

Saturday September 4th 1954

The members met at the Gt North Rd corner of Valley Road for the 2.15 pm bus to Codicote.

The party numbered 13! five ladies to six men and a youth and a boy.

There had been a steady rainfall from early hours to 11 am that morning but the forecast was good and the clouds were clearing.

However the footpaths were very wet - the long grass saturated with dew & rain.

After confirming tea at 5.00 at the 'George and Dragon' at Codicote, we took the path, leaving the Hitchin Road ^{left hand side} just past the turning to Whitwell. We climbed a little alongside the hedge and then across a ploughed field with no sign of a path - and before we reached the higher ridge at Three Haines farm three stiles had to be cleared of under & over growths before the party could cross them without hindrance.

Good view point at the top to east & south of Codicote - green & yellow fields with dark woodlands.

We turned away (left) at the farm and descended the Three Haines lane for a hundred yards and took a gap in the hedge (right hand) across the fields to a track ^(left) from the farm to the Whitwell Road. The County map shows this path along a ridge falling to the road but the only path we could see was one in the 'valley' following a 'cow path' through a gap in a fence. This brought us to the Whitwell-Codicote Road opposite the gateway into Lupton. Two paths we turned left and passed the road

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We turned left and walked the road two hundred yards to the farm cottages on the right and turned in here on the farm road across the bridge (R. Memoam) and followed the farm road thro' two gates (left hand turn) south towards the Welwyn - Kimpton valley

At the post gate (hedge row) we turned up the edge of a new lay and followed the hedge up to a gate and passed to the other side of the hedge alongside a fir wood named as Coronation Plantation. At the corner of the plantation we turned in right at a gateway and climbed a bit northwards thro' Hogs wood to a cart track - left here with the woodland on the right thro' another gate - in which were nesting about a dozen young pheasants (been feeding too well on the fallen wheat) - and still keeping the wood ^{right} hand turned in a gap on the right following the cart track half left up to the Park House at Hoo Cottage.

From here leads the trap path by corn fields and Valentine's grove down to the lodge on the Whitwell-Kimpton Rd but the paths had been planted with wheat & oats and were not walkable.

From the Park House there was a grand prospect of the Meon Valley & Kimpton village. The sun was shining and it was easy walking down to the village. At the Whitwell Inn we waited a few minutes for the local bus and filled it up for a 700 mile ride to Cordoba.

After a very appetizing and liberal tea four of the party left to get home by the 5.40 bus.

The remaining members set out again by the footpath alongside the Bell Inn ~~to~~ the Church but turned left near Bay Farm and along a grass valley to a stile beyond which the path climbed along a ~~side~~ along the edge of wheat field to the edge of a wood - Very many corn fields to be seen from here with the sunshine giving them a glow -

With the wood on the left and

afterwards continuing the same path

After a very appetising and liberal tea four of the party left to get homewards by the 5.40 bus

The remaining members set out again by the footpath alongside the Bell Inn towards the Church but turned left near Bung Farm and along a grass valley to a stile beyond which the path climbed along a dyke along the edge of wheat field to the edge of a wood - Very many corn fields to be seen from here with the sunshine giving them full glory -

With the wood on the left and afterwards continuing the same line the path brought us to the Tagmore Green - Codicote Rd

We crossed it and took a path - not on the map but avoiding Tagmore Green Nurseries - to a ploughed field - ^{right hand} along the edge of this & left at the end along a cart track towards Arnoldofan

3.

Here we rejoined the Map path and turned right across a pasture to a gateway in the left corner - The path leading along the edge of a cornfield until a stile on the right took us to the path by the Water tower (right hand) and Turkey farm (left hand) out to a side lane leading ^(left) into the private roadway from Patters Heath to Danesbury Park.

The way down across the Park to the Welwyn road was very pleasant.

At the 'Clock House' Bus stop "goodbyes were said"; A few stalwarts deciding to walk the rest of the way home.

The walk was considered satisfactory because it introduced us to ~~new~~ paths not known to members previously, to seeing the new County maps and gave us some enjoyable 'path finding' - The route was very pleasant and worth while repeating in reverse or part of future walks.

J. Whittenbury

Ramble - Sunday Sept 19th, 1954.

A party of seven assembled at the corner of
 Linsford Lane - the Great North Rd for the
 9.40 Green Line bus to Hatfield, leader Mr. Bain,
 where we changed to the 341 bus to Hatfield.
 This devious route was necessary because the
 direct 372 bus did not run to 11.30 a.m.
 At Mill Green we picked up five more
 members who had walked over the fields
 from N.G.C.

