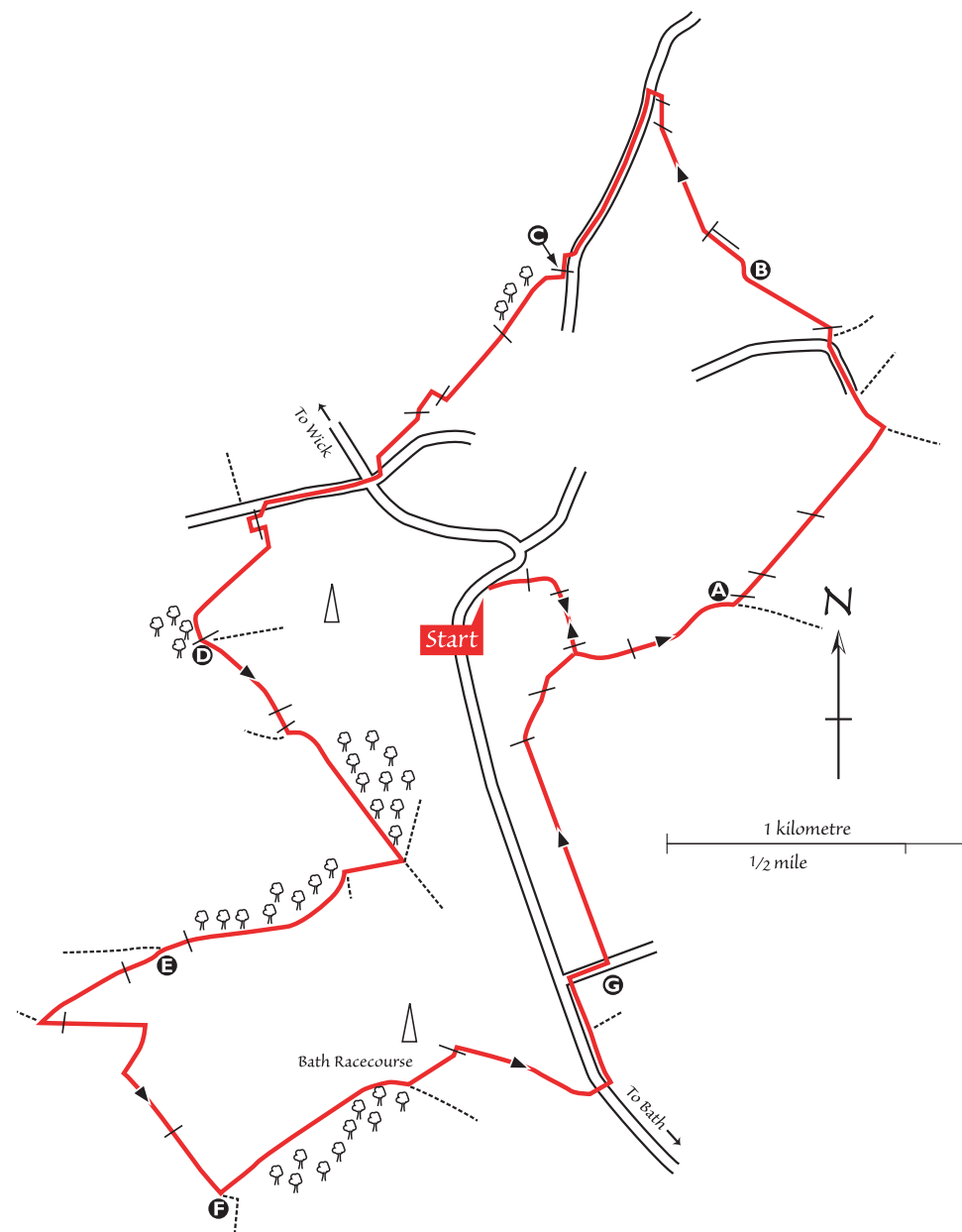
Distance 8.25 miles

Refreshments 'The Blathwayt' pub by the racecourse, 3/4 distance.

Getting there From Bristol, A420 to Wick, then right onto the bath road, signed Lansdown Park & Ride. At top of hill, park in rough lay-by on left by Grenville Monument information boards. From Bath, follow the road passing Bath racecourse, continuing on level road to lay-by on right, just before right-hand downhill bend.

An undulating walk from secluded valleys to breezy hilltops, taking in much of the Lansdown battlefield site and passing the row of beech trees that are a well-known hilltop landmark seen for miles around. A couple of steep climbs, plus 700 yards of dangerous road walking! Many fine views, so choose a clear day, and allow up to 4 hours.

From the lay-by, follow the grass path to the Grenville Monument, then continue, following 'Cotswold Way' signs, over a stile and along a wooded path. Another stile brings you to grassland, keep to the wall on the left to climb a further stile, then follow the path down to the left. Beyond a gate, follow the track ahead as far as a waymark post and here, go through the kissing gate on the left **A**.



Cross the field diagonally to a further gate, then continue downhill, passing a bench and going through a gate, then continuing on with a lake visible ahead. On reaching a lane, turn left, crossing a cattle grid and starting to climb. Beyond a farm, the 'Cotswold Way' bears right, but you continue ahead up the lane to cross an old cattle grid. Go right here, through a wooden gate to a house and walk up the drive, ignoring a waymarked stile on the right but going through a field gate ahead.

Climb the field ahead, aiming diagonally to the left to pass through a waymarked gate. Turn right to follow the field boundary around the stone walls of Hamswell House **B** then picking up the right boundary to reach a stile in the top right corner of the field (you will be guided by a waymark on a telegraph pole in the middle of the field that clearly points the way). Climb the stile, and go diagonally right to reach a double stile near the far right corner of this next field. Continue in the same direction for a short distance to a further stile, then go left to the road.

You need to turn left here, and follow this road that can be very busy, for almost a half mile. There is no verge and little refuge, save that of your own making! Try walking through the shrubbery on the left as far as you can, before dropping down to the road and crossing to face the traffic. There is a blind right-hand bend to negotiate, but beyond that, a sparse hedge with field beyond could give the unprincipled walker safe passage for most of the remainder of this unpleasant stretch. At a left bend, principles give way to practicalities as you must go through the new metal gates on the right, then keep left, passing through the field boundary **C** to another field. (The legal access to this field is through an uncrossable gate!)

Safe at last, follow the right boundary of the field (the cross-field path is always cropped) to the beech trees, the row that you have seen on the horizon many times from the west – a bit of an anticlimax now. Climb a stile in the right corner of the field, then make a steep descent, passing ancient earthworks utilized during the Civil War. Keep to the right and look for a double stile in the hedge. Negotiate this, then walk down to the metal field gate, pass through, then go diagonally right to a ladder stile in the far corner of the field.

You are now on a lane at crossroads. Go straight over into Marshfield Lane and continue as far as a farm entrance on the left. Here go up to the footpath sign on the left by a barn, pass through the wooden field gate and turn left, walking with the barn on your left. Just beyond it, go left through a gate, then walk right, up the track to reach open countryside where you continue your ascent diagonally right. As the climb eases, you reach a cross-track with a gate away to your right. Crossing this track, continue on the path that will take you up the hill, passing through the hedge boundary, then climbing steeply with woodland to your right, to reach another battle information board **D**.

Pass through the kissing gate and walk ahead, keeping to the right boundary with fine views beyond. Near conifers, go through another kissing gate, then in a short distance, through a wooden gate and descend steps to a track and walk left, eventually passing woodland on the left and a golf course right. At the end of the woodland, you reach signed cross-paths. Turn right, golf course now right. By a barn, bear left, then immediately right, walking with the golfers now on the left.

