

# The Viking Way

## SECTION 4.

**MORE WOLDS. FROM TEALBY TO DONINGTON-ON-BAIN.**

From Tealby the escarpment is climbed onto the open plateau again. However this soon gives way to the rolling hills and interlocking valleys of streams which combine to form the River Bain.

**APPROXIMATE DISTANCE :**  
**17 KILOMETRES ;**  
**10½ MILES.**

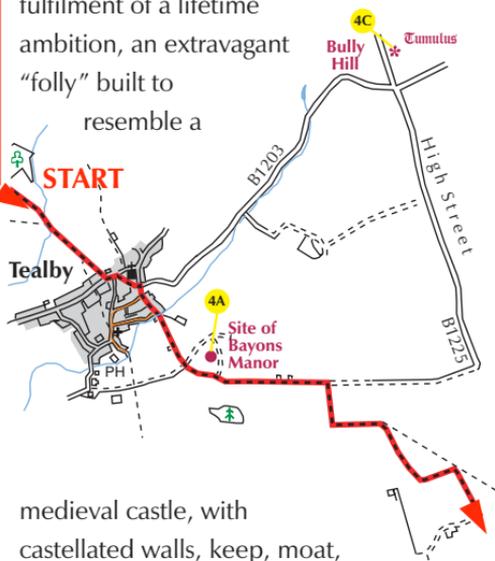
**MAPS:**  
**LANDRANGERS 113 and 122 ;**  
**EXPLORER 282.**

**REFRESHMENTS :** Ludford and Tealby

Leave TEALBY from the ford at the bottom of Beck Hill to follow a rising track across the parkland of the former Bayons Manor.

Bayons Manor was demolished in 1965. **4A**. It had been built between 1836 and 1842 by Charles Tennyson d'Eyncourt, Alfred Lord Tennysons

uncle. Charles was a wealthy solicitor and MP. and the Manor was the fulfilment of a lifetime ambition, an extravagant “folly” built to resemble a



medieval castle, with castellated walls, keep, moat,



*Bully Hill near Tealby*

drawbridge and portcullis. Alfred’s grandfather, George, had aspired to a manor house here but it was after his death that Charles was able to proceed with his own design, having inherited the lion’s share of the family fortune. Alfred’s father took the living at Somersby church and it was there that the poet was born in 1809.



Beyond the Manor site the Viking Way leaves the track and follows field edges up to the High Street. **4B**. Turn right.

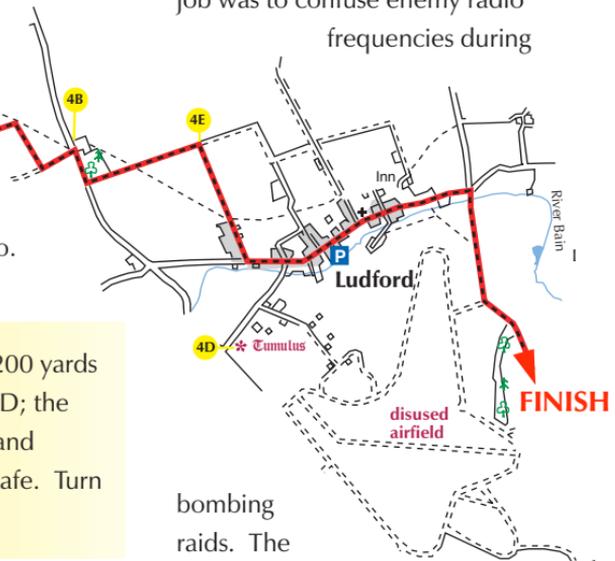
This is believed to have been a highway since prehistory. Evidence is somewhat circumstantial but there are a number of tumuli on or near its course, the nearest being at the top of Bully Hill **4C** with another close to Ludford. **4D** It also follows a direct course typical of Roman roads, between the Roman settlements at Caistor and Horncastle, so legionnaires may well have tramped along here too.

Leave the High Street after 200 yards for field paths into LUDFORD; the path turns southeast at **4E** and reaches the A631 near the cafe. Turn left through the village.

LUDFORD was once two villages; Magna and Parva. Indeed a sign at the western end still shows "Magna Mile". The area has been settled since the Neolithic period (the barrow mentioned above) and an iron age site is known to the east of the village. Close by another prehistoric route, the Bluestone Heath Road runs southeast over the wolds towards the marshes. Here too is the source of the River

Bain, later followed closely for 2<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>km(1<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> miles) into Donington-on-Bain.

