8

BEACON BANKS, HUSTHWAITE and KILBURN

from Coxwold 8½ miles (13.5km)

Most of this delightful walk lies outside the boundary of the National Park. It visits a trio of attractive villages with a host of interesting features and splendid views of Kilburn's White Horse.

Our starting point is Coxwold, one of England's most beautiful villages. Set back behind neatly mown grass verges, elegant stone cottages and houses line its broad main street. The most imposing feature in the village is St Michael's Church with its stately octagonal tower. The church was built in the fifteenth century and, apart from minor repairs, still stands as it was built. The interior contains some majestic memorials to the Fauconberg and Belasyse families. The oldest of these is the altar tomb bearing the date 1603. It shows the recumbent effigies of Sir William Belasyse and his wife Margaret. The Fauconbergs held title to the estates of Newburgh Priory. According to tradition the headless body of Oliver Cromwell was brought here after the Restoration by his daughter, Lady Mary Fauconberg, who had retrieved it from the Tyburn gallows. It is interred in a bricked-up tomb above the porch. His head, which spent twenty years on a spike, is buried in the chapel at Sussex College, Cambridge.

At the top of the village stands Shandy Hall, home from 1760 until his death in 1768 of the eccentric writer Laurence Sterne. It was here that he wrote volumes three to nine of *Tristram Shandy* and *A Sentimental Journey*. Shandy Hall contains the world's largest collection of Sterne's novels plus contemporary prints and paintings illustrating his work.

From the village we follow a field path leading gently uphill to Beacon Banks. The sweeping views embrace the beautiful Vale of York, the Hambleton Hills and the distant Pennines. Beacon Banks inherited its name from having had a beacon placed on its summit to alert the country when threatened with danger. It was used to signal the approach of the Armada in 1588. During World War II the Home Guard kept watch here for possible invaders.

After leaving the ridge we descend along the road into Husthwaite. At one time Husthwaite was also known as 'the Orchard Village' and, although it has fewer orchards today, its apple, pear and plum trees still produce a plentiful crop. Adjacent to the green stands the church of St Nicholas. Predominantly Norman, it consists of a nave, chancel, porch and a low square tower containing three bells. The fine oak roof is the work of the Mouseman of Kilburn, and six 'mice' are to be found on the altar, the reredos and the litany desk.

