

Easter Monday April 6th

WALK 38

18

A party of 11 caught the bus to Broadwater at 9.50 (two by the skin of their teeth). There was a cold wind and threatening clouds and the forecast was of rain hail and thunder. It rained while we were on the bus but stopped when we alighted at Broadwater.

We took the footpath - now somewhat spoiled by the building of the New Farm of Slavey - to Shephall and thence a more pleasant path to Aston End. This path was not well marked, but the one we took from Aston End to Walkem had practically ceased to exist. It ~~starts~~ starts from Lord's Farm and converges on the River Beane which is crossed by a small bridge at Walkem. Ploughed fields, mud and barbed wire made the going very heavy.

We walked along the road through Walkem and just beyond it turned right past some old thatched cottages, crossed the R. Beane by a footbridge then through a gap in the hedge just beyond the church where the footpath to Ardley commences.

Most of us were getting hungry and we stopped in the shelter of a hedge to eat our lunch.

We continued along the path to Ardley past a beautiful old mansion called Ardleybury and made our way to the
for

liquid refreshment. Meanwhile a fire had started in the thatch of a cottage in the village to the great delight of two of our members who specialise in country house fires. They dashed out to take snaps of the fire and the fire engine.

From Andley we took the country lane towards Cottred; the slender spire of Cottred Church stood up on a hill on our right. Where the road turned ^{350'} left to Cottred we kept on past an old windmill and struck a farm track which runs from Cottred to Luffenball, crossed the road at Luffenball (a tiny hamlet) to another farm track which took us across the green Roman Road to Halls Green. A mile or two along a country road and we were at The Anchor where tea was laid in the Bar. It was a very good tea too.

Up to now we had seen many black clouds round us, but, except for a few splashes, we had kept dry. It rained after we left The Anchor and until we reached Stevenage. Just north of the pub a path goes off south west past Gosfield Manor. There is practically no sign that it is ever used ~~and~~ but we found our way through without much trouble and reached Stevenage just in time to catch a bus to W.G.C. The conductress told us fearsome stories of downpours of rain and hail and we arrived home feeling that Providence had been kind to us.

Leader Sir Francis Peake

SIR FRANCIS PERKE AND ERIC BAVIN



The Pathfinders ??
Easter Monday 1953

nr 39 21

Ramble - Sunday, April 19, 1953

A party of 18 assembled, Leader Mr. Gurnod,
on a delightfully sunny, but cool, morning.
The route we followed through Sherwood
Wood, Nons Walk, Welwyn North Station, &
over the Tunnels was described in detail
for the ramble of May 11, 1952.

However, instead of taking the footpath
on the left of Danbury Park Rd through
Danbury Park we kept along the former
road, through the farm buildings, downhill
until we emerged on the Colicote road
about half a mile from Welwyn.

Refreshment was taken in Welwyn &
the party caught a bus back to WGC,
arriving back at the unusually early hour
of 12.45.

WJG

Ramble - Saturday May 2, 1953

A party of 14 assembled on W.G.C railway station, leader M. Byles. It was the first ramble which we had started by train + all the party seemed in high spirits. We caught the 2.25 p.m. train to Hatfield, crossed the line + turned right down the road in front of the station until we reached "The Magnis of Granby" where we turned left over the river Lea. We crossed the main road + continued up the lane in front, forking left right along the lane labelled "To Natchez End". Soon we came in sight of Natchez End + Natchez End Farm, of which Lynda wrote so delightfully in his Crays of Elia. We admired the place + beauty which seemed to surround these places in the bright spring sunshine, + tried to imagine what these houses looked like when Lynda saw them. We walked a little further along the lane to Hollybush Cottages + again admired a typical Old English garden. We then retraced ~~our~~ our steps to Natchez End + followed a cart track leading off from the corner of the lane. The weather

had by now become almost summertime in its heat & all the party enjoyed the sights & sounds of the English countryside at its best.

The cart tracks brought us to the main Hanfenden - Wheatthorpe road where we turned left for a short space, then right over the river, then again & over a level crossing, the gates of which had obviously recently been severely damaged.

I immediately over the crossing, on the left of the road, was a stile leading into a field of growing wheat. According to the map the path led directly across this field, but our leader informed us that, when surveying this ramble, he had been asked by the farmer to walk round the margin of the field rather than damage the crop & had also been asked to take the party the same way. After some discussion, we acceded to the farmer's request, although it was strictly against our principle. At the opposite corner of the field, there was another obvious stile, confirming the line of the footpath. Here we turned into a cart track leading into Annwell Lane. Here we turned right & right again

at the second fork. In the hamlet of
Anwell we stopped again to admire a
fine old house + garden. At the cross
roads beyond Anwell, we kept forward
to Nomanland + soon reached the
Three Oaks where tea was arranged.

This was a very pleasant + ample
meal + was thoroughly enjoyed by all.

