

ABOUT THE WALK

DISTANCE: 6 miles. **TIME:** 3 hours (not including stops)

START/PARKING: roadside opposite High Cross Farm, just off the A612 on the edge of Bleasby.

TERRAIN: pleasant hilly countryside, can be soft ground near Halloughton Dumble.

FOOTWEAR: walking boots needed.

OS MAPS: Explorer 270 and 271, 1:25,000 scale.

Landranger 120, 1:50,000 scale.

REFRESHMENTS: 'The Saracen's Head', various town inns and cafés. There is a very good tea room and garden at Manor Farm, Bleasby.

THE KING CHARLES 1 HERITAGE TRAIL

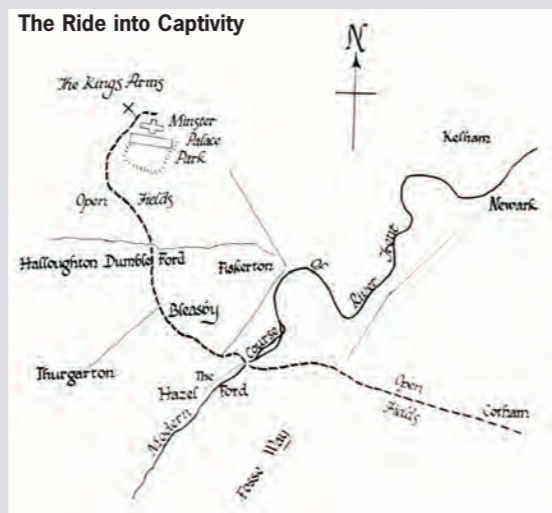
Bleasby is three miles south of Southwell. Take the A612 from Southwell and after passing Brackenhurst College take the next turning to the left, signed Bleasby. In less than a mile you will see High Cross Farm on your left. Leave the car opposite the farm.

The Royal Road into Captivity. By May 1646 the position of King Charles I and his Royalist army was desperate. They had suffered a series of setbacks in 1644-5 culminating in the decisive defeat at Naseby in June 1646. Whilst in Oxford, which was encircled by Parliamentary troops, he decided he had to escape and either make for the coast and flee to France or make an agreement with the Scottish Army that was laying siege to the Royalist town of Newark. Charles was employing a French diplomat, Montreuil, resident at 'The King's Head' now 'The Saracens Head', to negotiate with the Scots based at Kelham. On 26th April Montreuil sent an encouraging message to Charles and consequently his preferred option, after he had successfully slipped out of Oxford, was to make for Southwell, meet up with Montreuil at 'The King's Head' and do a deal with the Scots, who he expected would be more reasonable than the Parliamentary Army. The journey would be extremely dangerous, as there would be spies everywhere, and the Midlands was strongly Parliamentary. So Charles went in disguise, beard cut off and dressed as a clergyman, the tutor of his loyal attendant, Michael Hudson. He also took with him his servant, John Ashburnham. The three escapees reached Stamford late on May 3rd. The following night, at 11.00pm they set out for Southwell, travelling by night to avoid capture.

Walk down the lane following the FP sign to Southwell. You will soon pass by a fine line of cedar trees. Eventually turn left at a FP sign and walk towards Brackenhurst College which can be seen, partly hidden by trees, in the distance. Read below for information about Charles' secret journey to Southwell.

POINT OF INTEREST 1

The Secret Journey to Southwell. From Hudson's diary it is known the royal party went through Cotham to the Trent, which they could have crossed at Fiskerton or Hazelford. Fiskerton

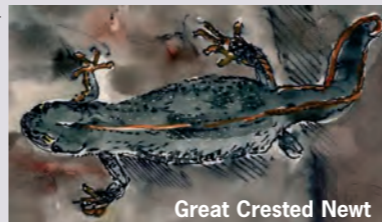


could have been too dangerous, being closer to the Parliamentary Army besieging Newark, so the likelihood is the small group rode from Hazelford to Bleasby, trotted up Bleasby Hill, and then continued over the fields to Halloughton Dumble. They would then be in the Brackenhurst area and would have the benefit of good visibility, being on high ground. After riding through the fields north of Brackenhurst, we know they arrived at 'The King's Head' around 7.00am on May 5th 1646.