At a gate, go through and walk downhill, again with superb views. On reaching a waymark post **E** fork left on a grassy path, going through a gate, then keeping with the left boundary and the high ground as far as another waymark post. Turn left, climbing to a kissing gate, then walk ahead across the field. You are crossing an ancient hill fort, turn right after crossing the remains of ramparts and ditch of the fort and continue to the field boundary where you are directed left. Walk with the right boundary, passing through a kissing gate and onto the racecourse. Continue to Prospect Stile **F** and a stunning vista, then continue, contouring the hill and keeping on a level course, aiming to the right of the radio mast and picking up the woodland boundary on the right.

As you come level with the radio mast, go left, cutting across the race course and picking up a metal fence on your left for a short distance. Cross the race course once again and head for the left end of a stone wall. Pass through a gap by a waymark post and walk with the wall and race course on your right, golf course left. Keep with the wall, passing the clubhouse and associated buildings left, to a race course entrance on the right. Now go diagonally left, through a gate to reach the road.

The Blathwayt pub is to your right, but the walk continues left, along the road, which you cross at your earliest opportunity. Walking on the grass verge, and ignoring a waymarked gate on the right, continue on, taking the first turning right. Pass the Village Hall on your left and in a short distance take the waymarked gate left **G**. Follow this path, passing a barn on your right, and continuing straight on with the fence on your right until you reach a gate. Pass through and head diagonally right across the field to another gate.

Follow the track beyond to the stile on the left that you crossed on your outward journey. Go over and retrace your footsteps back to the Grenville Monument and on to your transport.



Walk 26 – Blaize Bailey

Start Newnham, on the west bank of the River Sever (SO693120).

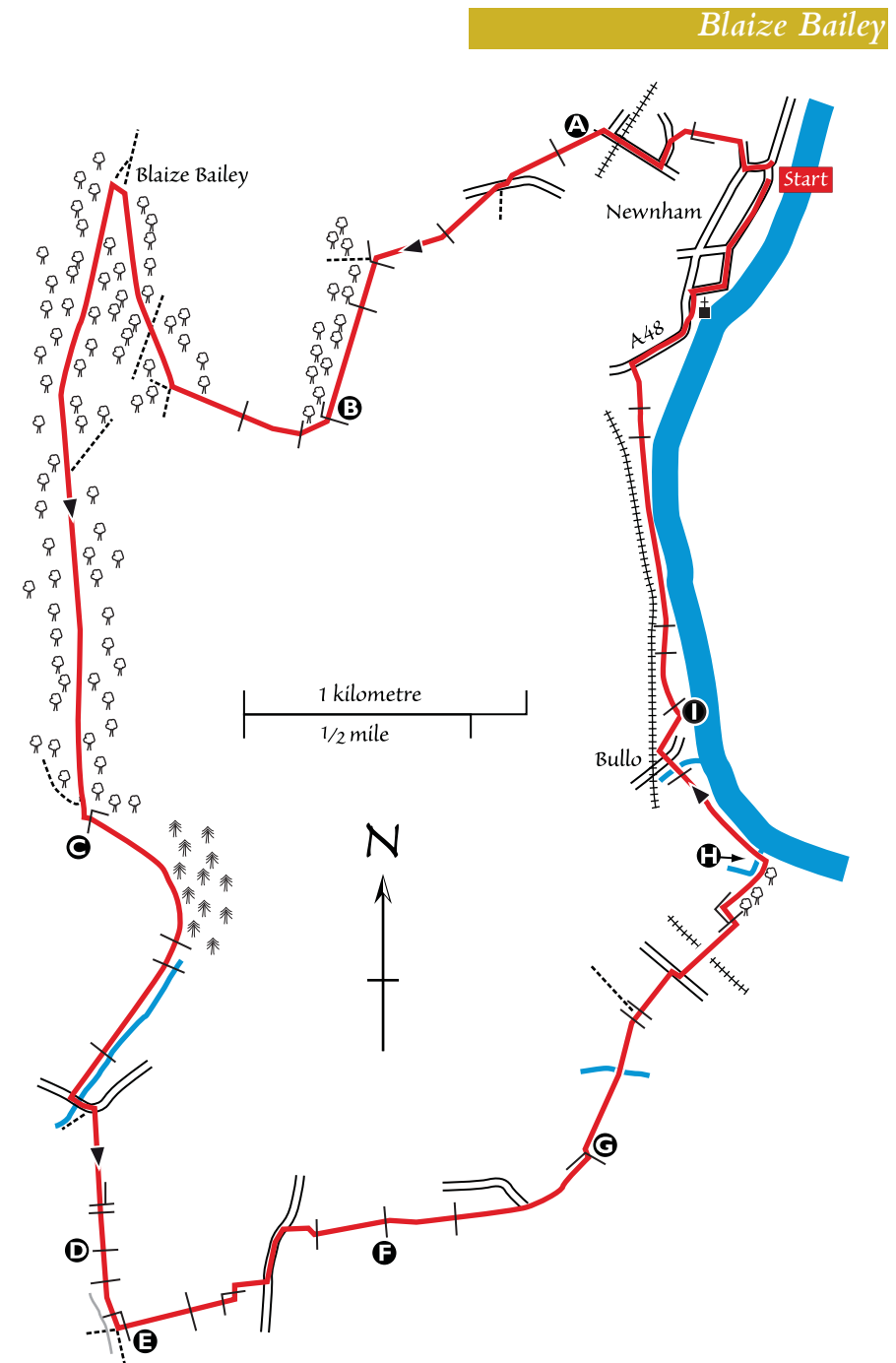
Distance 8.5 miles

Refreshments Pubs in Newnham, nothing en-route.

Getting there Cross the river using the M48, leaving at junction 2 and following signs to Chepstow. Drive through Chepstow on the A48 and continue, passing Lydney and Blakeney to reach Newnham. Follow the road through the town to a car park on the right, where the road reaches the riverbank.

A fine walk along woodland tracks and field a riverside paths with stunning views of the River Sever. A few gentle climbs and some muddy stretches Allow 4 – 4.5 hours of walking.

From the riverside car park in Newnham, walk back along the main road for a few yards towards the village, then cross and take the road on the right, Unlawater Lane. In a short distance, go left, through a kissing gate and walk with fence left, through a further kissing gate, then on, across a playground to a road – East View. Go left to a road junction where you turn right, crossing the railway and keeping left to a footpath by the side of a house where you go through a kissing gate into a field **A**.



Walk straight across, aiming well to the right of the white house, then climb a stile and in the following field continue in the same direction. Look left now, for a stile giving access to a lane that you cross to a driveway. Follow this, leaving it as it bends left to climb a stile into a field. Continue in the same direction, the well-worn path leading you up to an electricity pylon in the top left corner. Here, climb the stile on the left and walk along the field edge with woodland up to your right. Continue through a gate and on, to a stile in the top right-hand corner **B**. In the next field, go ahead for a few yards, then pick up a grass track going right, up to a further stile that you cross.

Now walk ahead, passing to the left of farm buildings and joining a track leading to a field gate. Beyond this, pass a pair of derelict cottages and continue to cross tracks. Turn right and walk to a further junction where you go ahead along the higher, left-hand track, eventually reaching the Blaize Bailey viewpoint – a suitable coffee stop. Now continue for a short distance to a junction where you double back left on a level track. Keep on this for just over a mile, most of the time gently losing height, until the track makes a U-turn round to the right. Here, follow a waymarked path ahead and climb a stile on the left **C**.