After tea, we crossed Nomanland
Common + followed Dyke Lane, to the
right of the Park Hotel. After about
3/4 mile, we came to a stile + path
on the right leading to the Devils Dyke.
This is a large ditch between two earth
walls + is reputed to be the remains
of the earthworks of an Ancient British
encampment. After walking through the Dyke,
we came out again on the lane leading
to Maford, where we took the well
known path along the river bank to
Waterend, Bocket Park + so back
to W.G.C.

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WALK 41

Ramble - ~~WALK~~ Sunday May 17

A party of 19 Leader Mrs Byles, assembled at 10.0 am for the walk to the ~~Wood~~ Horseshoes Inn on the St Albans road. It was a fine sunny morning & everybody was in high spirits as we set off along the footpath a few yards east of the Horseshoes, on the opposite side of the road. The path was quite well marked & with stiles in reasonable repair so that we were considerably surprised to find a new barbed wire fence forming access to the track leading to Beech Farm. This was surmounted with a certain amount of difficulty & it was resolved that a letter should be sent to De Havillands regarding this fence [This matter has now been settled to our satisfaction].

We continued along the track past Beech Farm & out on to the road where we turned right for a short distance & then took a footpath on the left indicated by a sign as a Public Footpath. After about half a mile along this clearly defined path we came out in a lane where we turned

right + after about half a mile, came
 to a path, where we turned right +
 almost immediately left on to a rough
 cart track following the edge of Symonds Grove
 Great Wood. This we followed for about
 half a mile when at a bend of the ~~road~~
 wood, a stile led us to a path running
 through the wood. This was followed
 bearing right + then left past an old
 quarry eventually emerging on the lane
 between Chaldwell Wood + Titnoll's Wood.
 Here we turned left for a short distance
 + then took a path through a chicken
 farm moving along the rear of Titnoll's
 Wood. This we followed until it left
 the wood + then took a path passing between
 two other small woods + leading
 diagonally across the fields to Lower
 Hyde + the lane to the Uygens
 Inn. Here all the party partook of
 refreshment + arrangements were made
 for a Whit Sunday walk. They were
 removed on way across Broomfield Park
 to Lendpath + W.C., arriving here
 about 1.45 p.m.

WALK #2 27.

Ramble - Whit-Sunday May 28, 1953

A party of nine met at 9:45 am
leader Mr. Byles, for the bus to Hetchin.
The weather was glorious, already warm
& promising real heat later in the day.
The route taken was the same as
that described on Dec 14, 1952 but
the beautiful weather enabled us to
have a picnic lunch on this occasion
on the slopes of Telegraph Hill, with
a magnificent view in front of us.
After lunch, a route to Pagsden for
drinks, we passed through a small
copse carpeted with wild strawberries
& full of hawthorn bushes covered with
may blossom. The scent of the
blossom was almost overpowering.
A very interesting conversation was
had at the "Live + Let Live Inn"
with a local inhabitant, from whom
we were disappointed to learn that
the "Golden Hill" of Laburnum trees
to Heston was now largely shrouded
by defecations of passers-by.
However, we carried on along their

road, admiring the delightful shadiness
 of the road & the laburnums which
 still survived. Arrived at Heston,
 the village pump was put to good
 use for the purpose of both drinking
 & washing, several members taking the
 opportunity of cooling their tired feet.
 Photographs were taken ~~of~~ of this pleasant
 interlude.

Resuming our way, we found that
 a field near the Pichard Way had
 now been planted with crop girdle
 covering the track we were following,
 so that to avoid damage we decided
 to follow the side of the field. We were
 soon met by a young man in keeper
 costume who told us there was no way
 there. We explained our position &
 a rather useless conversation ensued
 in which it was clear that our
 young keeper was very happy about
 rights of way generally & was merely
 acting on superior orders.

We eventually reached the Pichard
 way & Lully by the route previously
 described.

W.B.



Ablutions at Hexton Pump.
Whit-Sunday 1953



More Ablutions
at Hexton.
Whit-Sunday.
1953.

LEFT TO RIGHT
JOHN CARTER, ERIC RAVIN,
FRANK STANWAD, LADYS
STANWAD, PETER ATLES,
MAY POTTIE



Lunchtime on Telegraph Hill. Whit Sunday 1953

↑
 LADYS STANWAD
 ↑
 ERIC RAVIN
 ↑
 JOHN CARTER
 ↑
 PETER ATLES

Saturday 30th May. *

WALK 43 29.

Fifteen rambles set off on the 303 to a spot midway between Knebworth & Broadwater, at a place known to the bus conductor as Post 29. A track towards the railway led on to the golf course and by keeping straight across this for a short way we were able to join with a ledge, now the only mark of a path shown on most maps. On coming to a lane we turned right as far as the lodge gates; from here down an avenue of trees it was only necessary to follow the gravel road through Knebworth Park, coming to the bridge spanning the lake. Few seemed to know that spot, where swan-geese and their young amused us with a show of diving.

