

Ramble Sunday March 2nd 1952.

A party of 18 caught the 10.19 bus to Madley Hill where we commenced our walk along Robbery Bottom Lane. Passing under the railway, the lane led steadily upwards & the views became more open. A turn to the left & then right brought us on to the Roman Road. Some discussion arose as to the route ~~later~~ originally taken by this road & reference to the Ordnance Survey shows that it must have led from St. Albans, in a characteristically straight line to Ermine Street, which it joins at Colliers End. The road was descended, crossed the road between Barkham Green & Woolmer Green, & brought us to a solitary gnomon, a rather surprising object to find in these rural surroundings. The road now became a path, poorly marked running on the edge of a ploughed field but a ditch on the left hand suggested the ~~old~~ original route taken by the road. After a short distance we came out at the western end of Datchworth Green.

This is an extensive village green & conjured up ideas of village cricket matches etc & a picture of village life a century ago.

Keeping to the edge of the green, we passed in front of a few cottages & in a few yards came to the road. This we crossed & a stile at the left hand side of a pond gave access to a fielded path leading northwards to Datchworth.

This path was reasonably easy to follow & a few

minutes walking brought us to picturesque Datchworth Church. At this point we were about 400 feet above sea level & quite extensive views were available. The weather was somewhat dull & cold but dry, & it did not encourage us to linger at that breezy spot.

We turned right at the road in front of the church & then taking the right hand fork reached Datchworth Green again, this time at the opposite end from that earlier in the walk. We carried on down the road to Green's Green, & after a little difficulty found a path on the right of the little green. This led in a few yards to a field completely unenclosed, so far as could be seen, by barbed wire with no signs of a stile. The barbed wire was surmounted & the field crossed diagonally to Coltsfoot Farm. Keeping to the left of the farm buildings, we came out on the road in front of the farm. A few yards to the right, a path led off through a gate on the opposite side of the road. Here we encountered our major hazard of the day, a bull, young but ~~was~~ nevertheless obviously resentful of our presence. Some of the party pursued their way cautiously ~~with~~ ~~very~~ ~~keepsly~~ ~~a~~ watchful eye on the animal, whilst others crossed a hedge and carried on in the next field. Perhaps daunted by our numbers, the bull did not offer any active interference but watched us steadily out of sight. ~~But~~ Perhaps it was

getting that the village nearby is Bull's Green.
When it was discovered by closer reference to the
map that we had made a slight mistake by
entering this particular field, the path actually ran
in the next field ^{into} ~~where~~ part of the party
had already ~~been~~ been directed.

The grass field soon gave way to ploughed
fields with no trace of the path left so that it
was decided to carry on in the adjoining field
& rejoin the path later. This was done & the path
was picked up again in a short distance when
it entered a field at the back of Burnham
Green. This field was partly taken up by the
remains of a cabbage crop & there was little
trace of the path. We made for the right hand side
of the cottages in front of bus & found ~~the~~ the
remains of a definite path leading through a
gap in the hedge on to the road almost
opposite was ~~the~~ an inn (The White Horse?)
where we gathered for refreshment & a rest.

The village was Burnham Green.

During our stop, we discussed our next
outing in a fortnight's time to the Baldock
green & carry out a footpath survey for
the Ramblers' Association. A number of members
expressed interest & Mrs. Kim kindly agreed
to examine after the possibilities of having a bus.
Resuming our walk, we bore slightly to the
right across the green, over the Hamer Green
road, & entered a field by an opening closed

by a single strand of barbed wire. One of the party said he remembered using this field as a public path many years ago, although no path is marked on the 2nd & 6th maps.

Pleading slightly to the right we reached the corner of the field, ^{and} we found what may have been a stile, now surmounted by barbed wire leading into a narrow ~~path~~ ^{track}. The obstacle was crossed & once in the ~~low~~ track it became clear to two members of the party that ~~they~~ this was a track which they also had explored as a means of reaching Burnham Green, only to find that now it leads into a mass of allotments. Obviously, the end of this path requires more careful inspection.