Walk straight ahead downhill and then follow the FP round to the right and you will soon arrive at Halloughton Dumble. Cross the bridge, turn left and follow the FP which bends to the right up a rise. Keep straight on at a junction of paths and then at the next junction turn right and walk gently uphill. Soon you get excellent views of the Trent Valley to the right. Brackenhurst College is now in view, on your left. Continue forward keeping the storage area to your left, follow the lane round to the right and at the junction with a minor road turn left and walk up to a crossroads with the cricket ground and Brackenhurst College on your left.

POINT OF INTEREST 2

Brackenhurst College (Trent University). The Rev. Thomas Coats Cane, Vicar of Thurgarton, had Brackenhurst Hall built in 1828. His granddaughter married into the Allenby family from Lincolnshire and their son, Henry, distinguished himself as Field Marshal Lord Allenby, commander of the Palestine Campaign in the 1914-18 World War. Ownership passed on to the Hicking family in 1899 and Sir William Hicking, a highly successful Nottingham textile manufacturer improved the general appearance of Brackenhurst by adding a lake and rose garden. There is a significant population of crested newts within the gardens and ornamental ponds at Brackenhurst Hall. Great crested newts are protected by British and European Law due to population declines in recent years. The Brackenhurst population is expanding due to sympathetic management by the college. On his death in 1947 Brackenhurst was sold to Notts.CC and in 1949 it



Great Crested Newt



Brackenhurst Hall

became The Nottinghamshire Farm Institute. Today, as part of The Nottingham Trent University, Brackenhurst is expanding its course provision and is set on an ambitious building programme.

At the crossroads turn right and follow the road round to the left. At the next junction take the road to the left and follow the FP to Southwell immediately on your right that goes downhill, across a field and towards a marker post, giving you a superb view of Southwell below. Keep walking straight ahead through a second field and continue on this FP as it bends left downhill. This is known locally as Constitution Hill and some years ago cannon balls were found around here, thought to be from the Civil War.

Follow the FP as it passes the Minster School Sports Field, then right at the Potwell Dyke and quickly left to walk up a lane that takes you past a Childrens' Play Area on your right and the Southwell City Football Club on your left. You are in the War Memorial Park which, before the Civil War, was 'New Park' one of the four Deer Parks belonging to the Archbishop of York. At the top of the lane turn right and shortly, pause on your right at the entrance to The Bishop's Manor, which in 1907 was built and incorporated into the surviving part of the Archbishop of York's Palace.

POINT OF INTEREST 3

Archbishop of York's Palace. The medieval palace gave the archbishops a convenient halting place on their long journey from York to the Court in London. Charles would have visited the palace earlier in the Civil War en route for Newark. By 1646 the town was in Parliamentary control and it has been suggested that Edward Cludd invited the Scottish Commissioners to reside in the Palace as the Scottish army was nearby supporting the Parliamentary army in its siege of Royalist Newark. It is reported that soon after Charles reached 'The King's Head' on May 5th he had to go to the Palace to negotiate terms with the Scottish Commissioners. After the war finished, the palace was partially destroyed by the remaining troops. The only surviv-



Archbishop's Palace

ing building left was what you see on the far left, the Archbishop's State Chamber, now called 'The Great Hall'.

Walk straight ahead on the flagged path towards The Minster, then take the path to the left to the Minster gateway on Westgate. Few people would have been around when the secret royal party rode down the street. Cross to the classical styled building opposite, now part of The Saracens Head. It was originally the town's ASSEMBLY ROOMS, built in 1805 for the entertainment of the

well to do classes. You have now arrived at the 'King's Head Inn' where King Charles I spent his last hours of freedom. You will find plenty of memorabilia of this famous event. Relax and enjoy the hospitality!



Montreuil's rooms at 'The King's Head'

POINT OF INTEREST 4

Royal Party arrive at 'The King's Head' (now 'The Saracens Head'). The king arrived to find Montreuil, his link with the Scottish Commissioners, absent. It is said that, exhausted from the long journey, Charles rested in Montreuil's rooms which were reputedly to the south of the archway and which for many years were referred to as the King's Bedchamber. He had very little rest, however. It is said he was soon escorted to the Archbishop's Palace for negotiations with the Scottish Commissioners. Clearly Charles did not get what he had hoped. It is likely that Montreuil, earlier in April, had not been able to secure from the Scots any written agreement; however it appears he had got a verbal acceptance that firstly, the king, Hudson and Ashburnham would be safe under the Scots protection and secondly, if Parliament refused to restore Charles to his rights, the Scots were to declare for the king. The meeting ended in disagreement and Charles must have returned to 'The King's Head' very weary and dismayed. At some stage in the afternoon an armed troop of horsemen arrived and took Charles away to the Scots camp at Kelham.

