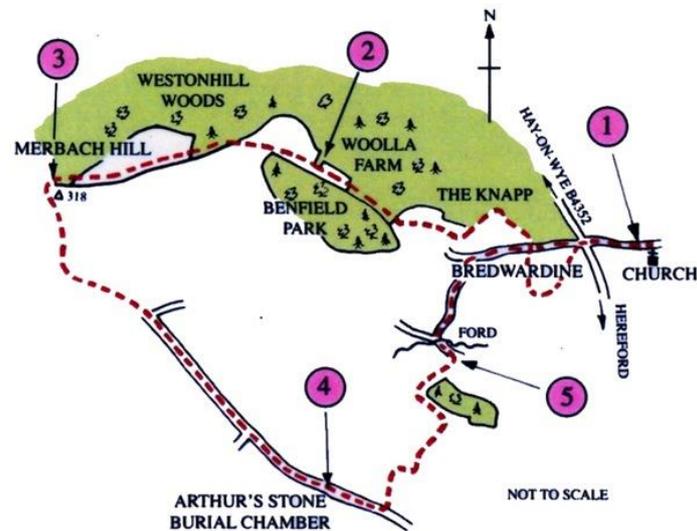


BREDWARDINE, WYE VALLEY WALK, MERBACH HILL, ARTHUR'S STONE, FRANCIS KILVERT COUNTRY



6miles (9km), 300m ascent; allow 2.5-3 hrs.

A Herefordshire Walk embracing sweeping vistas of the Wye Valley, a rather magnificent viewpoint, an ancient burial chamber and of course Rev. Francis Kilvert territory but demanding ascents and descents. Very beautiful in spring with the bluebells. Park under trees in lane to St. Andrew's Church on verge. Bredwardine lies on B4352 but can be reached off A438 OS Grid ref: SO333445.

WALK 1.

NOTE- amendments to published version shown in bold.

(1) Walk back from the Church and continue ahead to Red Lion PH at road junction. Cross to take farm track to (L) of Inn. At end of track continue through garden, past converted barn and over stile. Go through gate on (R) and then (R) alongside hedge towards trees and corner going down to cross FB onto narrow path leading **by side of house** to track ahead. Follow track past houses to join lane. Cross lane **almost opposite** to follow track up to Benllys Cottage and to stile seen ahead. Cross into field aiming slightly (L) uphill to join a track which follows round and uphill until where passing cattle grid it turns sharply (L), go through gate to (R) **and immediately (L)** joining Wye Valley Walk. Follow round to the (L) for a short distance to a bridlegate in (LH) corner. Follow the WM sign slightly (R) to the (L) of the "Knapp". When the Wye Valley comes into view on the (R) veer slightly (L) and ahead to a gate leading into Benfield Park.

(2) Continue ahead along this forestry track until just before "Woolla Farm" is reached, take waymarked path on (L) **to avoid the farmyard**, to reach the farm track where turn (L). At top of this hill go through gate and turn to the (R) **then (L)**. **Pass by side of barn and** go through gate on (L) and follow waymarks through bridlegates and stile of three successive fields, in the same direction to join a grassy track where turn (R) then to veer (L) going upward to higher ground. At brow and a waymark "Wye Valley Walk" goes (R) take path going straight ahead up to trig point and summit of Merbach Hill (318m,)

(3) From trig point **bear left to a waymark post and follow a path alongside the disused quarries to a gate** into the adjacent field with the "Golden Valley" down on the (R) and Black Mountains and Hay Bluff in the distance beyond. This field is extremely large so set a course slightly to the (R) of the two large trees ahead and **pick up the fence and hedge on the right. Follow this to reach a field gate** in a corner next to a house. Join the road and continue ahead for 1½km until "Arthur's Stone" is reached on the (R) (This is the remains of a Neolithic chambered burial tomb - estimated between 2,000 and 5,000 years old.)

(4) Continue ahead along road for 400m to take F.P. on (L) where road bears (R). Aim for far (RH) corner of field, cross the stile and go down to bottom corner and through the (LH) field gate of two, and proceed to bottom of field and over a stile and turn (L). Gradually veer (R) to follow the wood edge until a stile is reached on the (R). Here is a very steep gradient downhill and extreme care must be taken. Keeping close to hedge on (RH) drop down to fields with stiles in their corners to emerge on a lane near to cottage, and turn (L)

(5) Shortly passing another cottage dropping down to a ford and then uphill to reach a road junction. Go ahead now downhill very steeply (25% gradients) to Bredwardine coming out by the side of the Red Lion once more. Cross the B4352 road and back to the Church and starting point.

Accommodation and refreshments may be available. Do take the opportunity of discovering more about the Rev. Francis Kilvert inside the splendid Bredwardine Church where once he served as Vicar.

(Submitted by Raymond & Betty Lloyd, revised by Emlyn & Shirley Williams)