Newnham, start of the walk

Out of the woodland now, walk down the field drifting right to reach the lower fence with conifers beyond. Go right, fence left, to reach a stile. Cross, then continue, over a makeshift stile and then another by a field gate, eventually climbing a stile giving access to a lane.

Turn left and cross the bridge, then climb the stile on the right. Cross the pasture, keeping to the higher ground and climbing a stile by a gate on the far side. Continue for a short distance to climb another, then follow a level course to a stile in the fence on the far side **D**. Now continue in the same direction, climbing a further stile, then walking, fence right, to a stile by a field gate with a brook down to the right. Climb this and walk as far as a bridge on the right and here, go through the (unmarked) gate on the left **E**.

Walk straight up the hill, parallel with the left boundary, to reach a gate and stile in the top left corner. Beyond this stile, keep to the left boundary, soon going left with it to the top left corner. Here, you must climb an overgrown stile and continue up the hill, skirting the pile of rubbish and searching for an overgrown stile on the left. Negotiate this, cursing Gloucestershire Council's Highway Authority, then continue uphill to another stile and road beyond.

Cross the road and walk left. Beyond the boundary wall of the house on the right, follow a footpath between property boundaries. At the end of the path climb a stile on the left and walk ahead over grassland, keeping to the higher ground to reach a stile in the hedge on the far side of the field **F** close to the far left corner. Climb over and head straight across the following field, passing to the right of the farm sheds, then onwards, usually over crops, to climb a stile in the far hedge. Continue across the fields, aiming to the left of the farmhouse ahead and passing through a metal field gate to reach the farmyard.

Walk left through the farm, passing barns to your right, then ahead along a farm track. At the field corner **G** climb a stile and descend steps, then walk across the field, aiming for the distant farm buildings. At the far side of the field, you drop down to a squeeze stile, cross the footbridge and climb the stile beyond, then follow the waymark directing you ahead, over the hill.

Aim to the right of the green barn, to reach a field gate. Go through and walk ahead, through another gate, then down a track to a further gate with house to the right. Beyond this gate you access a lane. Turn right, and in a few yards climb the stile on the left and follow the track, crossing the railway. Continue to a stile on the left, climb over and walk down the enclosed path, following it around the edge of the coppice and eventually going left, over a footbridge and stile beyond **H**.

Now cross the meadow, passing through a field gate to reach Bullo Pill.

Bullo was originally a small tidal inlet, used for boat building, until the Forest of Dean Tramroad Company developed the area in 1810 as a port for exporting coal and stone from the Forest. A large dock basin with tidal lock gates was constructed, followed by the installation of coal chutes and wharves along the riverbank. By the 1830s there was a tramway running from Cinderford and Bullo soon became one of the most important ports in the area. In 1854, a broad-gauge branch railway line running from a newly built junction on the main Great Western Railway superseded the tramway. This increased Bullo's cargo-handling capacity and at its peak, the port was handling over 1000 tons of a day, but Bullo's trade gradually declined after 1900 as the rail network grew. The dock finally closed in 1926.

Now follow the path ahead, with millpond on the left, to reach a lane. Cross straight over and follow the narrow path alongside 'Severn View' on the right. With a stile and the railway ahead, turn right, and follow the driveway along the rear of the houses, keeping with the wall on your right as you part company with the driveway, to reach



Bullo Pill

the property 'Peace Haven' ❶. Go through the kissing gate and follow the path around the property, then through two further gates, with the railway left and river right.

As the railway veers away left, go ahead through a gate to a track, and on, beyond a kissing gate, along a farm drive to reach the main road. Go right here, along the footpath, to reach Newnham churchyard.

There are fine views from this elevated position, across the Severn towards Arlingham. Until the late 1940s, a ferry crossed the river from The Nab, just below the church, to Passage Pill on the Arlingham side.

Follow the path through the church grounds to reach the main gate at the top of the High Street. Turn right here, down Church Road, and follow this without deviation, eventually regaining the bank of the Severn, and your car park.



Walk 27 – Wick & Hinton

Start The Bull Inn, Hinton, parking after permission obtained (ST735768).

Distance 9 miles.

Refreshments The Bull Inn (start/end) and the Cross House Inn (passed twice, before/after mid point).

Getting there A420 east to Boyd Bridge (just before Wick). Turn left into Naishcombe Hill, signed Abson, Pucklechurch. Keep on this road to reach Pucklechurch. Take right turn before reaching village centre into Feltham Road. This becomes Hinton Road, which you follow to the village, parking in or around the Bull Inn.

An interesting ramble with a couple of easy climbs, following riverbank and field paths, visiting the villages of Doynton and Hinton. Good views of Dyrham House and a dramatic encounter with a working quarry.

From the pub, go left along the road, climbing the steep hill. Keep well to the right and take care, there are blind bends. Take the first road on the right and look after 400 yards for a footbridge on the left. Cross to a field and head down towards the bottom far corner where you pass through a gate to a further field. Proceed to another gate then veer left to locate a kissing gate in the trees. Beyond is a lane **A**.

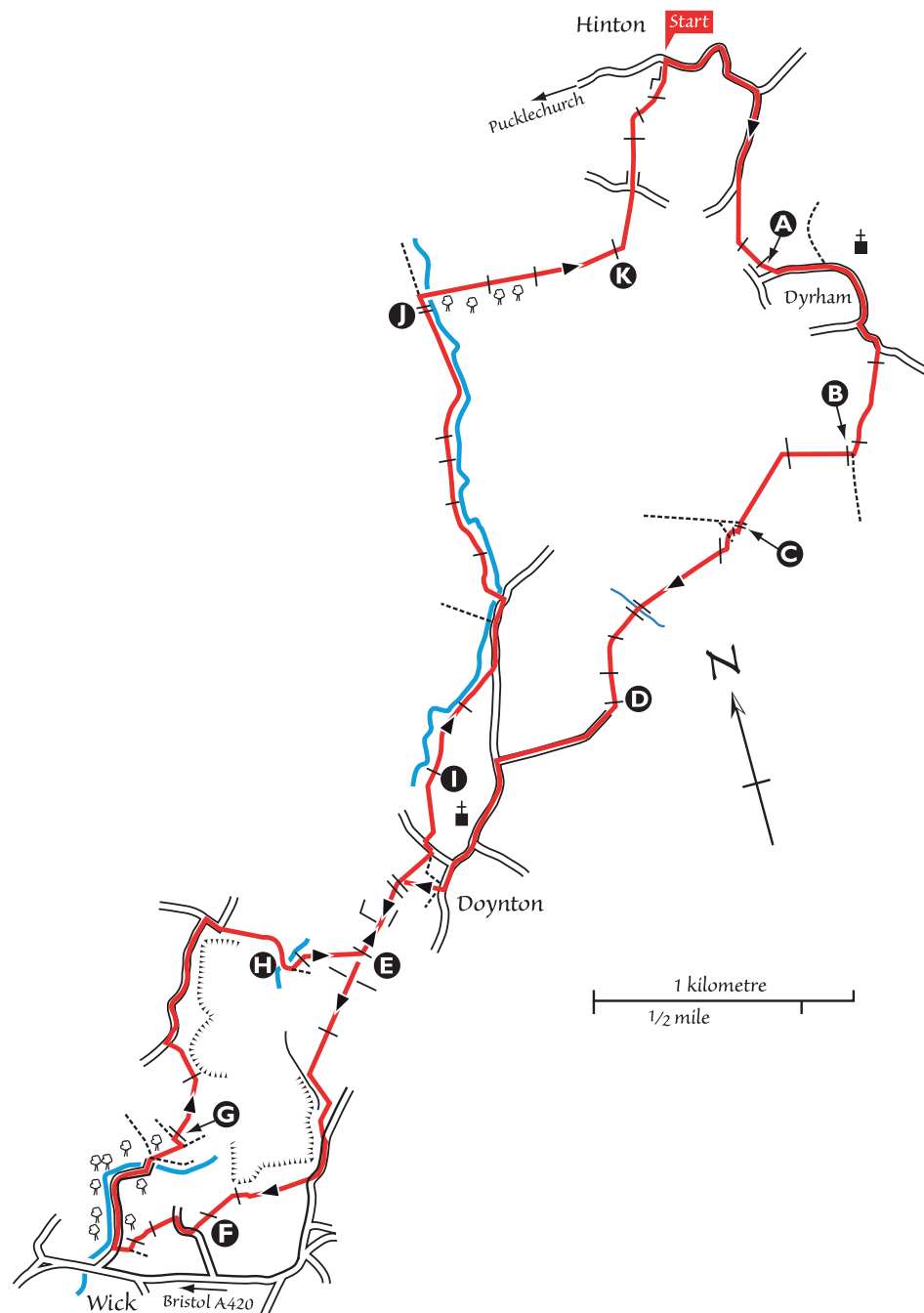
You are now in the village of Dyrham, follow the lane left, passing fine houses, with St Peter's Church up to the left. As the lane bends right, look left to the finest house of them all, Dyrham House, a National Trust property. On reaching a road junction by a small green, turn left and walk for a short distance. Take a footpath on the right, (the Cotswold Way), passing a shady resting place and through a gate. Follow the path ahead through a second gate, then immediately beyond the third gate go right through a gate **B**. Now cross the centre of the field and at the far side, go over a footbridge with two gates, then walk diagonally left towards the farm.

