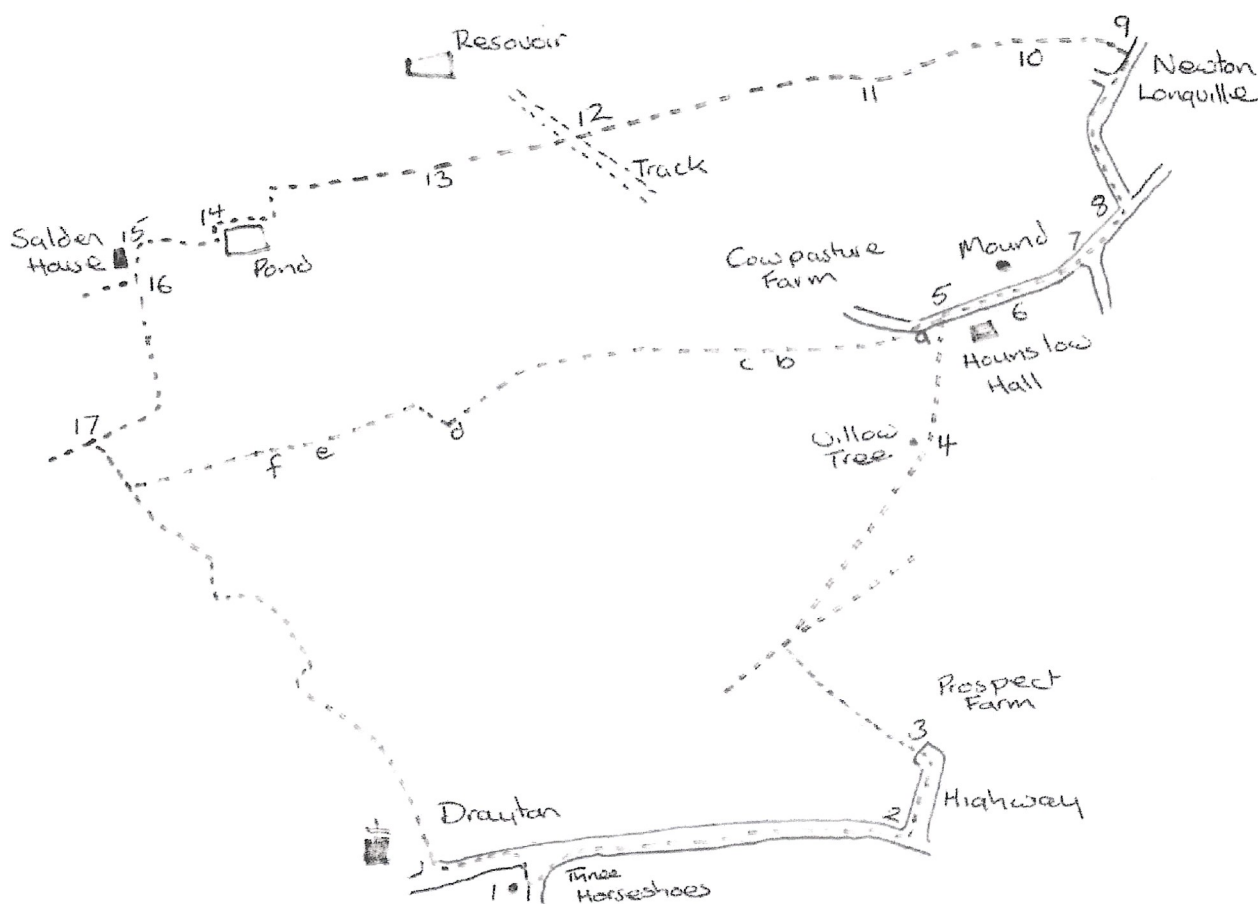


Jeremy's Walk Number 3 : : Newton Longville and Salden – 5 miles



The main walk is relatively easy. However, there is a short stretch along a fairly busy stretch of road and, when I walked it recently, there is a broken stile on the stretch from Newton Longville to Salden. Although I got over the fence it does take a bit of care to avoid falling into the ditch on the far side. If you don't fancy taking your chances with a dodgy stile, I have included an alternative, shorter, route, avoiding this obstacle at the end.

1. From the War Memorial head down Main Road, past the school to the turning on the left called Highway. Highway was once one of the main routes in and out of the village. The 1599 Salden Estate Map seems to indicate that Highway ran almost directly to Newton Longville with a branch heading off to Newton Road in the vicinity of where Crossroads Farm now stands. By the time of the 1760 Jeffreys Map, the direct route to Newton Longville had disappeared, but the branch to Newton Road remained.
2. Go up Highway past Bargate Farm and, at the gateway of Prospect Farm, follow the track round to the left. The Jeffreys Map shows Highway turning right just beyond the Prospect Farm gate and headed across to the Drayton/Newton Road (roughly on the same alignment as now) before continuing on to the modern Drayton-Newton Leys Road, roughly, where the sharp(ish) bend now is, this side of Bletchley Turf. The name Highway may reflect that it followed the higher ground out of the village, whilst another road, known as Mill Way or Millers Way, took a lower route (in part, the modern route) out of the village, to Hollingdon. The route of the modern road and the current site of the crossroads date from the early 19th Century. The name Bargate probably derives from when Highway was stopped up.