Turning to the left, we carried on down the track to the rear of Harmer Green & came to a little triangle of lanes. Taking the left hand lane at the side of a picturesque thatched cottage, in a few yards we came to another coving of lanes. We kept ahead, i.e. in a roughly S.W. direction, down a muddy lane which led shortly into a ~~left~~ field. Here we left the lane & followed the line of pylons diagonally across the field. No trace of the actual path remained. This path brought us out at Dignell Water & the walk was concluded via the Conference House, Monk's Walk, & Stenard's Wood back to W.G.C.

No named leader

WJ

Ramble Sunday ~~the~~ March 16, 1952.

We had been asked by the Ramblers' Association to carry out a footpath survey of Wallington & Rushton parishes, near Baldock.

6" maps had been provided by the R.A., with some extra copies provided by the secretary, who had drafted a suggested scheme for allocating various parts of the districts to small parties (see schedule attached).

To provide transport a private bus was hired through the good offices of Mrs. Chinn.

The party of 18 set off at 9.30 a.m. under rather doubtful weather conditions.

Five parties were made up under the leadership of ① Sir Francis Peake ② Mr. Butterworth, ③ Mr. Bowler ④ Mr. Lyman ⑤ Mr. Chinn.

Party ① was dropped about a mile before entering Wallington & the remaining parties split up on arrival in the village. All the parties met at the Plough Inn Wallington for lunch. Many members took advantage of the time to inspect Wallington Church.

After lunch, parties 1-4 were taken by bus to Rushton parish & carried out the survey there; party ⑤ remained in Wallington to conclude the survey of that parish.

All the parties then met at the Moon & Stars inn, Rushton to join the bus home.

The weather improved greatly during the day & although the going had been quite heavy everywhere with a good deal of ploughed

land to negotiate, everybody seemed to have
enjoyed a most interesting + useful day.

Reports were given to the secretary by the
party leaders for incorporation into a report to
the R.A.

Ramble Sunday March 30, 1952

A very heavy snowfall had occurred on the previous day & on the Sunday morning about 6-8 inches of snow covered W.C.C. with drifts of some feet in depth in parts.

Only two members appeared at the time arranged for the annual, Messrs Bain & Whalley, but it was decided to carry out the ramble w/ far as possible.

We walked down Valley Rd + Lonsdale Lane to Lonsdale Mill & then took the path across Brookel Park to the Chequer Inn. For almost all the way, our path was over virgin snow & the light reflected from it was almost blinding in the more open spaces. Some of the large fir trees at the entrance to the Park looked magnificent under their coat of snow. Considerable drifting had occurred on the path & we were more than once thigh deep in the snow.

At the stile opposite the Chequer a fine snow cornice had formed & this was duly photographed. We took the ~~to~~ lane, almost opposite, leading to Cane Hyde & soon found this almost blocked by drifts three or four feet deep. A mallet heavy was being loaded by well teams brought across the field by tractor, no approach being possible down the lane. A fairly strong wind was whipping off the top layer of powdered snow & creating a miniature blizzard at times.

Nearly at the end of the lane we took a short lane on the right past two old cottages & then over a stile. We followed straight across the field with a farmhouse on the left & descended the hill along the hedge to a gate leading to Draver's lane. This gate was obstructed by recently placed branches & had been similarly obstructed on the ramble of 22/12/51. We removed some of the obstruction, crossed the lane slightly to the left & in spite of very deep drifts followed up hill in the direction of Chalkwell Farm until the road was reached. Here we turned right & on coming to the cross roads took the road to Water End. It was pleasant to see that the foxgloves & gipsies were making a good show in spite of the snow.

From Water End we took the path through Basket Wood Park to Basket Hill & then turned left along the path leading to Foot Green. Here we called for some refreshment at the Waggoners Inn & then by the golf links path returned to W.G.C. It had been a fairly heavy walk in the soft snow & we both felt tired but it had been an unusual & enjoyable walk. It will be seen that instead of carrying out the planned walk to Marford & Bunyan's Chimney, we had in fact repeated the inaugural ramble in reverse.

