

# The Viking Way

## SECTION 3.

THE HIGH WOLDS. FROM  
CAISTOR TO TEALBY.

This section crosses the highest ground, not only of the Viking Way but in all of Lincolnshire. Both valley and hill scenery are some of the loveliest in the county.

**APPROXIMATE DISTANCE :**  
**14½ KILOMETRES ;**  
**9 MILES.**

**MAPS:**  
**LANDRANGER 113 ;**  
**EXPLORER 282.**

**REFRESHMENTS :** Nettleton and Tealby .

Leave CAISTOR Market Place via Plough Hill, The Horsemarket and Nettleton Road.

Just before turning into Nettleton Road note another of Caistors springs below the bank on the left. This is the Pigeon Spring. The town fire engine was once kept under the hillside behind the large doors nearby.

The Viking Way turns left 100 yards down from the school, enters a housing estate and doubles back at the street end around houses and a playing field to reach the by-pass. On the far side field paths lead to NETTLETON. At the road turn right, then first left. (Turn right for the church and the pub.)

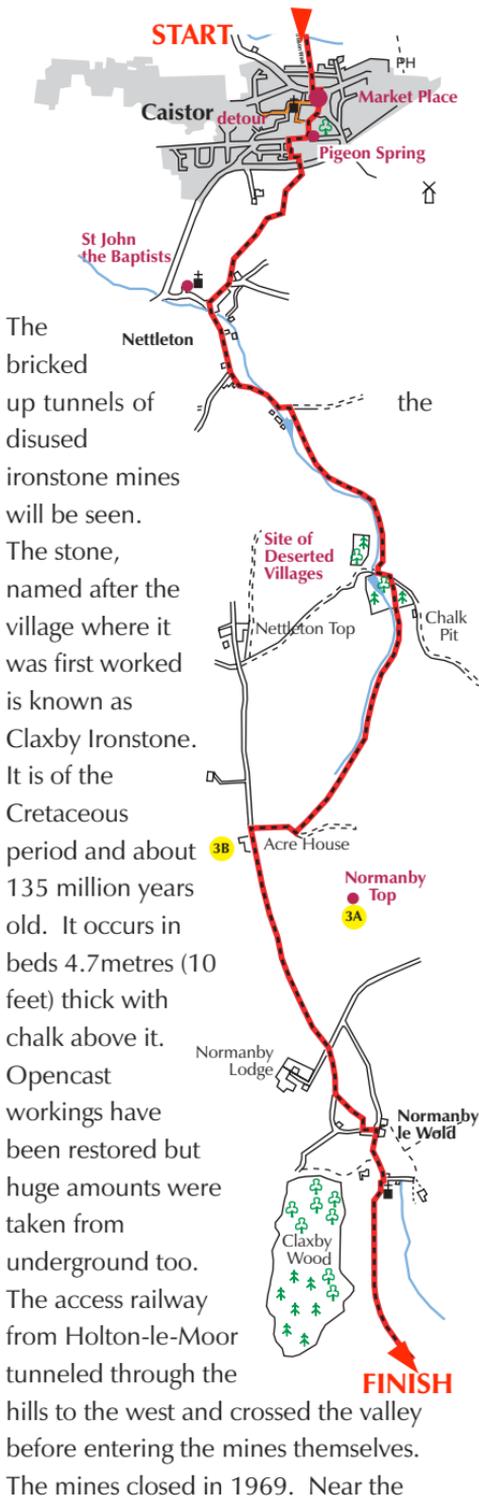
St. John the Baptist's is built of the local ironstone and glows a rich, ruddy brown in sunshine. NETTLETON and Tealby churches provide a remarkable contrast to the "green" sandstone seen by the time that Donington-on-Bain is reached.

Go left to Nettleton Grange and begin the ascent of Nettleton Valley. About halfway up, the route crosses a quarry road into some woods.



*Nettleton Grange Farm*





Normanby Church

The bricked up tunnels of disused ironstone mines will be seen. The stone, named after the village where it was first worked is known as Claxby Ironstone. It is of the Cretaceous period and about 135 million years old. It occurs in beds 4.7 metres (10 feet) thick with chalk above it. Opencast workings have been restored but huge amounts were taken from underground too. The access railway from Holton-le-Moor tunneled through the hills to the west and crossed the valley before entering the mines themselves. The mines closed in 1969. Near the

top of the valley turn to look back at the modern chalk quarry where a prominent band of unusual red chalk will be clearly seen.

At the head of the valley bear right on a farm track.

To your left here, at **3A** is Normanby Top, the highest point in Lincolnshire at 168 metres (550 feet).

Turn left on the road by Acre House. **3B**.

From this road you can look back to Barnetby, whilst westwards is a stupendous view to Lincoln cathedral nearly 20 miles away. No apologies are necessary for this exceptional mile of road walking.

