



Start. Leaving Hanbury Manor behind you follow signs to the Tennis Courts. Pass the tennis courts, brick Dovecote and the converted farm-house. Take the narrow path to the end, then turn right past the award winning Barn conversions to Downfield Gallery.

1. Downfield Gallery - Converted Victorian generating station & sculptor's studio, home of John Spielman, in beautiful country location overlooking the Rib Valley. In the gallery is a 100ft deep disused well previously providing water to Poles (Hanbury Manor). Visitors welcome.

Turn left on leaving Downfield Gallery, the Hitch brick wall of the old milking parlour is on your right, the wall is built using the well known Hitch Patent Bricks or Ware Bricks. The bricks have cavities in them, are interlocking, and are larger than the normal ones.

Turn left, down the hill, then right. Cross the golf course (designed by Jack Nicklaus II) following the yellow arrows. Look out for deer, foxes, badgers, herons & kestrels. Having crossed the golf course keep straight on, cope to your right, fields & allotment to your left. Carefully cross the busy A10 into Ermine Street. Follow the road along, then round to the left and down the hill enjoying the glorious hanging baskets in summer time.

2. Ermine Street, Roman Road - Reconstructed by the Romans on possibly an earlier British track built to connect London and York. The 'Windmill' house (ex-pub) is probably Tudor origin. The village school has only had 6 Headteachers since 1895. The 'White Hind' dates from the 16thC. The present red brick houses in Ermine St. (formerly named Back Street) were rebuilt by the Hanburys of Poles for their employees. Thundridge until the mid-30's had no mains water, gas, electricity or sewers.

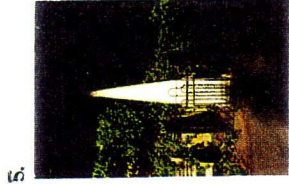
At the bottom of the hill turn left, then right, over the river foot bridge, no fee needed for the Turnpike Gate!

3. Wadesmill - Site of old watermill derived from the family named Wade who owned the mill in the 13thC. A Roman coin of Claudius was found in the ground nearby where the Romans forded the River Rib. The first bridge was probably built around 1510. King James I constantly complained about the state of the road! In 1632 the first traffic census was held just 2 villages away. Old Toll House - the first **Turnpike gate** following the Act of 1663 from Wadesmill to Barkway was built here. The 'Anchor' is late 16thC - incidentally the name has no connections with boats - an 'anker' was an ancient measure of liquor.

Continue on a little further.

4. Feathers Inn Staging Post - Very busy coaching Inn with stabling for 100 horses, probably a little exaggerated over the centuries, the original building dates back to 1615. A fair was held here on June 16th until the late 19thC - when it was stopped owing to rowdiness and bad behaviour described as 'grievous immorality'. The fair was intended for buying & selling wares and also for the hiring of servants.

View point for Thomas Clarkson's monument look up the A10 hill.



5.



4.



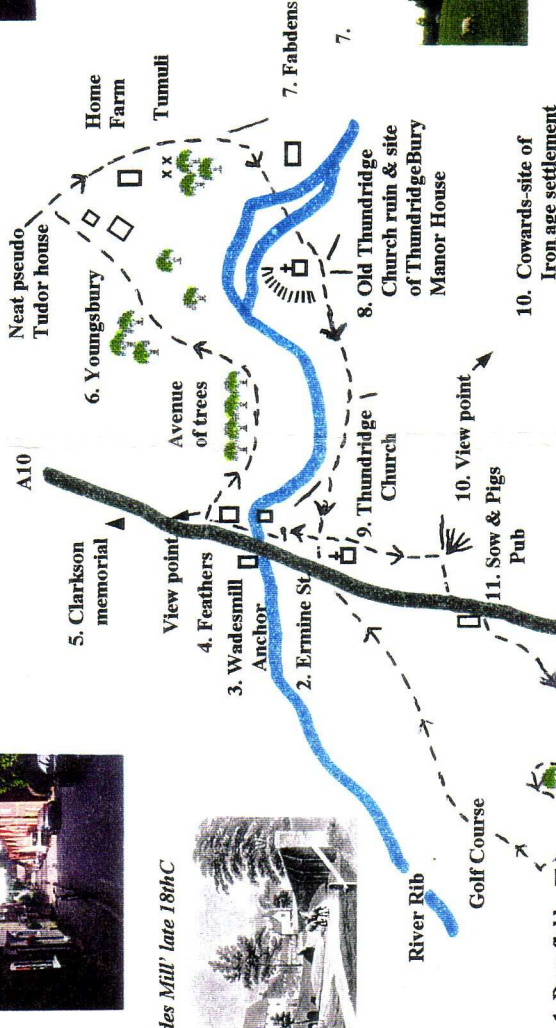
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2.