The weather was now looking most promising
 + the early mist rapidly dissipating. By the
 time we reached Hatfield, the morning was
 brilliantly sunny + promised to remain so.
 We waited a few minutes for the last
 member to arrive from Flitby Park +
 then set off.

We followed the same route as
 previously described (6/9/53) to the lunch
 place at Wadesmill. Here we lunched
 in the garden of the inn, noting with
 regret that the fine walnut (?) tree in
 front of the inn, under which we had lunch
 last year, had been removed.

The weather now was very warm +

brilliantly sunny & the party basked in the heat, unusual indeed in this disappointing summer. At last, the leader persuaded the party to start off again. We took a short ~~path~~ path leading east from the corner of the road against the sun & this led us very quickly to a cut-track running parallel with the River Rib. After about half a ~~the~~ mile we came to the site of the ruined Thundersidge Church & gazed on the sight of a deserted graveyard & church, almost completely over-grown with weeds & ivy, reminiscent of Gray's "Elegy" & fit surroundings for a first-class ghost story. We resumed our way along the path, & shortly found ourselves walking along the bank of the river to a ford & small waterfall. The attraction of the water was too great for some of the party who enjoyed a quick bathe & paddle. This was interrupted by the sudden arrival of a herd of cows, preceded by two cows of most peculiar & fearsome countenance, almost suggesting denizens of the graveyard we had recently visited.

The path now swung away slightly from the river in the direction of what appeared to

be a ruined castle. This eventually turned out to be an old, empty house with battlemented towers, standing quite alone in the riverside meadows. Some of the brave spirits explored the house & there was much speculation regarding the past of this unusual building.

We took ~~a~~ a track by the side of this house leading steeply up to the main road, where we turned right for a short distance & then, at the first corner, took a path on the left across the fields. At the end of the first field we turned right along a cart track across Ashridge Common (rather different from the place with the same name in the Chilterns). After about half a mile, we turned left down a clearly marked green track between two ploughed fields & continued down that until we came out on a road against two burnt-out cottages. Here we turned right & right again up a farm road, to see the farm with the curious name of Noah's Ark. There seemed to be no architectural reason for the name & it was thought that some former owner was probably called Noah & hence the name. We turned left, ~~and~~ to the main road

again + right for a short distance. We then took a
 from track on the right which gave us
 some delightful views forward over Wareside.
 In a little valley, we turned right for a
 few yards down the side of field + then left
 along the division between two fields to
 emerge on to a narrow + muddy lane.
 Here we turned left + followed the lane
 which, in places, was completely overhung
 by trees but quite unobstructed +
 evidently well used. We passed
 Morley Ponds + finally emerged at
 Reeds Green. We turned a few yards
 to the left + a well marked footpath
 on the right brought us to Wareside
 at 4 pm, exactly as scheduled.

Tea was ready at the Chequers Inn. The
 food was quite good but the arrangements
 for liquid refreshment were bad + an
 extra change was made for cups of tea
 after the first. It was felt that on another
 occasion, a better place should be looked for.
 After tea, some members caught a bus
 home from Wareside, + the rest continued
 the walk. It was a delightfully sunny evening
 + all were in good spirits on spite of being

already accomplished 12-13 miles.

We turned left from the Byways for a few yards & then crossed the road & on a stile on the right. An individual path led along the side of a ditch to a stream & on a narrow footbridge which we crossed, continuing along the stream (the River Ash) over the railway & then right along the course of the stream. Close to Mardoch Station we turned right for a few yards up a road & then left along a path which followed the railway for a short distance & then re-crossed the Ash against two cottages. The path led up hill & then in a S.W. direction along the edge of a wood. At a bank in the wood, the path turned sharply to the right & led to a well marked secondary road, where we turned right, down a gentle slope through the wood & emerged on the fields opposite to Watersplace. We did not follow the road to this large farm but turned left along a path on the edge of Casneye Wood Park. Here we admired ~~two~~ fine specimens of ~~the~~ Jersey Cows. At the end of the Park, we crossed the railway, then left across the R. Ash once again & on to a track leading to the main road between Stanstead Abbotts & Ware. Here we turned right

for a few yards & then took a lane gate
on the left leading to a path across the
meadows & then through allotments to
Ware.

Here we caught a bus to Hatfield
& then another to W.G.C., arriving about
7.30 pm. We had walked about 15-16
miles on one of the most perfect days of
the summer & were well content.

[Handwritten signature]

21 members turned out for this walk
in rather dull but on the whole satisfactory
weather.

It was a repetition in the main of
the walk on Saturday afternoon, 6th March,
1954. There was not a great deal of improvement
in the quantity of mud to be seen & traversed!