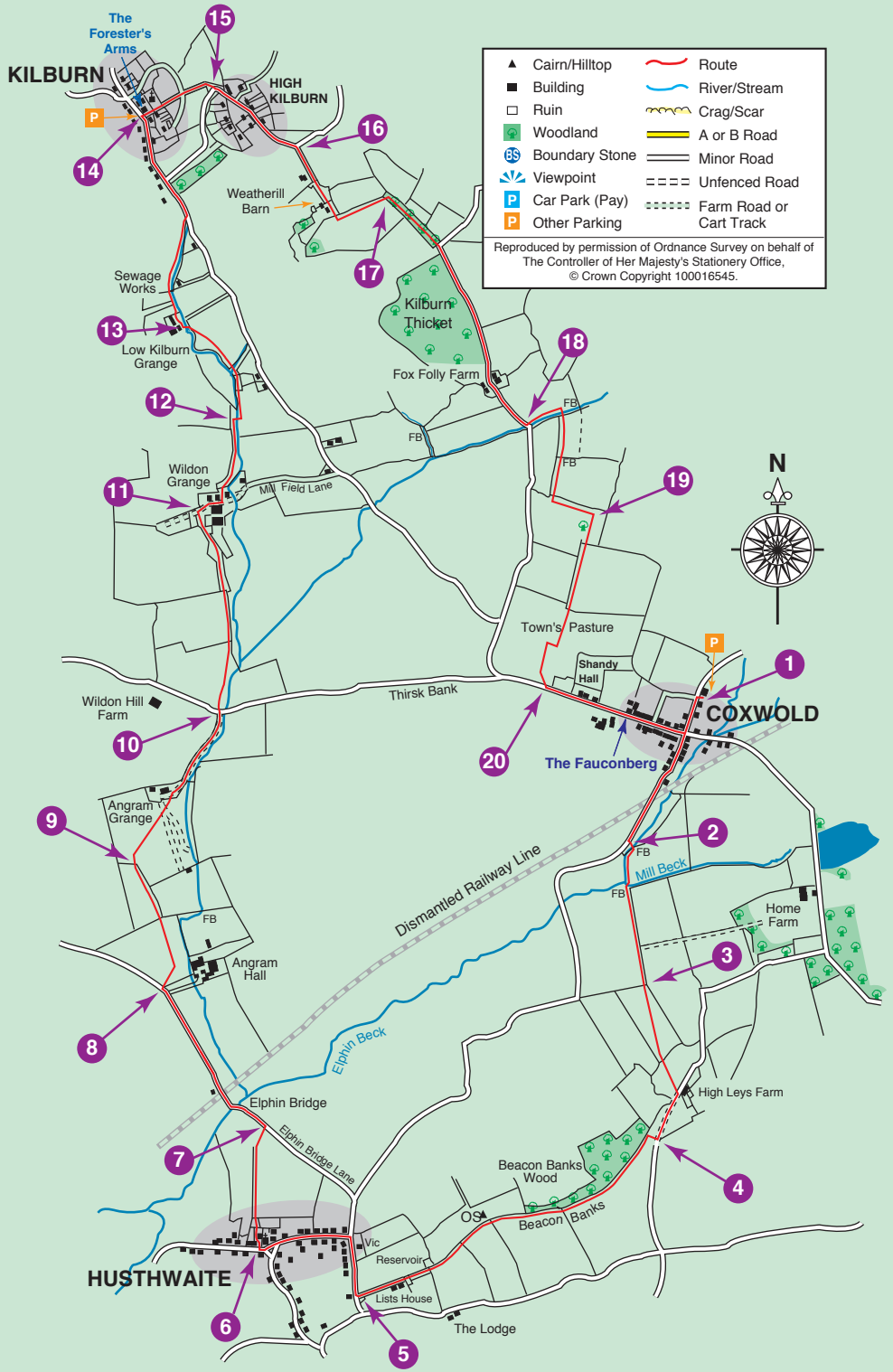
Our route continues through the fields to Kilburn, with the White Horse visible for much of the way. Kilburn's history can be traced back to the ninth century when is was settled by Norse invaders. It is recorded in the Domesday Book as 'Chileburne' which translates as 'Cylla's or Kyle's stream'. The village is divided into High and Low Kilburn, which are about a quarter of a mile apart. High Kilburn is situated on a shelf on the hillside, its houses placed around a large green. Low Kilburn is the heart of the village with the church and inn adjacent to the square.

The church, dedicated to St Mary, is an early Norman structure founded about 1120. The tower was added in 1667 and the whole church was restored in 1869. The porch has a sundial with the words 'Certa ratio' which freely translated means 'The right time'. The chapel contains two coffin stones dating from the thirteenth century. One bears a pastoral staff and was probably made for an abbot of Byland Abbey or a prior of Newburgh Priory; the other, an extremely rare type, displays a shield with a round boss and the long-shafted 'Martel', or fighting hammer of a 'Champion'. Kilburn's Champion fought in place of the abbot or prior in 'trial by combat', a Norman method for settling a legal dispute.

Robert Thompson, the 'Mouseman', was born at Kilburn in 1876. His mouse trademark which he carved on all his oak furniture, is world-famous. The trademark came about from the expression 'as poor as a church mouse'. Although Robert died in 1955, his business has carried on and is now run by his great-grandsons. The company still uses the mouse for its trademark, or trademarks, each craftsman carving his own individual mouse.

After savouring the attractions which both of the Kilburns offer we continue via meadows and quiet lanes returning us to Coxwold.

