

Wander
With
History
Walks in Kirklevington & Castleavington



WALK 8 - LEVEN VALLEY

FOOTPATHS AROUND KIRKLEVINGTON



This booklet is an attempt to describe the historic and natural history of the footpath routes around Kirklevington and its immediate vicinity.

All the footpaths are public rights of way unless a permissive path is indicated. The walks described are all indicated on the relevant Ordnance Survey Maps.

- 1) Outdoor Leisure 26 North York Moors (Western Area).
- 2) Ordnance Survey Landranger 93 Middlesbrough and Darlington Area.

Walkers should obey the Country Code and respect the landowner's property.

Footpaths which may be visible but are not marked as public rights of way on maps should not be walked. These footpaths are for the landowners use and there is no right to roam over any of the land covered by the walks in this booklet.

Walkers should be adequately dressed and have suitable footwear for the weather and ground conditions. A relevant map and possibly a whistle should be carried at all times.

All walks start and finish at Kirklevington Village Memorial Hall.

INFORMATION ON RIGHTS OF WAY

A public right of way allows members of the public access across privately owned land under the following conditions:-

Footpaths are for pedestrians only.

Bridleways may be used by horses, pedestrians and pedal cyclists only.

All footpaths and bridle ways are based on the relevant current Ordnance Survey Map and show all public rights of way at the issue date of the map.

- The maintenance of paths is the responsibility of the local council.

The local council is the Highway Authority responsible by law to carry out the following:-

- Protect the rights of the public to use the rights of way.
- Prevent where possible the obstruction of the rights of way.
- The public have the right to walk along the footpath but cannot deviate into the adjoining land. The public may however stop on the footpath and rest.

- The right of way may have no legal width but progress along a right of way must cause the minimum amount of damage hence single file through arable land.

Paths can be ploughed out but must be reinstated within two weeks. Paths along a field boundary must not be ploughed out. Sufficient space should be left to allow for safe passage.

- No recognised breed of bull over 10 months old may be kept in a field with a public right of way crossing it, except in the case of a bull which is accompanied with cows or heifers.
- Any other animal known to be dangerous may not be kept in a field which may be accessed by the public.
- Any dispute between the owner of the land and access to a public right of way should be reported to the local authority for clear determination.
- Public rights of way can be altered usually by declaration of the local authority and after satisfactory notice. In some cases these changes may not be on the ordinance survey map but way mark signs should clearly indicate the change on the ground.
- Permissive footpaths are not rights of way but have been indicated by the land owner to direct the public away from the original right of way. This in no way prevents the right of way being used and the existing right of way should be defined on the ground. Although the permissive path may be closed at any time by the land owner. It is hoped by mutual consideration the permissive path will be used as an alternative to the public right of way and so protect what the land owner considers of importance.
- Control of dogs is an important issue in a farming environment. Dogs should be kept on leads or close control (i.e. trained to walk to heel and obey commands without fail). All dog excrement must be picked up. Dogs must not be allowed to foul the landowner's fields or damage any crop or chase stock.
- Waymarkers are used to show the route. Footpaths are shown by Yellow arrows, Bridleways are shown by Blue arrows. Do not interfere with Waymark signs, this is an offence

THE COUNTRY CODE

- Prevent fire risks.
- Close and fasten all gates.
- Dogs to be kept under close control.
- Keep to the path.
- Avoid damage to crops, fences, hedges and walls.
- Do not leave litter.
- Do not make unnecessary noise.
- Do not pollute water supplies.
- Respect the natural heritage and wildlife.
- Be aware of traffic on country roads and lanes.
- Do not interfere with livestock and machinery.
- Respect the heritage and life of the rural environment.

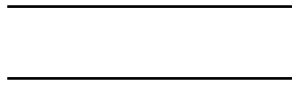
KEY TO SYMBOLS



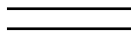
Stile



Footpath



Road or Lane



Footbridge



Fence Line



River or Stream



Tree or Wood



Hedge

The sketches are drawn more to give an indication rather than scale. Where possible the scale is approximately 1: 10,000.

All salient features such as buildings, roads, rivers etc. are not to scale.

Where the sketch is broken into 2 or 3 sections by directional section arrows, the section indicates the continuation of the map and the arrows indicate the direction of sight.

Walks 5 to 9 are continuation of previous walks as indicated in the text and on the individual route sketches. To understand the complete walk the relevant walks have to be read together.

WALK 8 - LEVEN VALLEY



Distance - Approximately 5 miles depending on route

Difficulty - Strenuous, good agility required, be prepared for river crossing, Wellington Boots or old trainers required. Be prepared to get wet feet. Turn back if water is fast flowing and deep. Only recommended after prolonged dry spell, it can become very muddy.



Red Hall Farm

to the West. On a clear winters night this position, in November or December, gives you a good view of the night sky.

In particular Orion to the South East and the Plough which seems to be directly above you. From the plough you can find the North Star or Polaris. From the North Star Cassiopeia, or the Big W, can be seen just off to the West. From the red star Betelgeuse, on the left corner of the Orion Constellation, you can see the twins Castor and Pollux in the lower left hand side of the sky. Betelgeuse is a Red Giant and eventually will go supernova. I do not think we need to worry though.

Continue along the lane until the lane bears left. On your right you will see a gate with a footpath marker.



