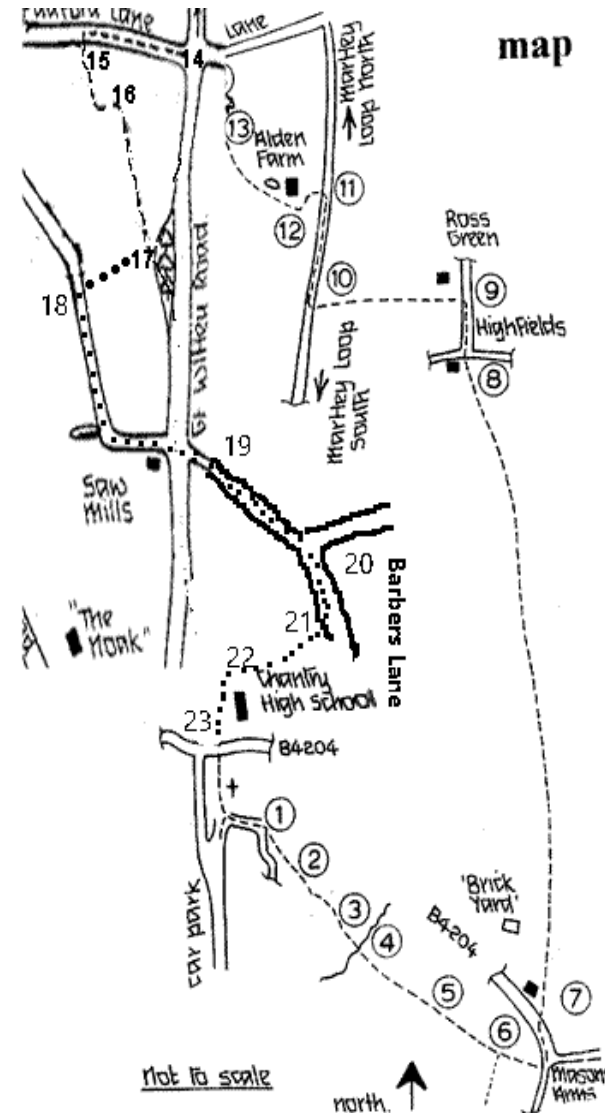


START:

From the church car park, follow the track beside the churchyard wall, passing the Old Hall, the former Rectory, just East of St. Peter's. This substantial building conceals within its 18th century exterior the nucleus of a mediaeval hall house with original timbers up to the roof beams, an upper floor being added in Elizabethan times. Nicholas Pevsner describes it in his "Buildings of England" series. Continue along the track to a gap into the field then diagonally across the field with new houses on the left, following the waymarking signs (1,2). At the end of the rough woodland on the right the path splits, and this route bears left at (3) and then turns right through a gate and over the bridge (4) across the Laugherne Brook.

Nearby Laugherne House was enlarged from the original timber farmhouse by a scion of the Nash family in the C18. The Nashs' of "The Noak" were wealthy glove makers who removed from Worcester, first to Pudford Grange and then to the "Noak", and were the local influential family for more than a century. The house was a private school for some years prior to its development for housing. Go straight ahead from the bridge until you see a gate (5) and another gate (6), in more or less a straight line. Through the second gate, veer left towards a telephone exchange and the Mason's Arms pub. Cross the stile opposite the pub, turn left alongside the B4204 towards Martley. Take care and stay on the

tarmac path to the left of the road. As the first house (Browford Cottage) on the right appears, (well set back from the road) look for the signpost over a stile and into the field via a permissive route (7). Follow the field edge to a stile on the left in the hedge line, cross this and turn right, following



along the opposite side of the hedge. In this field, adjacent to a pair of cottages, was the site of a former brickyard, levelled during the Second World War. The brickyard, which had a clay pit and two kilns, functioned till 1901 when tragedy befell one of the owners who was fatally burned. Work ceased, and the brickyard became derelict, before being demolished due to the pressure for farmland when every ounce of food was needed.

From the next stile, there is a glimpse of Woodbury Hill in the distance, a taste of things to come. The hedgerow shows ancient blackthorn bushes whose white blossom is first in spring and, barring late frosts, will bear the sour little sloes in autumn, used to make a delicious sloe gin liqueur. Continue ahead along the field edge path, crossing a further stile to a gap, another stile, up the field with fine mature oaks on your right to another stile into a pathway to the right side of the adjacent property (permissive route). Exit on to the lane over a stile at Highfields (8). Proceed along a short stretch of lane opposite your exit, foaming with hedge parsley in early summer, and turn left over a stile at the first signpost (9), just before the next property. In this field, pause and take in the panoramic view sweeping from the Abberley Hills on the extreme right (North), across Woodbury Hill and Berrow Hill to the Malverns, surely one of Worcestershire's finest views. Proceed down the field following the waymarking signs, through

wide gates, to cross a secluded brook, watching out for kingfishers (this crossing can be extremely muddy at times). Straight ahead towards, then past a prominent utility pole, to a stile in the fence (10).

Turn right along the track to Alden's Farmhouse. Sharp left off the track (11) towards the house along a short length of fence to a stile on the left into the field (12). Turn right over the stile, down the side of the house, pass the duck pond and over the next stile, again sometimes muddy, into another field. Follow the waymarking sign on this stile to two stiles and a ditch crossing in the line of trees ahead (13). Bear slightly right traversing approx. 400 metres to a stile in the far-right corner onto the lane near the junction with the B4197 and Horn Lane (14). Go straight over to the opposite lane (Pudford Lane) and up the hill to the first stile on the left (15). Follow across the field with the hedge on your right to a gate into the next field (16). Follow field edge, hedge left, to a stile (17) leading into a small wood

Do not cross the stile but turn right and go over the field to a gate (18) and turn left on the lane. Follow the lane to the wood yard and a junction with the main road (19). Cross over with care to the lane opposite and follow this to a junction with Barbers Lane (20) where turn right and carry on for about 100 metres to a gate on the right (21). Go through the gate and head diagonally across the field to a gate in the

far hedge to access Chantry school grounds. Turn right and follow the footpath and waymarks into the field, go left around the corner of the field then left through a gap (22) to walk through an avenue of damson trees. At the end the path veers left/right to a track leading down to the main Worcester road B4204 (23). Take care crossing the road into the churchyard to the start, at the car park.

Martley Walks

No. 6: Historic Houses, Bricks and Views

Grade: Easy, 4 m (6.4 km)

Remember the Countryside Code:

Respect other people

- ✓ Consider the local community and other people enjoying the outdoors
- ✓ Leave gates and property as you find them and follow paths unless wider access is available

Protect the natural environment

- ✓ Leave no trace of your visit and take your litter home
- ✓ Keep dogs under effective control

Enjoy the outdoors

- ✓ Plan ahead and be prepared
- ✓ Follow advice and local signs

The Path-or-Nones meet each third Sunday of the month for 2-3 hours from 9am, and has done since around 1985. The group tackles everything and anything on Martley's 41 miles of Rights of Way— clearance, installing gates, stiles, bridges, signposts and signage. We act on behalf of Worcestershire County Council and liaise between users and landowners. Volunteers are always welcome; we find it fun and worthwhile. Please contact Jon Pearsall 01886 888793 or John Nicklin 01886 888318 www.thepathornones.co.uk

Martley Parish and all service outlets, supports the Walkers are Welcome initiative www.walkersarewelcome.org.uk

Come to see Martley's unique geology! www.geo-village.eu

These walks were first written by Keith and Audrey Trumper in the early 90s

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