Aim to the right of the buildings and when you reach the field corner cross the drive to a stile **C**. Follow the edge of a car park for a few yards, go right over another stile then go left, across another drive. Now follow the waymarks between two ponds to climb a stile on your right.

Walk ahead, crossing the field (which may be cropped) and when a kissing gate comes into view in the far hedge, make for it. Cross a stream and pass through a kissing gate, then follow the discernable path ahead to the far side of the field where you come to a stile. Climb over and walk ahead to the obvious gap in the hedge opposite, continuing on in the next field to reach a stile **D**. Beyond, go right along the track to a lane. Follow this to a T-junction where you turn left, to enter the village of Doynton.

Pass Holy Trinity Church, then pass a turning right (High St) by the Cross House Inn. A short distance further, you reach a footpath sign on the right, enter the field here. There are clear paths ahead and left, but you need to cross the field to the lower left corner, so walk diagonally left, eventually picking up the hedge and fence of the left boundary and climb a pair of stiles sporting the 'Monarch's Way' symbol. Keep left of the thicket then walk up the centre of the field aiming for the left end of the hedge on the far side. In the next field, follow the right boundary to reach a stile **E**. Climb over and go ahead without deviation, passing waymark signs at the field corner, crossing another field to a kissing gate, then continuing onward to reach the quarry boundary fence. Follow it left to a gate by the telecom mast, go through to the road and turn right.

Walk down the road with care to the quarry entrance on the right and climb the stile into the quarry premises. Care is needed here, you have right of way but you can be delayed if blasting is in progress. Follow the clear footpath signs ahead to the wooden screening on the left of the quarry office. Pass through the screen and continue on, keeping to the right of the cream building. At the end of the walkway climb the drive ahead passing black oil tanks on your left and using the marked footpath between a wooden fence and an Armco barrier. At the top of the rise go straight ahead to cross a stile beside a warning sign and follow the narrow footpath between two wooden



fences to a stile giving access to a meadow. (If blasting is in progress, you may wish to avoid the area altogether, in which case continue down the road to reach the A420, turn right and follow the road to reach Boyd Bridge. Go right before the bridge and walk along the narrow road to pick up the route again as it joins from the right.)

Beyond the quarry, walk down the meadow keeping left to climb a further stile **F** then follow the path to a stile and lane beyond. Walk right here for a short distance, then go through a kissing gate on the left. Walk with the hedge initially on your left for a short distance, then continue in the same direction across the field, climbing a stile and continuing to reach kissing gate in the bottom left corner. Go through the gate and cross a footbridge, then go right along a lane to a road.

Turn right and follow the road into the Golden Valley Nature Reserve, with the River Boyd on your left, eventually crossing it via a bridge. On the far side, ignore the turning immediately right, but follow the path ahead that climbs gently up to the right, signed 'The Ravens Rock Trail'.

The site has a long history of heavy industrial workings. There was a iron-founding industry at Wick from the mid-eighteenth century based on the water power provided by the River Boyd. In 1761 it was reported that there was an iron works and paper mill within the valley. The 1882 Ordnance Survey map shows a rolling mill and dam across the river and soon after records show that the internationally renowned ochre processing works were in operation in 1895. The works remained on the site up until 1968 when it was closed down. Two years later the buildings were demolished and the site was cleared and left for nature to reclaim.

Continue on this broad path to reach a path up to the left. Take this, (if you miss it, you will reach a clearing with disused quarry workings) and in a short distance go through the kissing gate on the right **G**. Climb to the top of the meadow, keeping right, then go ahead to further gates in the far right corner of the field. Go through and on the right is a view point overlooking the quarry. Follow the path through a stone arched kissing gate to a lane with cottages, where you bear left and through another kissing gate to reach Rock Road.

Turn right, following the tarmac to a T-junction where you go right, signposted Doynton. In a few yards, the road descends left, but you go ahead along a bridleway, losing height and crossing the river at the pretty Cleve Bridge **H**. Now take a path left to a kissing gate, then go half-right, climbing to the far corner of the pasture to the stile crossed on your outward route **E**. Cross the stile and go ahead keeping to the left boundary to reach the next field. Walk down the centre of this field, veering left to pass the thicket near the bottom left corner. Cross a pair of stiles ahead (ignoring

one on the left), then go ahead towards the backs of the cottages where, by a patch of old stone wall, you go through a kissing gate and walk between the cottages to the road. The Cross House Inn is to the right, but the walk continues left.

Walk left for a short distance, climb steps to a stile on the right, then go half-left downhill towards houses, crossing a stream with wooden footbridge to your right. Now go ahead through the kissing gate by the right-hand side of a pair of metal field gates ❶ and onward with the hedge left. You will be following the River Boyd for some distance now. Here it is on your left so continue over several meadows, eventually climbing a field gate beyond which a discernable path leads you to a stile in the hedge on the right and road. Follow the road left with care for 250 yards, ignoring a stile on the left. A little further, take the bridleway left, crossing a wooden sleeper bridge. Now go right, through a succession of meadows and gates with the River Boyd to your right, for nearly a mile. Eventually, after passing through two closely spaced gates ❷ you will reach a footbridge on your right.

After crossing the bridge you leave the river, walking parallel with the trees to your right to the far side of the field where you climb a stile by a gate. Proceed over the

second field and stile, to a third and continue on to a field gate with farm buildings beyond ❸. In this fourth field, go diagonally left, aiming for the far top corner where a house can be seen. Hidden in the hedge is a kissing gate giving access to a road.

Cross to a converted chapel on the left and walk along Chapel Lane passing passing Chapel Cottage on the left and through a kissing gate into a paddock. Follow the right boundary and climb a stile in the fence, then continue ahead to another stile by the remains of a field gate. Climb over and veer right to meet a field corner, then follow the left boundary to a stile at the field bottom to reach a road. This was the old coach road from Bristol to Oxford. Follow the road right, to reach the Bull Inn, a good refreshment stop at the end of your walk.