Keep ahead at the road junction near Normanby Lodge, then cut left over fields to NORMANBY-LE-WOLD.





Near Walesby

This is Lincolnshire's highest village and church, with a lovely shady churchyard that belies its altitude. All but the tower was restored in Victorian times, although the medieval interior was retained. In the south aisle an amusing carving shows a man putting his fingers in his mouth to pull a grotesque face, and the westernmost pillars have curious horn shaped carvings on them.

From the church head out along the hilltop plateau. When the descent begins, veer right to join a track which meets the road just outside WALESBY.

The church in WALESBY village was built in 1913. The vicar at the time, a Reverend Laurence, spent some 30 years in his efforts to provide the village with a new church, but died the very day that building work began. It is

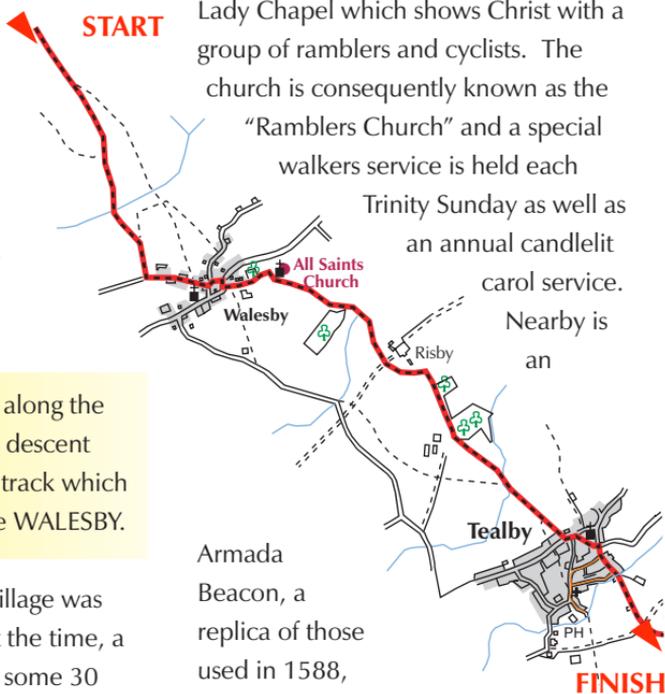
remarkable inside for a design in which the pillars are down the centre of the nave supporting the apex of the roof - "Not very good for weddings; and worse for funerals!" has been a recurring churchwardens criticism.

At the far end of the village a path climbs to the old All Saints church on the hillside.

Disused and abandoned, presumably because of its remote position as the village shifted, All Saints WALESBY was rescued from demolition and restored in 1931, its medieval character intact. A unique feature is the window in the Lady Chapel which shows Christ with a group of ramblers and cyclists. The church is consequently known as the "Ramblers Church" and a special walkers service is held each Trinity Sunday as well as an annual candlelit carol service.

Nearby is an

Armada Beacon, a replica of those used in 1588, erected for the 400th anniversary of the defeat of the Spanish Armada.



From the top corner of the churchyard some short, steep ups and downs lead below Risby and via Castle Farm to TEALBY. In the last field before the village 2 paths exit to the road; the Viking Way takes the upper one. Bear left at the road.

At Domesday this was “Tevelesbi” an important and prosperous village, its stream providing power for 14 mills. TEALBY too has strong associations



*Tealby*

with the Tennyson family. (See also section 4.) The poet laureate’s brother, Charles, was rector here too (before Grasby). Parts of the hilltop ironstone church are badly eroded, the tower particularly looking quite like a natural rock outcrop. The church was extravagantly restored by the Tennyson d’Eyncourt family in the 19th century and is aglow with their invented heraldry. Inside can also be seen a truly impressive display of kneelers, all colour co-ordinated, and embroidered it would seem, by everyone and every organization in the village - even the

tennis club has contributed a racket and balls design. Large display books contain photographs and details of origin for every one. Seats in the churchyard face out over the village and nearby hills.

From the crossroads the route descends Beck Hill to a ford.

[DETOUR] TEALBY’S refreshment facilities are off the official route. However the village has a reputation as one of Lincolnshires prettiest and the narrow streets with their old cottages reward exploration. Turn right off Beck Hill into Front Street, past the 1856 school, paid for and designed by Charles Tennyson d’Eyncourt. Here you will find the tearooms. A picturesque, thatched pub built of mud-and-stud is situated at the bottom



*Kings Head, Tealby*

of the hill by another ford. There is also another pub on Cow Lane. A path from “The Smootings”, just above the old chapel, provides an alternative way to the foot of Beck Hill. A delightful extra  $\frac{3}{4}$ km ( $\frac{1}{2}$  a mile).