3. Follow the track past the Rickyard Allotments and go, downhill, through the kissing gate. At the bottom of the hill, footpaths go left and right. Go right, over a stile. The footpath divides again. Ignore the path that goes straight ahead, along the hedge and, instead, take the path heading diagonally left up the slope towards Hounslow Hall (not as grand as it sounds).
4. In the valley just before Hounslow Hall, pass just to the right of a lone Willow tree and then, the footpath kinks slightly left. Follow the path uphill (keeping Hounslow Hall on your right).
5. At the top of the hill, you reach a paved driveway. At this point, you can turn left and follow the alternative route (see below) or turn right to follow the main route.
6. Follow the driveway towards two large gateposts. At the gateposts, look left to a small mound about 50 metres away. The mound is now only just discernable in the field, but it was once much bigger and has had an interesting history. Built as the motte of a medieval castle (probably just a wooden tower on top of the motte), when the castle went out of use, a windmill was placed on the mound. When the windmill went, it became the site of the local Gallows/Gibbet until the 19th Century.
7. Continue along the driveway to the road and turn left towards Newton Longville. The road is relatively busy, but you only have to walk about 100 metres along it and there is a wide verge alongside the carriageway if you need to take refuge from the vehicles.
8. Once in Newton Longville take the first left, Westbrook End. You can get onto the pavement for a while. However, the pavement does disappear when Westbrook End reverts to the character of an old Holloway. It is only a short distance without pavement and the road isn't particularly busy, but a succession of bends mean you do need to keep alert for cars.
9. After you pass Yew Tree Close, you will see a sign for a footpath on the left-hand side of the road between nos. 48 & 50 Westbrook End. Take this path and go over a stile into the field beyond the houses.
10. Head across the field and, beyond the two large barns, go through the gate in the left-hand corner into the next field, bearing slightly left to another gate. Go through this gate, keeping the hedge on your left, then through a gap into the next field and over a stile in the left-hand corner.
11. You are now in a field which narrows towards the far end. There is a stile (or at least the remains of a stile) in the right-hand corner of the field, overhung with trees. The plank that links the two sides of the stile has disappeared. The fence isn't big, but I had to stand on the stumps of the stile to get over. This isn't very difficult, but there is a ditch immediately on the far side of the fence with a plank bridge across it. Take care to come down on the bridge and not in the ditch!
12. Having negotiated the stile, you are now in a large field. The footpath heads left, up the hill. At the top of the hill, cross a track (that leads to a small reservoir and a large tent/tepee) and head downhill (and slightly left), towards a small group of low trees in the hedge line in front of you.
13. Cross a plank bridge into the group of small trees. On the other side cross another plank bridge. Follow the path across the next field towards a stand of trees and another stile. Go over the stile and the path turns sharp left, winding through the trees. Emerging from the trees, cross another stile, into a long, narrow paddock. Cross to the tree/hedge line in front of you and turn right. There is a large pond on the other side of the trees/hedge on your left.

14. Follow the hedge and go over a stile on your left. The path runs between the large pond on your left and a smaller pond/wet area on your right. These may be the remains of fishponds that would have provided fresh fish for the occupiers of the grand Salden House (largely demolished in the 18th Century). Follow the path as it turns sharply right and heads towards North Salden Farm House. Originally built in the early 18th Century, this house may have reused building materials from the demolished elements of Salden House.
15. Go over a stile onto the driveway that serves the houses at Salden and turn left. As you walk along the driveway you get a very good view of Salden House after which you come to a footpath on your right which, if you have done Walk 1, you may have previously followed to Mursley.
16. You now head back to Drayton, reversing the route out of Drayton taken by Walk 1. Ignoring the footpath to the right, follow the driveway past Salden Lower Pond and as the driveway turns sharply right, go through the gate in front of you to follow the bridleway uphill with the hedge on your right. Go through two more gates and follow the hedge gently round to the right and uphill.
17. At the next gate turn left towards Drayton, with the fence/hedge/pampas grass on your right, until you reach the gate at the Drayton/Mursley Parish boundary. Go through this gate and follow the bridleway back to Drayton. When you reach Main Road, turn left and go down the hill to the War Memorial.

Alternate Route – total 3.2 miles (beginning and ending at the War memorial)

- a. From point 7 on the main walk, turn left and follow the track. Ignore the driveway that curves right towards Cowpasture Farm (there is archaeological evidence of a Roman building, possibly a villa, in this area). Keep to the hedge on your left.
- b. You are on a bridleway following the line of the pre-Inclosures/Enclosures road from Newton Longville to Mursley. It remained as a discernable track well into the 20th Century, but now, in many places, the bridleway has been diverted off the old route and the track has disappeared. The bridleway leaves the route of the old road and kinks left through the hedge, whilst the track continues on the route of the old road. Once through the hedge, the bridleway turns sharp right (so the hedge is now on your right). Follow the bridleway and enjoy some good views back towards Drayton.
- c. At a bridleway marker turn right, going back through the hedge line (which at this point has thickened into a small wood on your right). Keep the wood on your right.
- d. At another bridleway marker turn left, across the field towards a gap in the hedge in front of you. You are now back (roughly) on the line of the old Newton Longville – Mursley road.
- e. Go through the gate and across a narrow parcel of land to another gate which you go through into a large field.
- f. The bridleway continues, heading slightly to the right, across the field heading towards two trees together in the hedge/fence/pampas grass line on the opposite side of the field. If you look closely, you may spot the posts which mark the bridleway route, between the two trees. When you reach the opposite side of the field you are back on the main route (just after point 17). Turn left, go through the gate and follow the bridleway back to Drayton.