Wick Quarry, viewed from Rock Road



Walk 28 – Slad

Start Lay-by north of Bisley (ST903063).

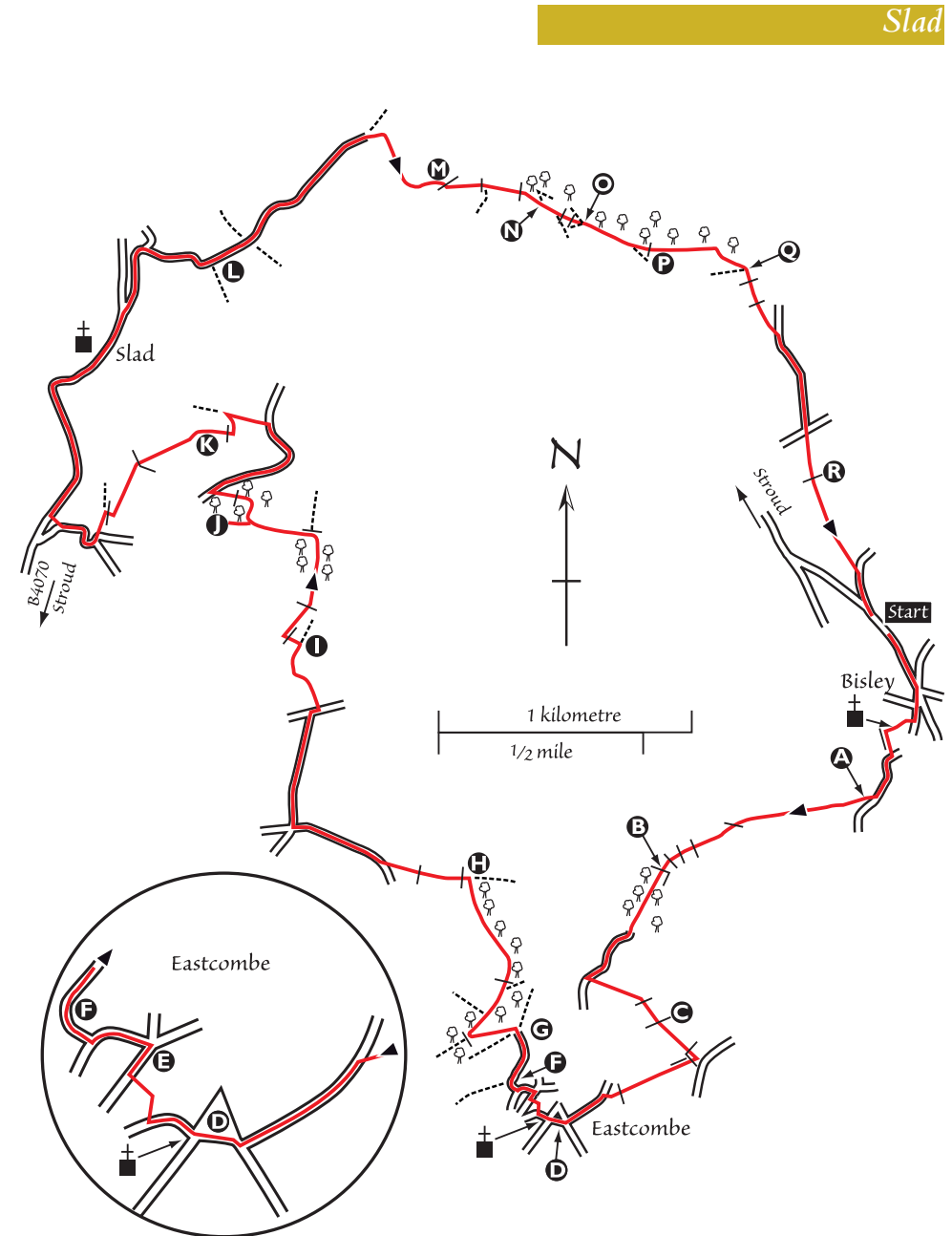
Distance 9.5 miles

Refreshments Pub in Bisley at start/end of walk and the Woolpack in Slad (just beyond mid-point).

Getting there M5 junction 13 then A419 to Stroud. Follow A419 signed Cirencester through Stroud (taking care not to go north on the A46) and after passing beneath railway bridge, turn left at a roundabout signed 'Hospital'. Immediately take first turning right (Field Road) and climb, passing the hospital to reach the Bisley Road. Turn right and follow the road out of Stroud. After a right bend, you come to a fork, keep left signed 'Bisley, Through Road'. In a short distance go right at a junction and park off the road on the left (opposite houses on right).

A hilly, but beautiful walk up, down and around the Slad and Toadsmoor valleys, starting in Bisley (home to Jilly Cooper) and passing through Slad (home of the late Laurie Lee). Allow 5 hours.

From the lay-by, walk down the hill towards Bisley, taking a downhill right-hand fork at 'The Stirrup Cup'. Take a broad path on the right leading up to the church, pass through the Lych gate and walk to the left of the church. Continue to the back



wall of the churchyard, then turn left, walking with the boundary wall on your right and leaving the churchyard via the Bisley Steps.

At the bottom, turn right and follow the road down to the left, then in a short distance climb up to the right on a narrow driveway (immediately before a 20mph sign). Your route is confirmed when you pass a cream-coloured garage door on your right **A**. This driveway becomes a path, initially surfaced, that you follow, passing a plantation of trees to your right. Follow the path to a stile, cross, and descend over grassland to a waymark, then half-left to climb a stile in a wire fence. Continue in the same direction, following the waymarks to a further stile in a fence. Climb this and continue ahead to the trees, climbing a further stile, then another to reach a wooded footpath **B**.

Follow this path, emerging by a cottage and following a surfaced driveway that becomes a lane. Climb ahead and as the gradient eases, look for a footpath and kissing gate on the left. Go through to a meadow, then climb ahead, slightly left, passing through a further kissing gate and continuing up the track to a third **C**. Beyond this, continue to a further gate with a covered reservoir on your right. Beyond the gate, walk a few yards and before reaching the road, go right through another kissing gate. Walk across the



View over Slad from Swift's Hill (Point J)

field, initially with the wire fence on your right, then continue, aiming to the right of the bungalows and left of the house with distant views of Lypiatt Park House away to the right.

Lypiatt Park House was once the home of Sir John Throckmorton, who was related to the gunpowder plotters Catesby, Tresham and Winter. It is reputed that they all met – along with Guy Fawkes – and devised the plot in one of the rooms at Lypiatt Park House.

At the far side of the field go through a kissing gate, cross a farm drive and follow the signed path ahead to reach a road where you turn left. Follow this road to its end, where you turn right to reach the village green at Eastcombe **D**. To the left of the Lamb Inn, take the road by the telephone box alongside the church and walk to a tarmac footpath that doubles back right. Follow this to the long closed 'Red Lion', where you turn right, then at the next junction **E** take the narrow lane doubling back left and descending steeply. At the next junction descend right and follow the lane bearing right **F** and ignoring a footpath on the left. Keep left at a fork with footpaths right and left, and continue to cross a stream to reach a three-way junction **G**.

Take the higher, left hand route and climb to a gate, then follow the track turning up to the right. When you reach a left bend, leave the track and walk ahead on a path through woodland. Keep on a roughly level course and just beyond a descending path to the right, you climb a stile in a wire fence and continue onward. Where the trees thin out, the path becomes quite overgrown in summer, but battle on to reach a T-junction. Turn left and climb for a short distance to climb a stile into grassland **H**.