No named leads

Ramble - Easter Monday April 14th, 1952

A party of 12 (leader Mr. Whittenburg) caught the 9:45 a.m. bus to the Roebuck Inn at Broadwater. From here, we took the road to Aston. The weather was perfect, bright sun with a little breeze & good visibility. Although it was still early, the sun was quite warm. The road to Aston had some pleasant undulations & gave frequent broad views of the countryside. We noticed signs of the near encroachment of Stenage New Town & on the outskirts of Aston saw the recently erected houses for staff engaged on the undertaking.

Aston Church was a focus for attention. In the churchyard a very large primrose bush was in full bloom & contrasted with the paler yellow of the daffodils also growing in the churchyard. We inspected the interior of the church & was very pleased with the well-kept appearance & the pleasant contrast of the ancient walls & modern electric installations. The church was decorated ~~handsomely~~ beautifully with flowers in celebration of Easter & it was very obvious that much time & care had been spent over these floral tributes.

We then pursued our way along the road, through the village, to the village of Benington. By this time, the sun had become very warm indeed & we were all to reach the village & house to inspect the church.

As at Aston, the churchyard was a picture with daffodils & forget-me-nots & the display here was even finer than at Aston. It must be rare to see a churchyard such a mass of colour.

The interior of the Church also did not disappoint. The same well-lit air was noticeable as had been the case at Aston, with magnificent floral decorations.

Our leader was able to provide us with information regarding the history of the Church. It dates from the 14th & 15th century & the two prominent round stone figures between the chancel & the chancel are statues of Sir John de Beustade & his wife. Sir John was the envoy of Edward I to Robert the Bruce. There was also an interesting brass of a 15th century priest.

After leaving the church, we endeavoured to inspect Bevington Castle, one time home of the Kings of Mercia & scene of a war council held by Beowulf in 850 on the news of a Danish invasion. It appeared that the present landowner had had the ruins moved to a neighbouring site & we felt that with the loss of the historical association, a visit to this site was scarcely worth while. Instead, we adjourned to the neighbourhood of the Bell Inn, set by the roadside to eat our lunch & refreshed ourselves with liquid from the Bell. A photograph was taken & shows this pleasant interlude extremely well.

After lunch, we retraced our steps a short way to
 the outskirts of the village & took a cart-track
 on the left. This track soon led gently upwards
 over bare country, reminiscent of Denmark
 & giving some magnificent panoramas, & finally
 we came to a cross roads. Here, we turned
 right on to another track which descended
 quite rapidly & again provided us with some
 very fine views. In spite of the dry weather of the
 previous few days, the going here was quite
 wet & muddy. The track led us out on to
 a road opposite the grounds of Frogmore Hall.
 At the junction of track & road, we admired
 the beautiful display of anemones growing in the
 garden wall of a cottage. We turned right
 along the road & in about half a mile left.
 This road took us over a ford over the River
 Beane & we stopped to rest at that pleasant
 spot. One of the party pointed it was warm
 enough to paddle & his efforts were duly
 rewarded by the camera. We carried along the
 road & then ~~turned~~ turned left to a road
 leading along the edge of the grounds of Frogmore Hall.
 This led us to a main road where we turned
 right again for a short distance to the little
 hamlet of Hook's Cross. Here we turned
 left off the main road to a secondary
 road known as Shego's Wood. After about
 $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile we turned left on a lane
 leading to Peffer Green & endeavored



RON DRAWE LINDA CHING CYRIL CHING PETER SYLES SIR FRANCIS DEANE ERIC GAVIN

Mr De
TONGH
??

Outside the Bell Inn, Benington
 (Photo by Mr. Chinn)
 MRS. WILLYTON BUCKY
 RUTH MARTIN ILLY MARTIN PETER SYLES
 MARGERITE LOUGH??



