

The Town Tour

An easy stroll through the centre of old Boroughbridge and out to the town's boundaries takes you on a journey which includes a touch of history, a battle site, the works of a blind road-maker and some mysterious ancient stone monuments.

Our walk begins in Hall Square, sometimes known as the Market Square - the town was granted a Royal Charter for a market in 1310 by King Edward II. You can't miss the gateposts of Boroughbridge Hall, which a blue plaque marks as the birthplace of noted explorer Isabella Bird - first western woman to travel up the Yangtze.

Walk Information



The walk is one mile (2km) long and should take around an hour at a steady pace. Park in the main car park off Fishergate. Start at the walk interpretation panel on the wall of the Tourist Information Point in Hall Square. Follow the route as described in this leaflet but there are some red waymarkers on the route to help you. This walk is suitable for wheelchairs. Please clean up after your dog.

OS Map Explorer 299 covers the area.
Buses serve Boroughbridge (www.northyorkstravel.info)



The weir on the River Ure at Boroughbridge.

URE WALKS THROUGH TIME

Boroughbridge and the lower Ure Valley are steeped in history and support fascinating wildlife. Ure Walks Through Time enable the people who live here and the visitors who come here to explore and enjoy the riches that surround us. This is one of a series of waymarked walks leaflets available from local outlets.

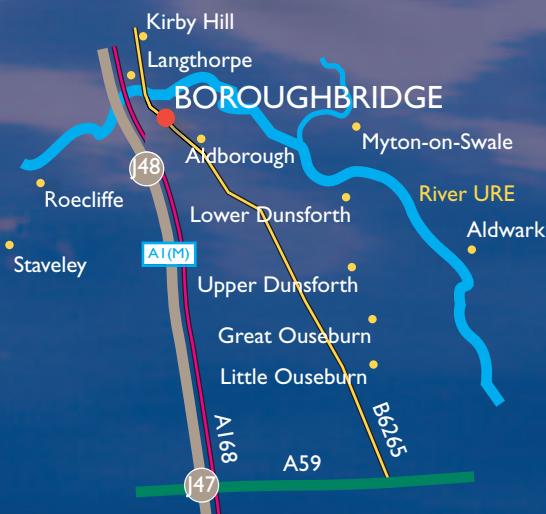
Ure Walks Through Time is an initiative led by Yore Vision, the regeneration partnership for Boroughbridge and the Lower Ure Valley, working to improve the area for people who live, work and visit here.

For further information about Ure Walks Through Time or Yore Vision, visit the Tourist Information Point, 1 Hall Square, Boroughbridge or call 01423 323373.

www.boroughbridge.org.uk | www.yorevision.org.uk

FOLLOW THE COUNTRYSIDE CODE

- Be safe, plan ahead and follow any signs.
- Leave gates and property as you find them.
- Protect plants and animals and take your litter home.
- Keep dogs under close control.
- Consider other people.



YOREVISION
revitalising your community

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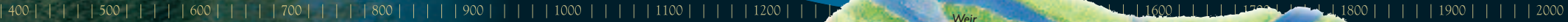


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Some information has been taken from material supplied by the Boroughbridge and District Historical Society. Front cover image: Top right - The rebellious Thomas, Earl of Lancaster. Middle - Hall Square, Boroughbridge. Bottom right - The remarkable Blind Jack.





The Route

A short walk along Fishergate brings you to a bridge over the River Tutt, built by the remarkable Blind Jack. Born John Metcalf in 1717, he contracted smallpox at the age of six and became totally blind. He became an accomplished fiddle player, huntsman, stagecoach driver and entrepreneur and, in his mid-thirties, a builder of roads and bridges in Harrogate, Leeds, Skipton, Halifax, Doncaster, Huddersfield and beyond. He died in 1810 aged 93.

Detour to the right at the T junction to our next bridge, which crosses the River Ure and replaced a wooden bridge which, in 1322, along with a ford downstream at what is now Milby Lock, was the site of the Battle of Boroughbridge. Andrew Harcla, a supporter of King Edward II, defeated rebel forces of the Earl of Lancaster here, the rebellious Earl of Hereford being killed by a pike thrust through the planks of the bridge from underneath.

Retrace your steps along Bridge Street into Horsefair and turn right along Valuation Lane, where you'll see John Boddy Timber, world-renowned for exotic woods and supplier of material for the restoration of Windsor Castle and York Minster, among other famous sites. Turn left into the housing of Druids Meadow and, in the far corner, go through a narrow ginnel back onto a lane.

One of the three huge Devil's Arrows.

Swifts fly screeching around buildings on late spring and summer evenings.



Key

- The Town Tour
- Start of Walk

- 1 **Boroughbridge Hall**
- 2 **Blind Jack's Bridge**
- 3 **The Ure Bridge**
- 4 **John Boddy Timber**
- 5 **The Devil's Arrows**
- 6 **The Peggy Bridge**
- 7 **The Black Bull**
- 8 **St James Square**

The walk returns to Horsefair which was once the Great North Road. With the coming of the stagecoach, Boroughbridge became one of the busiest staging posts on the key north-south route with many inns to deal with passengers and horses - the Crown Hotel had stabling for 100. Drovers, gypsies and horse traders travelled this way too and the June Barnaby Fair meant 14 days of horse-trading followed by three days for cattle, sheep, hardware and pleasure.

Bear left, cross Horsefair and into St Helena, the third square in Boroughbridge. We cross the River Tutt once more, this time over



The famous Barnaby Fair around 1900.

an older bridge known as The Peggy Bridge, said to contain parts of the fourth Devil's Arrow. As you turn left into the High Street you'll find yourself by the Black Bull - a 13th century coaching inn and one of many places where you can enjoy a drink to celebrate the completion of The Town Tour.

Across the field in front of you stand two of the Devil's Arrows. Turn left up to Roedcliffe Lane where the third arrow is just across the lane among the trees. It is believed that there was, at one time, a fourth arrow. Previously known as The Devils' Bolts, The Three Greyhounds and The Three Sisters, these mysterious monuments, composed of millstone grit, probably date from around 2000 BC.

The tallest stone stands higher than anything at Stonehenge at 22ft 6in (6.9m) and the lightest weighs over 25 tons (25,400kg) but their purpose is not known, nor can we be certain where they came from or how they got here.