Continue straight ahead, climbing again towards the trees and a further stile. Beyond this walk ahead, boundary right and through a kissing gate to a lane. Turn right and walk to a road junction where you go right, signed Birdlip and Bisley. At the next junction turn right, then immediately left onto a farm drive. Follow this, with the village of Slad coming into view across the valley ahead. The drive eventually leads to a property where there is a (legal) diversion. Follow the drive until you cross a cattle grid **I** then immediately turn left down some steps to a green kissing gate. Pass through and turn right, keeping the garden boundary to your right, until you reach another green kissing gate in a fence. Beyond this, pick up an indistinct path keeping to the left of an electricity pole and right of a tree. Keep to the right of the next tree as you cross the remains of an ancient field boundary and continue ahead, descending slightly to an obvious path leading into woodland. In a short distance you climb a stile, then follow a path contouring the hillside and ignoring a stile up to the right as you leave the woodland. Now you have fine views down the valley towards Stroud as you make for the summit of Swift's Hill **J** a great spot for sandwich break! Now re-

gain the path that bears right and descends through a beech wood, through a gate and on to reach a road.

Turn right, crossing a cattle grid and follow the road, bearing left by a cluster of cottages, then at a right bend, go left along a driveway signed 'Furners Farm'. As you reach cottages on the right, double back left, down a wooded path to reach a stile on the right. Climb this into a meadow, then contour the hillside, finally descending to a lake **K** that you cross at the far end. Climb the field ahead, slightly right, to cross a stile at the far side. Descend slightly and walk over the field, aiming for the hedge corner ahead, just beyond power lines. As you reach the hedge, look right for a stile, cross to a driveway and follow it left to a road where you descend right, ignoring the left turn. At the bottom of the hill, where the road begins to climb, go over a stile on the right, then follow the right boundary to reach the road. Turn right, and follow the pavement into Slad and the famous 'Woolpack Inn' a good lunch stop at just over mid-point of the walk.

Opposite the pub is Laurie Lee's school, now a private house, while his gravestone can be seen by the path to the right of the church entrance.

Your return route continues along the pavement through the village (passing Rosie's cottage on the left) until you meet a right turn, Steanbridge Lane. As a child, Laurie lived in the T-shaped house down to the right. Take this lane, following it round a sharp right bend at Laurel Court. Keep on for some distance, passing a lake on the right **L** after which the lane climbs steeply, finally petering out at a fork by a welcome seat. Here, go right and eventually pass through the iron gates of Snow's Farm. As the track passes to the right of the buildings **M** look right for a stile by a metal farm gate.



Rosie's cottage

Cross, then descend on a broad grassy path towards the trees.

The path takes you through a wildflower meadow and down to a stream. Cross this and climb the stile beyond, then walk ahead, ignoring a path veering right. Pass beneath power lines, then to climb to a gate.

Continue your climb through woodland to a path junction where the main path doubles back **N**. Here, go ahead keeping to the right boundary, and follow this narrow overgrown path as it passes a cottage up to the left. At a junction with a waymark post, take the left



Laurie Lee's childhood home

fork and in a few yards pass through the garden gate of a cottage. Walk along the garden path, exiting via another gate and in a short distance you join a track by a green corrugated shed **O**. Walk ahead, passing another cottage on the left, then before reaching the gravelled courtyard of a further house, take the path up to the left, through a gate, and passing the house down to your right **P** and following a gently rising path with wire fence on the right. At the head of the valley, the path bends right, stay with it until you reach a gate and stile on the left, and a gate right **Q**. Ignore both and continue climbing ahead to go through a waymarked gate into a meadow. Continue ahead to a further gate with stile and beyond here, follow the field-edge path beneath power lines and climbing a further stile to reach a road.

Walk ahead as far as a T-junction, cross, and go through a metal gate. Follow the grassy path ahead and through another gate **R** then with fields either side, continue to a road. Turn right, and in a short distance you will reach your starting point.



Walk 29 – Buckland Dinham

Start Buckland Dinham church (ST754512).

Distance 10.5 miles.

Refreshments Pub at start/end of walk and the Talbot Inn at Mells, just beyond mid-point of walk.

Getting there Buckland Dinham lies on the A362 Radstock to Frome road. Restricted parking by the church, (take the first turning left after the Bell Inn).

A delightful and varied walk of parkland, riverbank, railway paths and a few fields, passing old mills, limekilns and other relics of a bygone industrial age. Mells, with its 'Little Jack Horner' connection is worth exploring, as is the Talbot Inn with its Butcombe ale straight from the wood. Generally level walking, mostly on good paths, but expect some muddy stretches after rain. Allow up to 5 hours.

With the church gate on your left, follow a path (signed 'Lullington 2 miles') between walls to climb a stile, then walk down to the bottom left corner of the field. Pass a redundant footbridge **A** then head out diagonally left over the field, passing close to the lone tree and aiming for the far left corner. Here, go ahead along a short track into a further field. Climb a stile by a wooden gate, then walk to the top left corner of the field, over a stile and into woodland.