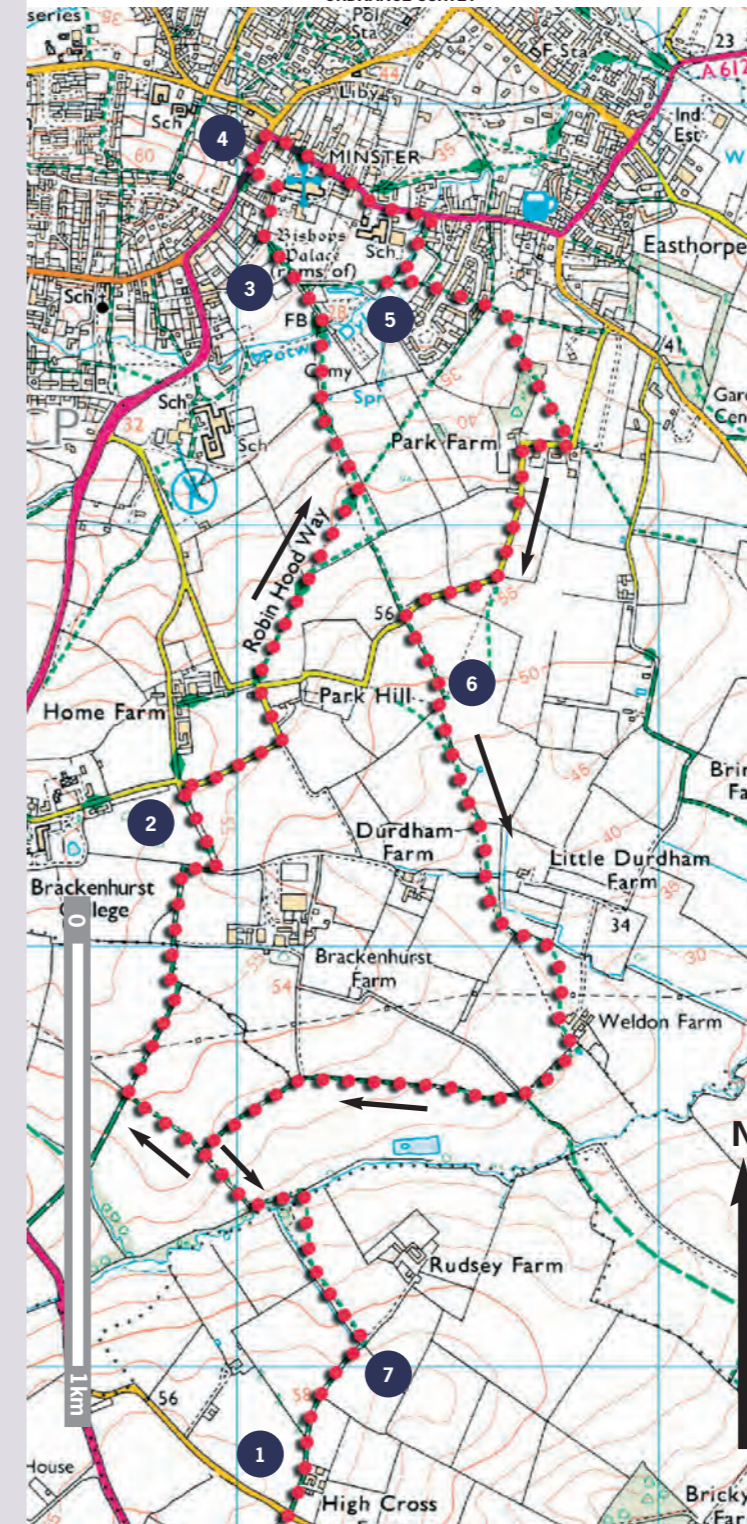
From 'Saracens Head' cross the road and walk down Church St. This could well have been the king's route to Upton and then Kelham as it lies close to the Archbishop's Palace. Would the local people have recognised this famous figure? Would Charles have changed out of his clergyman's disguise? Whatever, the armed escort through the streets of

Southwell Heritage Trails

The King Charles I Civil War Trail



THIS MAP IS REPRODUCED FROM ORDNANCE SURVEY MATERIALS WITH THE PERMISSION OF ORDNANCE SURVEY



POINT OF INTEREST 7

The Fate of Charles I, Hudson and Ashburnham.

