

# The Environs of Ottery St. Mary's

Walk 7

Distance - 9 miles Map: OS Explorer 115. Exmouth & Sidmouth

Any worthwhile compilation of walks in the vicinity of Lower Knapp Farm, must include a visit to Ottery St. Mary's, a town containing many interesting features and customs. Also a church that's a replica of Exeter Cathedral, built originally in 1342 by Bishop John de Grandisson. The poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge was born there.

Some of those features will be revealed during the course of this outing; Cadhey, a Tudor Manor House, built by John Haydon in 1550 with its wonderful tree-lined entrance and residence (which is open to the public on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday throughout July and August, plus the spring and August bank holidays 2.00-5.30), and the tumbling weir, constructed in 1790, when the river's flow was harnessed to provide power for the textile and corn mills.

Of the local customs? The "Pixie run" which occurs each June, and the "tar barrels" which dates from 1688 and involves blazing tar barrels being carried through the streets on the shoulders of the "tar barrellers". Apprentices, ladies and men carry increasingly larger barrels. This takes place on 5th November (unless a Sunday).

**Start/car parking** - Church at Ottery St. Mary's

It would be a great help to future walkers if you could record any inaccuracies you come across during this walk and report them to reception so that appropriate amendments can be made.

**Thank you. Happy walking!**

## WALK

The walk commences from the church gates, heading towards Alfington (back to church – left). Soon after leaving the houses behind cross a flower-bedecked (in season) road bridge and turn into an unmade lane on the left. The lane twists and turns before descending to a footbridge. A left turn leads to the road, then veer left again to continue along the road. **(If wishing to visit Cadhey (5 mins) swing to the right, noting the old level crossing gates alongside Cadhey Bridge Cottage).**

Beyond the small hamlet of Dunkirk, turn right, cross the second of two footbridges and begin a 2 ½ mile association with the river Otter, towards Tipton St. John.

Pass the tumbling weir, and continue to the rear of the buildings to arrive at St. Saviours Bridge, a road bridge that was re-opened in 1992.

Cross the bridge and turn left at the footpath sign, then proceed downstream (ignore the modern footbridge) passing through a succession of meadows. Eventually, having passed a weir and a five arch bridge (don't cross it) the route leads towards the houses of Tipton St. John. Turn left along the road and left at the ensuing junctions, passing the dominantly positioned church (St. John the Baptist) along the way.

Cross the road bridge, continuing along the road beyond The Golden Lion, (refreshments), post office and telephone box following the indicator to Ottery St. Mary's (road walking is unavoidable. I followed the left turn footpath sign opposite the telephone box upstream for 3/4 mile to be thwarted by an immovable gate at the redundant mill).

A few yards farther on elect the left fork, soon merging with a busier road. Veer left, towards Wiggaton, seeking an isolated row of cottages on the right; 250 yards beyond these, as the road tilts at a T junction turn left and head

downward, turn right into a bridleway (signpost). towards some large, farm buildings. At that point swing left, rising along a wide track, then immediately before reaching a road turn right into another bridleway and onwards to emerge on a road close to "Happy Valley". Turn right.

Pass Round Ball farm, and soon after turn left through a gate (signpost) and cross the lower part of the field towards a stile. Maintain the previous line across the next field towards a wide gate, then pass through the right hand gate of two, and proceed along the left hand edge of the field, seeking a stile tucked away at the distant corner.

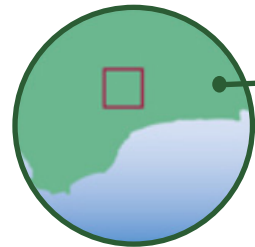
Descend the attendant steps, then march directly ahead across the next field aiming for an upright pole close to the field boundary. Pass through a gate, then turn right to walk along the road.

After a short distance turn left, through the impressive gates and proceed beyond the large residence (Knightstone). Walk straight ahead to enter a track that initially rises and passes some large farm buildings.




Now aim straight as an arrow towards the houses of Ottery St. Mary's. At the road turn left downhill and left again when a junction is reached (Slade Road). Turn right at the United Reformed Church to enter Batt's Lane, passing The Lamb and Flag. Rising to another junction turn left into Sandhills Street, then turn right to return to the church.

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HPB Lower Knapp

-  - Walk
-  - Optional Route
-  - B3174

#### Disclaimer:

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