

WALKS FROM THE CROWN & ANCHOR



WALK 2

WANSDYKE FARM LOOP

2 miles/3.2 km : 45 minutes

generally level, no stiles

1 From the Crown & Anchor pub car park turn left onto the road heading towards Buttermere. Immediately on the left is the 16th century Rose Cottage with its later well-winding gear outside it. Twenty metres further on there is an option to turn right along Church Lane to view the 12th century All Saints' Church, after which visit retrace your steps to the main road.

The church was built by Henry of Blois, grandson of William the Conqueror and powerful Bishop of Winchester, who owned the village. The tower of the church is reputed to have been built in 1349 as a thanksgiving for the village surviving the Black Death.

2 Continue towards Buttermere. The road goes uphill and passes, on your right, the whitewashed, thatched Forge Cottage, which was once the blacksmith's forge. After a couple of bends, at the top of a short hill you reach Manor Farmhouse on your right. Continue ahead along the road for about 100m until just past the last house on the left hand side, Elston Farmhouse, where there is a farm track and public footpath sign to the left.

3 Go through the gate and follow the farm track. Ahead of you on the top of the escarpment is Rivar Copse, known locally as the Bull's Tail, which conceals a Celtic bowl barrow. After about 500m ignore a path branching right across the fields towards the downs. After a further 100m the track turns sharp left.

4 Follow the track to the left, on this permissive route.

Looking right can just be seen the buildings of Ham Spray House, once the home of prominent members of the Bloomsbury Group – Lytton Strachey, Dora Carrington, and Ralph and Frances Partridge.

5 After about 200m, when the track turns sharp right, leave the track, crossing straight ahead into a field and turn sharp left alongside the field boundary on your left along a less distinct path. (Do not turn left on the gravel track between fences). Follow the field boundary for about 100m until the path turns right at the edge of a wood.

6 Turn right and follow the path along the edge of the field until it curves slightly left alongside the boundary of Acorn Cottages, built in 1945 for estate workers of Wansdyke Farms. Continue until the path meets Spray Road.

7 Turn left at the road and head gently downhill into the village until you reach the Crown & Anchor pub.