To the south lie the remains of RAF Ludford, built in 1943 in 90 days. Lancaster bombers of 101 Squadron flew from here, some of which carried highly specialised radio equipment and an operator fluent in German, whose job was to confuse enemy radio frequencies during

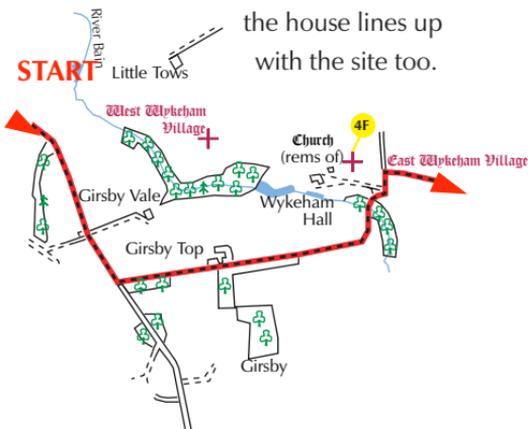


bombing raids. The airfield closed in 1963 after a brief life as a Thor ICBM (Inter Continental Ballistic Missile) base. By the main road in the village is a memorial to 101 Squadron and their roll of honour is in the church.

Bear right at the crossroads outside LUDFORD. In approximately 1.6km (1 mile) turn left for Girsby Top.



From either side of Girsby Top House the outlines of the “lost” village of West Wykeham can be clearly seen across the valley on the left. The view through the large barn before the house lines up with the site too.



decline were complex and varied from village to village, factors such as the Black Death having more impact in some places than others, and often only exacerbating existing problems. The Black Death arrived in Britain in 1348, reaching Lincolnshire the following year, its devastation continuing into 1350. At that time the marshes and fens were thinly populated. Not surprisingly therefore the majority of deserted villages are on the higher ground. This locality is particularly rich in good, accessible, sites. A further one is crossed at BISCATHORPE.

The road becomes a track, which after crossing the infant River Bain, leads on to East Wykeham.

The remains of this second “lost” village can be inspected on the left **4F**. There is no public right of way to West Wykeham. Over 230 deserted villages have been identified in Lincolnshire. Reasons for their



*Black Horse, Donington on Bain*



*Donington on Bain*

Opposite East Wykeham the Viking Way turns right to reach a bridleway junction at **4G**. Head southwest to the A157, the Louth / Wragby road.

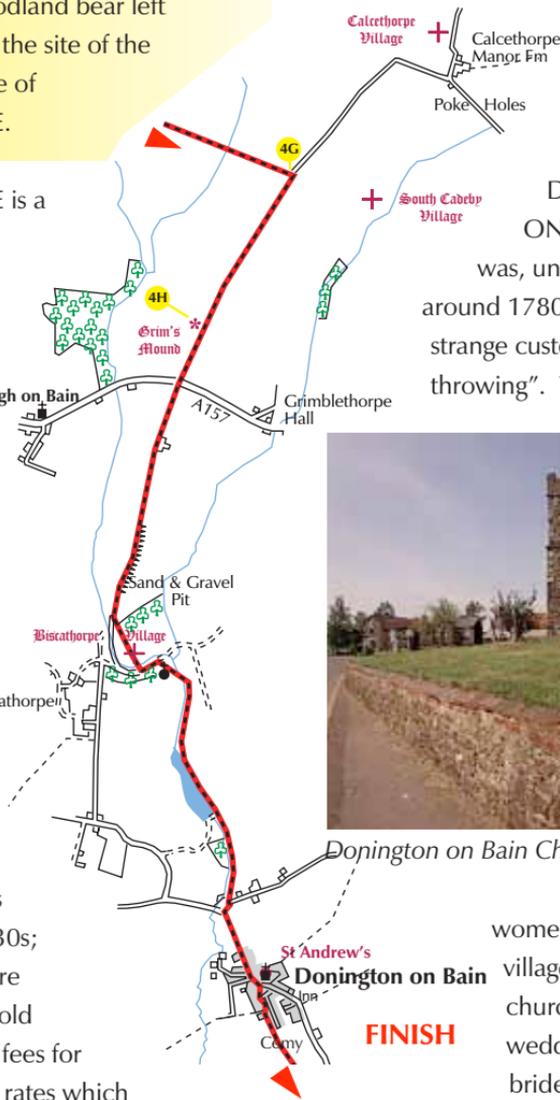
Grims Mound, a Bronze Age barrow, is passed on the right at **4H**.



Cross to a surfaced lane and at a small coniferous woodland bear left downhill, over the site of the deserted village of BISCATHORPE.

BISCATHORPE is a delightful spot; sheltered and peaceful. The River Bain creates one ford and a contributory stream makes a second only a few yards further on. The "village" now comprises the church and one house. Little St. Helen's was built in the 1830s; original furniture survives and a old notice sets out fees for funerals etc, at rates which can scarcely be believed today.

From here the way passes the church then crosses the Bain and turns south passing a lake. At the road near the picturesque watermill turn right then left into DONINGTON-ON-BAIN.



When St Andrew's church is reached notice the transition to "greenstone" as the predominant building stone. DONINGTON-ON-BAIN church was, until sometime around 1780, the scene of the strange custom of "hassock throwing". The elderly



womenfolk of the village gathered in the church for every wedding, and as the bride and groom walked by they would throw all the hassocks at them, and then at each other. This happy chaos was apparently tolerated for generations, until a new rector, the Rev. Veners, became victim to an airborne hassock and called a halt to such frivolity.