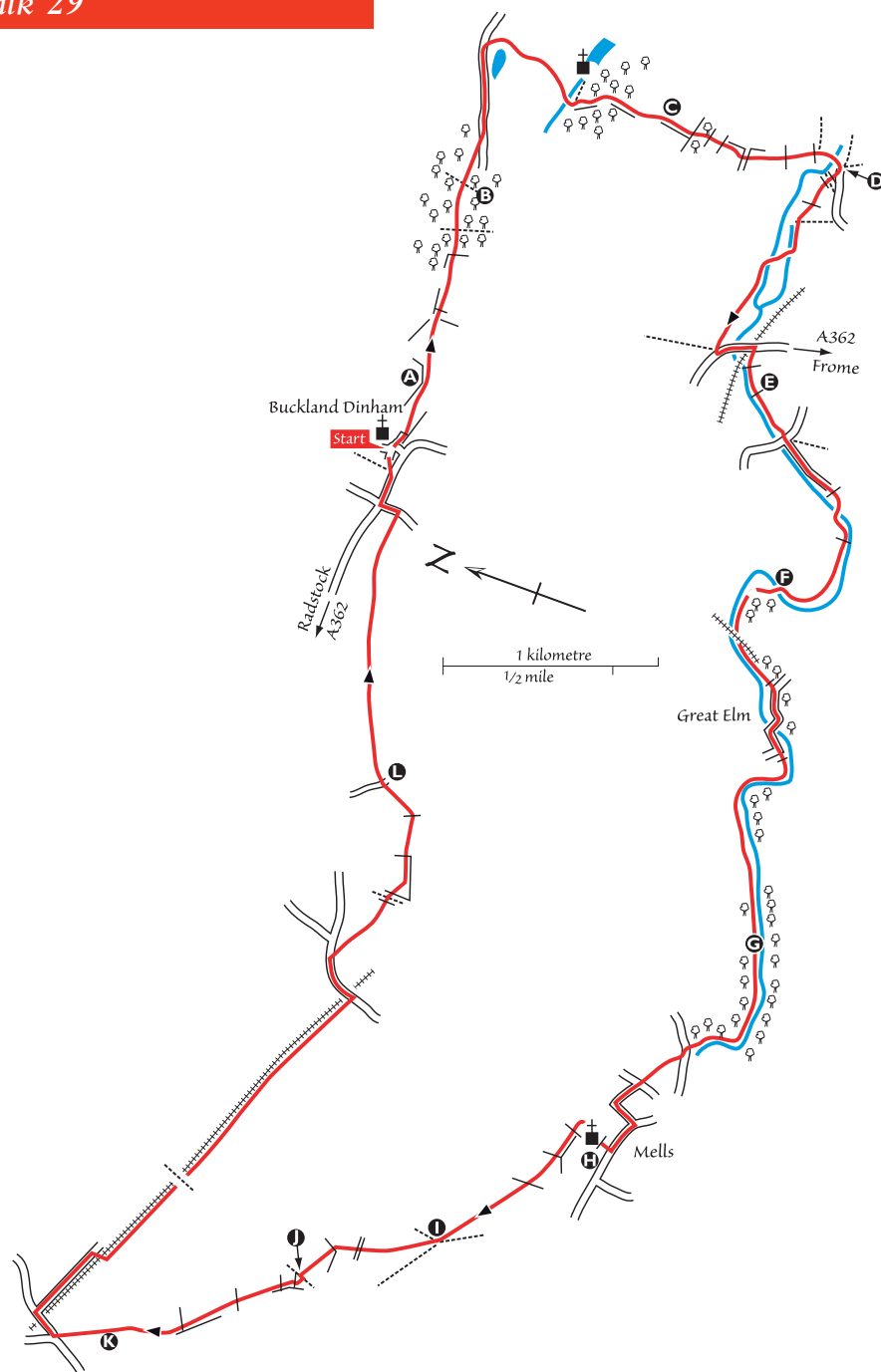
Buckland Dinham

Walk ahead on an obvious track, crossing a junction with farm buildings to the right **B**. Keep in the same direction to enter parkland and a road joining from the right. Follow this over a cattle grid onto a golf course and keep to the tarmac until you reach a turning to the right before a house, signed to the church. Take this turn and follow the driveway, leaving the golf course and descending to a cottage. The drive bends left here and leads to Orchardleigh church in a pretty setting that you may want to visit, but the walk goes right just beyond the bend, climbing into woodland.

Pick up a track that follows the right boundary, eventually reaching an open area cleared to make way for another golf course – until the money ran out. Cross this, veering a little to the left **C** to keep another boundary on your right and continue to a strip of woodland ahead. Pass an old stile and descend through the trees to climb a stile, then walk down two fields separated by another stile. At the bottom of the second field climb a stile, cross the track and go over another stile, then walk down the field, boundary left. Leave the field via another stile and follow a path, eventually climbing another stile to join a tarmac driveway passing houses. Follow this, crossing the Mells



Orchardleigh church



River, then bear right at a junction **D**. A few yards further, opposite 'Fern Villa', climb a stile on the right into a field. Cross to a further stile with a large house, once a dye works, to your right. Go over a driveway, climb another stile, then head towards the next stile. Beyond this, follow the obvious path to the far right corner of the field, cross an embankment carrying a driveway, then continue, boundary right. On reaching a bridge on the right, cross and walk ahead to cross a further bridge with a cottage beyond. You now reach a farm drive, follow this left to the main road.

Turn left along this busy road, keeping to the left verge and watching your back! In a short distance, you cross the river and reach a railway bridge. Now cross with care to a footpath on the right and follow this with the railway on your right. At the riverbank, climb a stile and walk with the river on your right to reach a stone parapet **E**.

This was Murtry Aqueduct that should have carried the short-lived Dorset & Somerset Canal over the Mells River in the early 1800s. There is no water, just a grassy top, because this aqueduct – like the rest of the canal – never saw a boat, the money running out before completion.

Continue ahead, crossing a stile beyond the parapet, and keep the river to your right, eventually climbing left to reach a road.

Cross to the road opposite (signed 'Hanson Social Club') and follow the tarmac into a commercial area. Go through the metal kissing gate into the lorry compound and walk on, over a bridge and ahead between buildings, then following a footpath sign directing you left. Walk, river left, to exit through a high kissing gate, from where you follow a broader path to an open area. Keep to the right here, picking up the path again and crossing a metal footbridge **F**.

The route now takes you through a cutting beneath an iron bridge. Continue, passing redundant kissing gates on the right with river beyond, then walk beneath a railway bridge and on via a kissing gate to reach a road at Great Elm. Go right, over the bridge with an old millpond on the right, then follow the road uphill to a right bend. Here, go ahead and over a stile, then descend to a clear riverside path that you follow to a surfaced driveway. Follow this until it starts to climb, then keep left with the river. The path eventually leads you alongside the ruined walls of Fussell's ironworks **G**.

The ironworks of James and John Fussell produced a vast array of tools for the agricultural industry, including scythes, reaphooks, spades, shovels and axes. They also manufactured water wheels, anvils, forges, hammers and bellows. The business was a large local employer and the tools produced were exported to the far corners of the Empire. The works closed about 100 years ago and now the site is reverting back to nature, but amongst the ruins,

pits where the steel was forged, hearths and kilns, as well as lengths of rail track can be discovered.

Follow the riverside path to reach a road, walk left for a few yards, then cross with care and climb a stile on the right into a field. Walk half-left across the grass, aiming to the right of the row of houses ahead. Here, join a road and walk ahead, turning left with it to reach the war memorial. Turn right and walk through the village to the 15th century Talbot Inn, a good refreshment stop **H**.

Your walk continues right, along New Street (before the pub) towards the church. Leave the churchyard at the opposite side, via an avenue of yew trees and a gate, to reach pasture. Go left, climb a stile, then walk with the wall of the manor house on your left. Climb the stile ahead, then cross the following field half-right, entering another mid-way on the far boundary. Now go half-right again, and as the ground levels, gradually head toward the right boundary, joining it by a short stretch of wall and a farm drive **I**. In the next field, veer a little more to the right, aiming for the



The war memorial in Mells, designed by Edwin Lutyens

stile on the far side. Cross a double stile and unsafe footbridge here, then cross the next field to a further stile. Now veer left to a field gate in the fence **J** and turn left along the farm drive for a few yards, before going right through a small gate.

Walk ahead with a pond on your right and through a gate on the right, into the next field. Climb ahead, boundary left, and through a further field gate, continuing to a stile in the top left corner of the field. Now keep in the same direction to another stile, with an industrial area beyond. Proceed, keeping to the left until you find yourself carefully guided towards office buildings that you pass on your left **K**. Now pick up the roadway that will lead you out of the site.

At a road junction, turn right, signed Hemington and Buckland Dinham. Walk for a short distance, then just

beyond the railway bridge go right along a road that eventually gives access to the railway path. Here was Mells Siding, on the Frome to Radstock GWR line. Turn left along the railway and walk for about a mile, passing beneath one bridge, then going up to join a road at the second. Turn left here and cross the bridge.

A short distance beyond the railway bridge take a signed footpath to the right and follow the left boundary of the field. At the far end cross a pair of stiles, then go diagonally right across the field towards the trees and the right boundary, which you follow to a stile in a hedge. Cross, and continue to a further stile, and beyond, along a grassy track, passing Hill House Farm on the right **L**. This bridleway takes you back to Buckland Dinham, passing the ivy-mantled shaft of Oxley's Colliery on the right.

The shaft was sunk in 1874 but soon became waterlogged and abandoned. Another attempt to open the pit was made in 1910, but again, the level of water was more than the pumps could handle, so the venture was abandoned.

When you reach a road, turn left and walk for a short distance to the main road. Cross to the Bell Inn, passing it on your left, then follow the pavement to reach a set of steps on the left, just before a bus shelter. Climb these and walk ahead (ignoring path going left) behind the shelter to a residential cul-de-sac. Follow this to the church and your starting point.