Keeping to the road as far as the gates, only a few yards really from the bridge, we found a footpath on the right, following the fence which borders the private part of the water's edge. Beneath overhanging trees was a small swing gate giving access to an unused bridge crossing the end of the lake. Having waited for the party to collect together (there are several terrible footpaths here) we took the left hand path leading to the Codicote Hitchin road - a lovely path beneath the trees, and well defined. Left along the main road and through a gate on the right into another wood, grassy

* Leaves Miss Womack

paths and signs of bluebells which had been in full beauty just the week before. About a mile of road was then necessary, turning right out of the wood, along the lane past cottages gay with Coronation decorations. Away to the right could be seen Stevenage New Town with the masses of houses, but we still found the country lane more attractive. Where the lane took a sharp right turn we left it for a grassy track on the left, following this for some time and then down an avenue of trees on the right, with a lovely view of The Bury (a big house) away in front. To save a bit of road we crossed the lane at the foot of the hill, up the path on the further side a little to the left, then sharp left by the fence at the top of the slope. From here the path leads through the meadow into Whitwell by the JHR, but we made for the Bull and tea - a good one for $\frac{1}{9}$ and worth repeating. Ring Whitwell 54 the day before for a good spread.

The paths home, deceptive in that it looks fairly short route, were mostly grass fields obviously left for hay. Out of the Bull we turned left until we came to a track up hill to join our earlier path, then right and straight on to the road. Just keep walking straight is the best description. The path leads easily from one field to another with a right turn once, through the hedge

and sharp left, then left on the lane to the cottages and right, back onto paths. We should have come out by the Node for the Y.Y. Bush, but we missed it and the local bus from Coacote, so we walked into the village, where some quenched thirst, some looked for ice cream, and some lucky ones found a private car to take them home.

It was an uneventful day in that nothing went amiss, but it was good to know that the first part through Knebworth Park was apparently new ground.

Done

Midnight Walk to Bucks Farm Little Berkhamstead
June The 1955

This adventure was the final item on the programme of the Welwyn Garden City Corporation Festivities, following a display of fireworks on the Campus which finished at 10.30 pm. Saturday evening 6th

The walkers met ^{at midday} at the corner of Parkway & Bridge Road and twenty - ten ladies and ten men joined. These included four youths from the Justice Boys Club. The night was fine & cloudless.

The town lights went out as we walked Parkway and we found it very dark; only starlight - no moon appeared until about 1.30 am - Torches were a help when we turned into the fields at the bottom of Stanboro' lane on the path past Woodhall Farm to Mill Farm Road, then by lanes to the Coal Sand Mill just beyond the Hertford Road from Hatfield.

The sea looked swift and blank and we took the field path alongside the river pastures to Essenden Mill.

The torches were essential ^{also} for rough paths and gateways - A herd of young bullocks was excited by the torches & voices and stampeded around the head of the party but caused no trouble.

There was no traffic on the stretch of road to Bedwell Park Lodge gates and the party had warmed up from the exercise and continued well along the rough path and at the second lodge gates began the climb up to the village of Little Berkhamstead, which was entered on the road from Essenden -

The moon was a dim lambent cartoonish and only outlines of the church, houses & John Strathens tower (200 years old) could be seen

The moon was a dim lamb eastwards
and only outlines of the church, houses &
John Stratton's tower (300 years old) could be seen
we had completed about seven miles and joyfully
turned into the lane leading to Bucks farm
anticipating rest & refreshment -

We arrived here at 3.30am and
found our Chairman had prepared a ground

2
 bonfire. There was some ablaze - started off with straw + sticks - Branches 6/7 feet were stacked to a peak and the light and heat gave comfort + joy to the party.

Seated around the fire they sat & joked and gladly watched our secretary efficiently, stand up his primus and fill up a pan of water with sausages and deftly turned them as they sizzled - These were generously distributed to the 'gypsies' who expressed their delight.

The Chairman had bottles of ale for all who had a thirst of that sort and "all went merry as a marriage bell".

The light had strengthened and we could enjoy the dell between a hedge and a wood we had been invited to use by our Chairman, who had made the trip with his wife in a motor - Mrs. Jarrow had rugs to spare for those in need.

The fire was very cheerful and the party was loath to leave at 4.30 am to make the returning walk.

Clouds veiled the sunrise and a dawn breeze encouraged a good pace to start homeward.

A Robin was the first bird song to be heard, then followed thrush blackbird and a cock crow. At about 6.30 near to the Coldfearn rail crossing at Jarrow a nightingale was "singing in" but no full song was heard.

We returned our route to the lodge in the Heatford Road and then by way of Betty Jarrow, Coldfearn to Hornston Hall - The party here separated to their respective quarters of the garden City well contented with their night walking.

We retraced our route to the
lodge in the Hertford Road and then by
way of Letty Green, Cole Green to Hornstead
Lane - The party here separated to their
respective quarters of the garden City, well
contented with their night walking.

J. W. W. W.