In 1649 Charles was put on trial by Parliament. He was found guilty of treason and on the 30th January 1649 he was beheaded outside Whitehall Palace. Soon after the monarchy was abolished. What happened to his two loyal servants, Hudson and Ashburnham? Ashburnham continued to serve his King, was imprisoned after the King's death but after the monarchy returned in 1660 he resumed his post as Groom of the Bedchamber. Hudson's story is quite extraordinary. He fought on to serve the interests of his king, abroad and back in England. He, too, was imprisoned and his responses to investigation provide much of what we know of these events. He escaped, was recaptured and sent to the



King Charles 1 on his way to execution

Tower. Again he escaped, this time disguised as a hawker carrying a basket of apples on his head. He returned to the Stamford area where he led a royalist rebellion and garrisoned Woodcroft House. He was forced on the roof by the besieging Parliamentarian Army and, in trying to escape over the battlements, his hands were cut off and he fell into the moat. He managed to swim to the bank but then was killed by a blow to the head by a musket.

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There are six Heritage Trails for Southwell

Supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund

of FP's turn left towards Morton and walk downhill towards a farm. Ahead and slightly to your left lie Upton and Kelham, where Charles was escorted after his departure from Southwell. Read below for details of what happened at Kelham.

POINT OF INTEREST 6

Charles I at Kelham. What happened to him ?

Charles became a prisoner of David Leslie, the Scottish Army Commander, and no one was allowed access to him. The Scots were aware they were in a supreme bargaining position with Parliament as they had possession of the king. They also were aware the Royalist garrison at Newark could be made to surrender if they put pressure on Charles to order it. Charles wrote to Governor Bellasis of Newark and stated that if Newark did not surrender Charles would not be able to go north with the Scots (he still had some hope of safety) The order was reluctantly accepted by the governor. Following the surrender of Newark, the Scots moved north to Newcastle taking Charles, Hudson, Ashburnham and the king's barber! Despite their earlier promises, the Scots handed Charles over to the English Parliament in exchange for the waiver of a loan.

The FP bends to the right and again to the right. Cross over the stile and walk straight across a meadow to a gate. Having passed through the second gate walk to the left towards a hedge and go over a stile and take a line straight across a field towards Weldon Farm. After another stile, continue on the FP which takes you to the right of the farm. Keep to the right with a pond on your right and walk by the hedge on your right. At a junction of paths walk straight ahead for approximately 800 metres keeping the hedge to your right until a dead-end is reached at a T junction. Here the walker is reunited with the outward FP and must turn left downhill to Halloughton Dumble. The FP bends to the left, cross the Dumble and walk to the right

following the hedge. This will take you up to a farm lane. Turn right and walk back to the car parked near High Cross Farm, which you will see ahead on your left.



The Warrant for the arrest of King Charles 1

Southwell would certainly have been witnessed and would have been a major talking point for many years. Continue past The Minster, Vicars' Court and Minster School as far as Harvey's Field by the Potwell Dyke. Turn right along the FP, walk into a playing field, keeping the dyke to your right, until you reach a stile up to your left on the far boundary of the playing field. Pause and read below.



The Potwell Dyke Grasslands

POINT OF INTEREST 5

The Potwell Dyke Grasslands is a nature reserve which provides a wonderful show of wild flowers in spring and summer. It consists of a dry Hay Meadow, a Wet Meadow

and several areas of vegetation typical of less managed, poorly drained soil such as meadowsweet, rushes, sedges and yellow iris. The Hay Meadow is especially noteworthy for its carpets of yellow flowers and the Wet Meadow for Marsh Orchid. The flowers of the meadow attract many butterflies and the pond streams attract dragonflies. The Potwell Dyke is also visited on Heritage trail 4.

Turn left and walk back across the playing field to a snicket which leads to Farthingate. Cross the road and keeping to the right walk round the bend into Farthingate Close and look for the snicket on your right between houses 17 and 19. Cross over, turn down the snicket and go over the stile into a meadow. Climb over the next stile on your right and walk on the FP which bends to your right and goes uphill. When you come to a wood go over the stile on your left and follow the FP through the wood to Crink Lane. Turn right, walk round the bend and pass Park Farm which is named after New Park, one of the Archbishop of York's Deer Parks. Continue along Crink Lane for about 500 metres and enjoy the excellent views of the Minster and the town. At the junction