'Wades Mill' late 18thC



Neat pseudo Tudor house

Home Farm

Tumuli

8. Old Thundridge Church ruin & site of Thundridge Bury Manor House

7. Fabdens

7.



8.



9.

10. Cowards-site of Iron age settlement

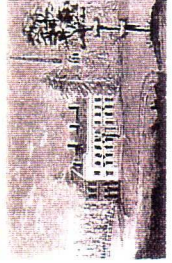
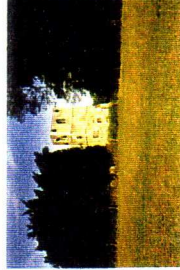


11.



6.

Youngsbury estate



Thundridge Bury & church as it looked in 1811.



Hanbury Manor Start & Finish

Hanbury Manor



1.

1. Downfield Gallery

Golf Course

River Rib

9. Thundridge Church

10. View point

11. Sow & Pigs Pub

View point

4. Feathers

3. Wadesmill Anchor

2. Ermine St

Avenue of trees

6. Youngsbury

A10

5. Clarkson memorial

Neat pseudo Tudor house

Home Farm

Tumuli

8. Old Thundridge Church ruin & site of Thundridge Bury Manor House

7. Fabdens



5. Thomas Clarkson - One important happening on this Old North Road is marked by a monument. Thomas Clarkson in 1785 on his way from Cambridge to London, rested by the roadside in sight of the Feathers and "resolved to devote his life to bringing about the abolition of the slave trade". He travelled thousands of lonely miles on horseback and risked his life seeking evidence & witnesses at the slaving ports of Bristol & Liverpool. He worked tirelessly for 45 years lobbying MPs and influential people, among them William Allen of Allen & Hanburys, now Glaxo, and William Wilberforce. In 1807 the Abolition Bill was passed.

Turn right onto Youngsbury Lane leading to Youngsbury estate, pass by the avenue of walnut and sweet chestnut trees, over the cattle grid, up the hill through grazing sheep.

6. Youngsbury - Site of a Roman Villa with 2 Roman Burial Mounds and 18thC Ice House - items found are now in the Verulamium Museum at St. Albans, and include a large urn, worked flints and pudding stones. In 1770 Capability Brown designed the island for the boat house & bath house. He quoted "Nature had done so much that little was wanting but enlarging the river".

Keep straight on, past Youngsbury, past the neat pseudo Tudor house, turn right at the T junction, past white iron gate towards Home Farm. Keep straight on, begin descending the hill, leave the track, take the path straight ahead with the wood close to your right side. Over one stile, then turn right over another.

7. Faddens - Dating from medieval times. It is a fine example of a Wealden's Hall-house, dating from the 15thC. It's now home to a famous English actor.

Keep Faddens on your left as you cross the field to the two gated bridges to cross Capability Brown's little island. Cross the field at 10 o'clock over the stile to the old church tower. Here once stood Thundridgebury Manor at which King Edward II stayed.