ERIC
GAVIN →

Ford over the River Beane. G.R. 289,215
 (Photo by Mr. Chinn)

to find the footpath leading to Handley Hill.
 This we were unable to do & after crossing
 two fields we rejoined the track we had
 followed from Hook's bus. This suddenly
 deteriorated to a narrow, overgrown, path
 & eventually became so difficult that we
 were forced to take to the fields again. However,
 we were only a short distance from Handley Hill
 & reached the road against the Hall in a few
 minutes. Here we turned right into Datchworth
Green & enjoyed a rest & a welcome cup of tea
 at the local cafe. From Datchworth Green
 we returned via the Roman Road to
Robbery Bottom Lane & Handley Hill. This
 portion of the route was described in the
 journal of March 2nd. From Handley Hill,
 the bus was caught back to W.G.C.

Saturday April 26

WALK 14 3a

Ramble ~~Sunday April 27~~, 1952

met at 2.30 pm

A party of ~~two~~ twelve (leader M. Butterworth) \wedge
+ set off via Brookwood Lane + the path on the
golf course to Ayot Green, thence by the path
opposite the Wayfars to Brocket Park. At
the bridge over the lake we met two more
members + proceeded over the path to the Dogers
Inn. Crossing the main road, we took the lane
to Crown Hyde up at a point just short of
Upper Crown Hyde Farm, where the lane divides
into three, we crossed a stile on the left hand
lying between two lanes. This led diagonally over
two ~~old~~ fields, then turned half right along the
right hand side of the field to a cart track
running across the top of the field. We followed
this track to a gap in the hedge, turned left
through this + traversed the length of a field
to another gap leading to a rough cart track.
This brought us out to Colman Green. A
slight diversion was made to see the ruins of
the farmhouse where Burgon stayed + preached.
Only the chimney now remains. Hence it is
known as Burgon's Chimney. A tablet, only
partially decipherable, records its connection
with Burgon. This can be found
almost at the start of the lane (Dover's lane)
which leads ~~west~~ from Colman Green, on
the right hand side of the lane, almost at the
point marked G.P. (guide post) on the 6" map.

This upright of this guide post still ^{remains}
 We retraced our steps a short distance ^{we have found by another} +
 We took the path on the west of the green, at the
 side of the Prince of Wales Inn. A dilapidated
 board marked this path as a "Public
 Footpath". The path led through a small
 wood & we were delighted to hear at this spot
 a nightingale in full song. From the wood, the
 path led over two fields, then to the intersection
 of two lanes with a solitary cottage at the
 junction. We turned right for a few yards
 + then straight forward through a field gate
 towards Lower Beech Hyde Farm. We turned
 right on the side of this farm + noticed on
 our right the Devils Dyke, ~~an~~ a natural (?)
 feature which may have been used as a
 burial ground. The path led to a wood, where
 we turned left for a few yards + then left
 right on a stile to follow a path leading
 gently up hill. The path was well marked
 & brought us out on a main road where we
 turned right to reach Wheathampstead.
 Tea had been arranged at the Bull Inn
 & was greatly enjoyed. Feeling much refreshed,
 we restarted our walk by the lane on the right
 of the Bull, soon turned right on to a foot path
 & then left to reach a lane. Here we turned
 left again & very soon reached a footbridge
 over the river sea. In a few yards after
 crossing the bridge, we turned through a gate

on the night, ~~we~~ crossed a field diagonally to
the corner of a bridge & then followed a clear
path parallel the river bed for about
 $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile to Waterend. From here, we
took the well known path through Brochet
Park to Lemford & thence by path over the
golf links back to W.G.C., arriving there
about 7 p.m.

W.B.

Ramble Sunday May 11, 1952

Seventeen members assembled (leader Mr. Gamrod) on a rather blustering, rainy morning.