One slight variation was that we stayed on
the lane leading from the river valley to
the hamlet of West End, instead of striking
off by Darkinsdell Grove. The reason was
that the first field to be crossed from the lane
had been ploughed & would have been heavy going.

The party reached Mill Green in good shape
(after the pleasant tea interval at Epsomton
Post Office) and there dispersed to reach their
homes by the most convenient routes.

L. Williams

Bramfield & Marden Hill

Sunday, 24/10/54

Twelve of us got off the bus at the North Star & proceeded up Oaklands Rise to Harnes Green Wood, where many large oak trees had been felled obstructing some of the paths. The route to Marden Hill was the reverse of that taken on Aug. 9th 1953 (p. 41), the trickiest bit being the navigation of Harnes Green Wood in a general easterly direction. It is easy to get lost in this wood, which was delightful in its autumn dress, but a previous reconnaissance (with compass) had made sure of the path.

So to Hedd's Farm, Collyer's Farm, Bull's Green & the Back Lane. It was a mild & pleasant morning with heavy dew & gloom from a cloud gilt sun. We stayed to admire - & for the adventurous to climb - the neat water tower at Bull's Green, which had been built on a deep pit for foundations on that galling thirsty day in August last year, when we drank from the builders' tap.

The Back Lane is always delightful, but to avoid some of the wet & muddy patches we walked the stubble fields beside it. So to

the Grandison Arms at Branfield & a comfortable picnic lunch in the saloon bar.

A visit to the church was made, & then on by hedgerows (not much sign of path) to West End Farm, & by bridle path to Bacon's Farm & Marden Hill. After crossing the drive we went through an iron gate on the right behind the house, & followed the path to Fair Church where a short stay was made. From the other end of the churchyard we took the path across the field & through the little wood to the concrete path which we followed to Bigsmall, & thence by Monk's Walk (where we met our Secretary & a friend coming towards us) we came ~~back~~ through the woods, taking our open-air appetites home to our teas.

E.F.B.

Sunday 31st October 1954.

Chilterns & Thames.

MS-Herts Footpaths Society. Meet 8.50 a.m. Welwyn. Stairs Car Park, Sunday, 31 October, for special bus to the Chilterns. Leader: Mr. Thornburgh. Route: Cadmore End, Pansal, the Haulshole Valley, Marlow (road). 12 miles approximately. Bring lunch, tea provided.

Again the special outing by Coach to see the Antennae edawning in the Chiltern beechwoods was marred by incessant rain - evidently the Fates intend to discourage us from walking outside our own locality.

Under grey skies, 19 started off from the Stags Car Park by road to step out at Wheelerend, 3 miles beyond West Wycombe (Bucks). The first part of the walk led across Cadmore End Common - a matter of more or less following any one of several tracks in a general S-westward direction until one hits the Stencherde-Marlow road at the village of Cadmore End, and crosses the road up to the church. Two or three of the party who had stopped behind feared they were being left in the lurch, but they did shortly catch up and we carried on by the path leading through the young trees just beginning to make up for war time felling and down the lay hillside into Fingst.

This attractively situated village boasts an old church whose tower is capped by a double-gabled roof - rather a curiosity.

We climbed up the steep muddy path leading to Trith, but before reaching that village turned right along what was nominally a bridle path through the woods but was in fact dense undergrowth that had to be pushed through. In we walked

our way back down to the Hambleton valley at Kiermatt - a very long 3/4 mile (the sign post said) to Fingest. Thence we decided to strike to the road into Hambleton, where lunch.

Two of the party here left us to return home, having been picked up by car; five more took the road to catch a bus into Harlow where they awaited us at tea. The remainder set off up the hill to Rotten Row (farm + cluster of cottages), avoided the mud of Heath Wood by sticking to the lane round Bodlemer End, & just past here down the green valley facing Pallinghill Woods we had our best view of the autumn colour of the day - the beech leaves shone a brilliant russet in the light, perhaps assisted by the stepping of the rain just before.

The last woods to go through (Bournepost Wood) brought us to the Moulton road, not far from the town, but instead of going the short way in we made a detour by Hawleyford Lane down to the Thames, and spent the last mile or a half along the riverside seeing Bisham Abbey across the water.

Tea at the "Porpora" on the waters edge was very pleasant - a warm cosy room, good strong hot tea, and Mr + Mrs Jones "hovering" to see if anyone wanted more.

A "husband" who had joined us by car at tea gave a lift back home or time more, so the return by coach we were all able to stretch our legs being one per double seat. And thence without incident back to W. G. C.