8. Old Thundridge Church - All that now remains is a ruin, a 15thC tower with angle buttresses, a Norman doorway with 14thC window formally in the nave. Next to the Church once stood Thundridge Bury a large Manor House and in 1316 King Edward II stayed here en route to Lincoln. The place name Thundridge derives from Anglo/Saxon god "Thunor". Thundridge is mentioned in the Domesday book in 1086. At the time of the Armada, Thundridge sent six men to fight fully equipped with armour.

On leaving the tower ruin, join the track passing the old moat on your right. Continue until you meet the road. Keep straight on for a short way along the road, then veer left onto the footpath cutting off the corner of the field, seasonally abounding with a blaze of red poppies. Through the hedge and fence across a neat paddock through another fence into a narrow path brings us back to the top of Ermine Street. Sharp left after a farewell view down the hill of course, through the narrow gateway and up the 17 steps. The New Church is now on your right.

9. Thundridge Church - The present church of St. Mary's was erected in 1853 at the expense of Robert Hanbury of Poles. The old church was kept for a burial chapel. A couple of years ago his great grandson Roland was married here.

Keep straight on and past the houses until you reach the T junction. **View point** - look left to the last house on the right on the horizon.

10. Cowards - the earliest known settlement in the parish was near Cowards - an early Iron age settlement. Pottery, animal bones, flint flakes and honing stones were found probably dating back to early sixth century B.C. Alas no visible remains.

Turning right follow the road to the Sow & Pigs pub on the A10.

11. The Sow & Pigs Pub - In 1660 recorded as the Five Horse Shoes, but in 1777 it received its present name, from an ancient game "My Sow's Pigged" thought to be a card game.

Enter Hanbury Manor grounds along the splendid driveway. By the clock tower turn right and enter the beautiful walled garden through the moon gate 20 species of apple trees grow here. Exit by the far left corner, cross the road and follow the path into the delightful secret garden. Finally stroll through the majestic trees with squirrels scampering all about to the Manor house, at dusk with the lights glowing, it looks like something out of a fairy tale.....

Finish. Hanbury Manor - in 1513 Lady Margaret Pole, sister & heiress of Edward Plantagenet, Earl of Warwick, became Countess of Salisbury and acquired the land called "Poles". In the early 18thC a house was built. Sampson Hanbury purchased Poles in 1810. In 1890-1 well known architect Ernest George built the Jacobean style mansion at a cost of £20,000. Home to the Hanbury family until 1913. After being generous benefactors to both Thundridge and Ware, so ended the Hanbury "regime", when E. S. Hanbury died in that year and the estate was sold partly to cover death duties. The original golf course was laid out by the well-known golfer Harry Vardon. The estate was self sufficient with all its own tradesmen from blacksmith, carpenter, baker, tailor, laundry, wheelwright, farmer and farm labourers, school teachers and vicar. Poles was resold & bought in 1923 by the Faithful Companions of Jesus who converted it for use as a girls convent and boarding school. Hanbury Manor is now an outstanding country house resort in 200 beautiful rural acres with magnificent trees, walled & secret gardens and dovecote.

Keep to the footpaths & Remember to keep to the countryside code.

A big thank you goes to Eileen Lynch, for her kind permission to print from 'Thundridge and Wadesmill in Hertfordshire', A Brief History by Eileen Lynch.

A Guide to lead groups around this walk is available. Tel. 01920 461625 John Spielman Downfield Gallery.



Beauty and history unfold before your very eyes as you take this walk for pleasure or health. This 4 1/2 mile walk on public rights of way, around Thundridge and Wadesmill, reveals Hertfordshire at its very best. Cross a river the Romans once forded, pass by an avenue of sweet chestnut and walnut trees and an orchard of 20 species of apple trees. Experience an abundance of wild flowers & wildlife. Rain or shine, winter or summer, you won't be disappointed. Enjoy God's beauty in nature and man's creativity. If you forget your camera you may have to go round a second time. Allow 2-3 hours. A guide to lead groups is available.