Our way was, at first, by the well known path through Sherwood + Monk's Walk to Dignall, then under the viaduct + up the hill past Welwyn North station + as far as a bend in the road, when ~~a fence~~ an opening + hand rail on the left of the road led to the bank + over the entrance to the tunnel by a well marked path. The path continued very obviously, over the line of the tunnel as was clear by the two ventilation stacks which we passed, still surrounded by barbed wire erected by the Home Guard during the war. We noted the path from Lockley's Park to Hamer Green which crossed our own path soon after passing the first ventilation shaft. Rain now fell rather heavily + rickshaws were the order of the day. After passing through a wood, the path brought us to the first houses at Hendley Hill + to a road which led downhill + in about half a mile brought us out on the Great North Rd, just to the left of Pudding Pottanham. Here we turned left, crossed the road, passed the North Star + took the first turning on the right. This led uphill for about ~~half~~ half a mile + at the top of the hill, turned

left. We continued along this lane for about half a mile, passed another lane on the left, & then shortly reached a kissing gate on the left. This led to a rather narrow path rising at first through a holly fern & then into Daneshbury Park. This was a most delightful stretch of parkland. The path brought us out just to the rear of the Clock restaurant where we turned right for Welwyn. Here we enjoyed refreshment at the Vine Hotel & discussed future plans. Most of the ~~party~~ party then boarded the bus for W.G.C., although four decided to continue home on foot. Some of the party alighted for the bus at Ayot Green & met Mr. Davis at the Wagoner's Inn where quite a vigorous political discussion was carried on. W.G.C. was finally reached about 1.45 pm.

W.S.

Ramble, Bramfield district. Saturday afternoon, 24th May 1952

A party of twelve found seats on the 236 Hartford bus from W.G.C. station, but there were queues waiting at all the stops & some of us stood up to let mothers & babies sit down. Mr Davis unfortunately was unable to be with us, & some of our regular walkers were away on holiday. We got off at the White Horse, Hartingfordbury, & walked on past the Panchanger producer gardens & drove gates to a path leading off on the left through the woods about 50 yards up the hill.

Four or five "Saturday members" who had been only on the Wheatthamstead walk previously, were in the party, & a remark was passed forward to Mr Pyles the leader that one or two ladies hoped we should walk rather than run. A medium-slow pace was adopted, but the leader said we should not be able to dally too much as it was necessary to reach Tain's not later than 5.15 if we wanted to have tea. The pleasant wooded path brought us out to cultivated fields & along the edge of some more woodland where nightingales were singing intermittently, & thence across a cornfield to the Hartford-Wooling road. It was a beautiful warm sunny afternoon & the weather so settled that no extra coats had to be carried.

We turned left along the Wooling road for about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile & then took a well marked track

along the hedge side on the right, through
Salsbroom woods, where a few late bluebells could
still be seen, & out on to the Bramfield road
opposite a lane leading to Bacon's Farm.

Turning right along the road for a short distance
& then left at the next lane which we followed
a little way, we took a field path on the right,
well marked by farm vehicles at first, in the
neighbourhood of West End Farm, but later
ploughed up & indistinguishable though unobstructed.
This path brought us at about 10³⁰ to Bramfield
Church, almost hidden by its surrounding trees,
where we were glad to rest in the cool & quiet
before going into the village to admire the
thatched dwellings & the old well on the green,
now disused & stony round with barbed wire.

Mindful of our tea at Tevis, we were soon off
along the lane to Bramfield Farm, taking the footpath
along the edge of the wood, which showed little
sign of use, & so down by a sudden lane it
drove up watercourse to the road, which we
followed to the Rose & Crown at Tevis.

Here we had a most enjoyable tea in the
garden, & a good rest, before proceeding
along a footpath near the back of the hotel
over a field & along the hedge side to the
'concrete path' on the N. side of Tevis Water.
These paths were evidently well-used, & easy to
follow. The path, with its narrow strip of concrete
laid down by German prisoners many years ago

to save the right range, ^x brought us to Bigswell. Under the Viaduct we turned through a gate to a footbridge over the river, & followed a path upstream to a small lake, & then through fields to Bigswell Church. So, by way of Monk's Walk we came to Shavards Wood where the party began to break up. It was about 7:15 when we reached Bridge Road & dispersed to our homes well pleased with ourselves & with our outing.

EJB.

x This reported origin of the concrete path is incorrect, our local historian & fellow member, Fred Savod, tells us. The owner of Levin Water laid the path down as a permanent footpath from Bigswell to Levin, so that the public should not walk through the grounds of Levin Water.

Leader Mr. Byles.