Walk 30 – The Marlborough Downs

Start Barbury Castle Country Park, south of Swindon (SU155760).

Distance 10.6 miles.

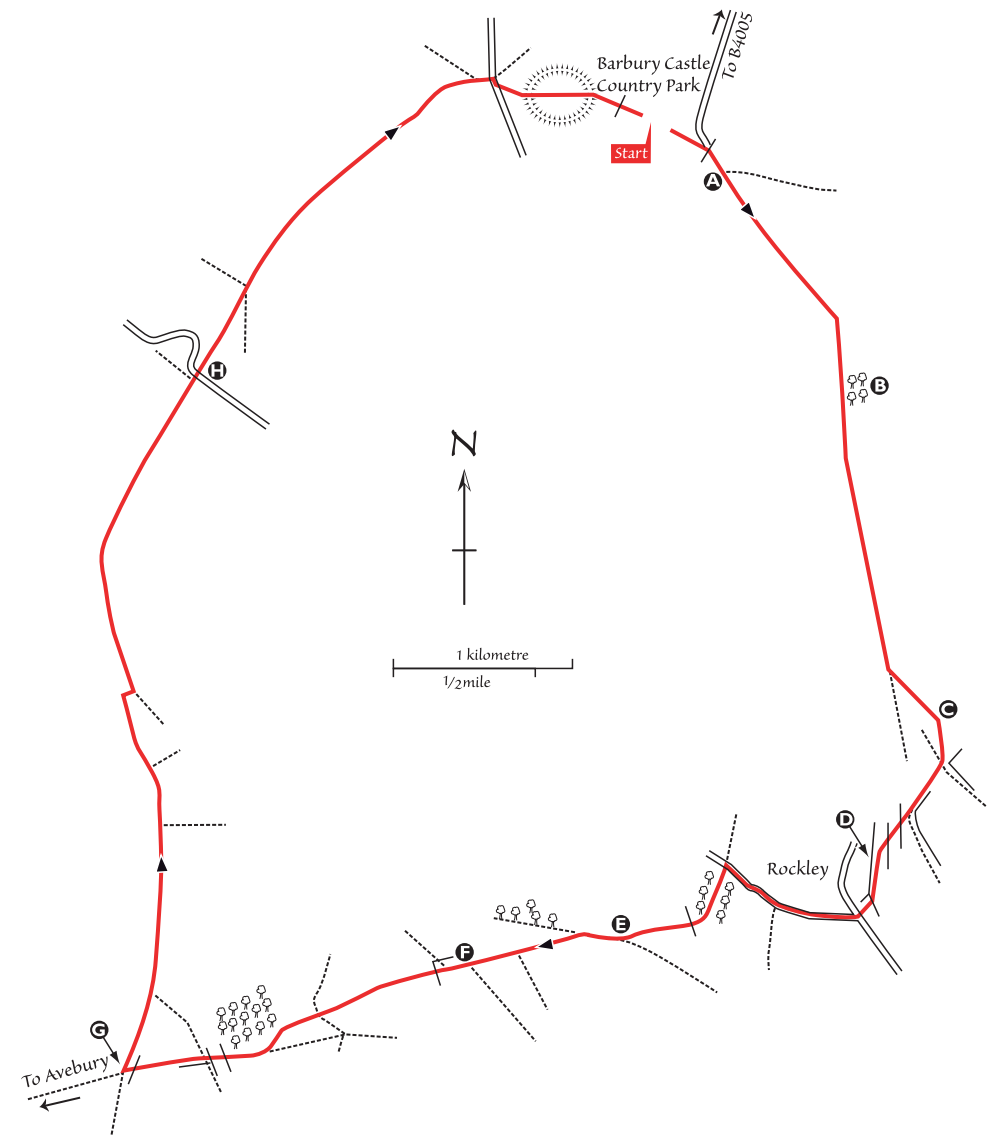
Refreshments Teas etc. at start/end summer weekends.

Getting there From M4 near Swindon, junction 15 south on A346 then right onto B4005 through Chiseldon. Beyond village, look for left turn on right bend signed 'Barbury Castle Country Park' and follow narrow road to car park.

An elevated walk with fine views around the Marlborough Downs, the latter half following a section of the Ridgeway long-distance path. In summer, birdlife abounds – yellowhammer, whitethroat, linnet and corn bunting vie with each other for your attention while at your feet, dozens of varieties of wild flower can be identified, so take binoculars and take your time!

From the toilets by the car park, walk on the grassy path eastward (with the car park to your left), pass through a metal gate and turn right onto a tarmac lane signposted 'The Ridgeway'. At junction of byways **A** go ahead, leaving the Ridgeway, which veers off to the left. You now have fine views to the right over the horse gallops, and you pass through the fringe of a wood **B** beyond which there is easy downhill walking with views right and left. After passing the woods, notice the large barn some way ahead and to the left, a useful landmark that you will shortly reach.

The Marlborough Downs



At a track junction by a signpost, fork left, aiming for the barn. (Don't rely on the signpost, it swivels easily!) From the barn ❶ veer right along the stony track, crossing the gallops and heading for the clump of trees on the crest of the hill. As you reach the bushes look left for an incongruous beech hedge, which encloses a tiny cemetery. A family from the horse-riding fraternity lies here, graves overgrown and headstones weathering.

From the cemetery, emerge from the bushes and turn left to cross the stony track, then go ahead to pick up the grassy path with bushes and field boundary to your left. Where the path bears left, strike out across the gallops towards a white signboard (on the reverse you find a 2-furlong marker), then in the same direction crossing a further set of gallops to a gap in the fence on the far side where you will see a waymark. Keep on the same line crossing another track, more gallops and reaching the boundary fence ❷. Turn left to walk with the fence on your right until you reach a metal gate near the field corner.

Pass through the gate then walk down the hill with the wire fence to your right until the road below becomes visible. Continue to the metal gate, go through, cross the road and walk down the lane opposite signposted 'Rockley'. Follow the lane, passing a small church on the left, then a few houses left and right to reach a bridleway that crosses the road on the edge of the hamlet; turn left here.

Follow the bridleway as it leaves the road on a gentle climb. Pass through a wooden field gate and continue in the same direction, now with a wire fence on your right. The path eventually bears left to meet a part-surfaced track where you turn right ❸. Follow the track signposted 'Avebury & Hackpen' and in a few yards fork left with the main path. The track climbs gently with horse gallops to your left, eventually passing a small, covered reservoir on your right ❹. Beyond the reservoir, ignore the gate on the right but go ahead through another gate onto the nature reserve of Fyfield Down; notice to your right, the first of many Sarcen stones that litter the ground.

50-70 million years ago, hard sandstone was formed above the chalk layer of the Downs and following geological movement and weathering, this sandstone was broken into blocks and deposited over the chalk downland. Known as Sarcens, they provided a local supply of suitable building material for Neolithic megaliths, as standing stones and chambered tombs as well as grindstones for stone tools. Their most obvious use was of course for the construction of Avebury's stone circles.

Continue the climb to reach a wooden gate; go through this, cross the gallops then pass through a metal gate. Walk now along a grassy path to a further gate, beyond which you meet the Ridgeway ❺. The track ahead will lead you down to Avebury

village, 1.5 miles away – if time is on your side! To continue the walk, turn right, you will follow this track back to the start of the walk with fine views left and right.

At ❻ you cross a road and continue on the track with the imposing ramparts of Barbury Castle becoming clearer as the path descends. On reaching another road, go right for a few yards then left through the gate, stopping to read the information board. The path now leads you up, through the 'castle' and out the other side. Continue through a gate then walk the remaining 400 yards to your starting point.