Windmills, Roseberry Topping just visible



Undulating ground, Red Hall

Before going through the gate, observe the land to your right. It is particularly undulating with dips and tracks. Red Hall's historic site connected to Guisborough Priory. Dean Meriton, Dean of York 1617-1624, and Chaplain to Queen Anne was in possession of the hall after James I came to the throne. The hall with an extensive library, was destroyed by fire in 1703. Its owner, having lost everything, was given support by the William Hall Trust Fund. (refer to the village walk, The Old School Kirklevington, for details).

The hall had survived the Civil war when it can be assumed more destruction came to the village. Three members of the Meriton family died in the Civil War .The Meriton family were famous as authors, George Meriton wrote The Praise of Yorkshire Ale in 1684/5, a poem describing a drinking trip around Northallerton's ale houses with friends from London who went home with sore heads. Copies of the 1975 reprint still available from Ken Spelman, bookseller in York. The valley opens out in front of you, again a place of solitude. Progressing down the track a fork is reached, take the right hand fork as indicated by a footpath symbol. The A19 viaduct can be seen in the distance and that is the direction you need to take . The track becomes tree lined, eventually reaching a ford across the River Leven. Take care at this point, under dry conditions in the summer when the water level is low the ford can be crossed, hence the need for wellingtons or trainers. The ford did have stepping stones but these have been removed. The River Leven is not to be underestimated. Once across the River Leven turn right. Note there is a path going to the left.



The Leven Valley



The River Leven Ford

If you take this path you will reach Low Lane close to the Fox Covert public house.

Taking the path to the right you follow the field edge until you reach a track, turn right on this track and pass under the A19 viaduct keeping the River Leven on your right. Walking along this track you will notice signs of a wall on your left. The River Leven is quite close

to the track at this point and the wall may be the remains of an old mill. Note what might possibly be a mill race on your right. Continue along the track skirting the field edge. The track becomes more of a path before entering Hilton Wood. The path becomes quite difficult at this point, you will have to clamber over tree roots, and is prone to subsidence so take care. On exiting from the wood, although the Ordnance survey map indicates the path going directly to Scriddles Wood in front of you, it would appear the farmer is encouraging you to take the clearly defined footpath on your right which follows the River Leven. Note the Giant Hogweed growing alongside the river bank. On entering Scriddles Wood via a stile continue to follow the path alongside the Leven until you come to a diversion in the path. Take the left hand path



The River Leven

and climb a number of steps walking away from the River Leven. The path at this point can be very wet and muddy care being taken when stepping on the wooden edges of the steps, as they can be very slippery. In fact all the wooden structures when wet can be hazardous so take care.

On exiting Scriddles Wood you will see a Bridle Way sign in front of you. At this point the walk offers two options.

OPTION 1 If you take the path to the right you immediately face Castle Hill or Mound. In winter with the leaves off the trees Castle Hill appears to tower over you, the flat top being quite pronounced. In summer the Mound is partially hidden by the trees and not so prominent. The Castle was part of a Norman Motte , built to enable the Normans to control the surrounding area.

Walk towards the Mound and before passing over a stream and through a gate, you will notice on your left a number of stones with carvings on their faces. These carvings are all part of local village projects. After passing through the gate directly in front of you, across the field you may just see a path leading down to the river and another ford. In order to reach the ford the ordinance survey map indicates you go left at the gate and skirt the field until you reach the ford. Again only cross the ford in dry conditions. On reaching the opposite bank turn left and skirt round the base of the mound. The path is indistinct at this point, but will soon become visible when you reach the wood in front of you. You will notice on your left signs of walls. This may have been another mill or crossing point, again open to investigation.



Castle Mound

On entering the wood follow the clearly defined path but be careful, subsidence has caused the path to be re-routed slightly. The path continues to Foxton Bridge, the River Leven being on your left. On your right, embedded in the bank and just before you reach the bridge, you will

see a World War 2 Pill Box, built to defend the approaches to the bridge. Pass through the gate into Castleavington Lane and turn right and head for the bridge over the A19. Once over the bridge you will see a footpath sign on your left pointing down the embankment. Follow this sign down some steps, which over the years have become more overgrown. Go over the stile and into a ploughed field. Usually the path across the field is clearly marked, but if not, head just to the right of the farm in front of you. On reaching the farm access road continue across the field in front of you keeping the farm to your left. Again the path should be clearly marked, if not aim for a gap in the hedge about 100 metres from the right hand corner of the field. After passing through the hedge continue on to the corner of the field in front, where you will see a gap in the hedge and a footpath sign. Passing through the gap and turning left puts you on Dents Lane. Follow the lane back to Kirklevington and the Memorial Hall.



Track looking back towards stiles

Middleton. On reaching Middleton notice the church on your left. Turn right and head for a stile at the end of Middleton's main street. Climb the stile and follow the edge of a garden. Entering Middleton Wood by means of a further stile, follow the path through the wood. The path is way marked and passes through a number of gates. The path winds its way across ravines and in the spring, the floor is carpeted in flowers, but it can be extremely muddy even in summer

Eventually the path reaches Castleavington Lane, which is accessed by a stile. Turn right on the lane and head for Foxton Bridge where you join the route for option 1 and return to Kirklevington.



Foxton Bridge

WALK 8 - LEVEN VALLEY