Start/Parking:	Coxwold, there is a small car park behind the village hall.
Location:	Coxwold is situated 6 miles (9.5km) south-west of Helmsley.
Grid Ref:	536 773
Distance:	8½ miles (13.5km) circular. Allow 4½ hrs walking time.
OS Maps:	Pathfinder 642 (1:25,000) or Landranger 100 (1:50,000).
Refreshments:	The Fauconberg at Coxwold and the Forester's Arms at Kilburn.
Public Toilets:	Coxwold and Kilburn.
Other:	Shops, Post Office, telephone, Shandy Hall, Newburgh Priory, The Mouseman Visitor Centre.



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1 *(GR 536 773)* From the car park entrance turn left and follow the road. At the cross-roads go straight across and continue along the road towards Easingwold.

2 *(GR 533 767)* About 100 yards (91m) outside the village boundary leave the road via a gate on the left *(Waymark)*, cross a bridge and follow the right boundary to cross another bridge in the far right corner. Turn left and continue along the left hedge to a gate.

3 *(GR 534 761)* Go through the gate and climb towards the top right corner of the field. Go over a stile and climb up to another stile leading onto a rough tarmacked road at High Leys Farm. Turn right and follow the road.

4 *(GR 534 755)* Leave the road *(SP Public Footpath)* and head towards Beacon Banks Wood on the right. Turn left and follow a clear path alongside the woodland through two large fields to the OS column. Stay close to the right fence and descend via four gates to the road near Husthwaite.

5 *(GR 522 749)* Turn right and descend into Husthwaite. At the T-junction turn left into High Street and continue through the village to St Nicholas's Church.

6 *(GR 518 751)* Just past the church turn right *(SP Public Footpath)* and follow a clear track leading round to a gate. Go through the gate, bear left and go through another gate. Descend gradually along the fence and go through a gap in the hedge onto the road.

7 *(GR 518 756)* Turn left and follow the road, crossing Elphin Beck and the dismantled railway. Continue along the road for about ½ mile (0.8km)

8 *(GR 514 761)* Just past the driveway to Angram Hall, leave the road via a gate on the right *(SP Public Bridleway)*. Head towards a tree near the centre of the field. Turn left and using two more trees as waymarks continue across the field. Go through a gate and follow the right hedge passing through two hedgerows.

9 *(GR 513 767)* Climbing slightly head to the right of Angram Grange. Go through a gate to the right of the farm, turn right and follow the farm lane to the main road.

10 *(GR 517 772)* Cross the road and follow the right boundary across two fields. Go through a gate and follow a fenced/enclosed track up to Wildon Grange.

11 *(GR 516 781)* Turn right and pass between the farm buildings. Turn left between the barns and go through a gate. Follow a rough track between the fence and the beck.

12 *(GR 517 785)* Go through a gate on the right *(Waymark)* and cross the footbridge. Turn left and continue over a stile in the left corner of the field. Follow a narrow fenced path over two more stiles. Continue alongside the beck to Low Kilburn Grange

13 *(GR 515 788)* Go over a stile and cross the beck via a concrete bridge. Turn right and continue through the farmyard. Return to the beck and continue alongside it through gates and stiles to the main road. Turn left and follow the road to the village square.

14 *(GR 513 796)* At the village square go through the gate into St Mary's churchyard and head towards a white kissing gate in the far right corner. Continue along an enclosed track through two gates and follow a narrow fenced path climbing uphill.

15 *(GR 516 797)* Go through a gate leading onto the road at High Kilburn. Turn left and follow the road past the village green and descend to a sharp left bend.

16 *(GR 520 795)* Leave the road and follow an enclosed farm lane through two gates to Weatherill's Barn. Continue through another gate, turn left and follow the fence.

17 *(GR 523 793)* Cross a wooden stile, turn right and follow an enclosed track leading onto a quiet lane. Turn right and follow the lane past Kilburn Thicket and Fox Folly Farm.

18 *(GR 529 784)* Leave the road via a stile on the left *(SP Footpath)*. Continue along the right boundary to a footbridge. Cross the footbridge and follow the right hedge across two fields *(crossing another footbridge)*. Go through a gap in the hedge, turn left *(SP Coxwold)* and continue along the hedge.

19 *(GR 532 780)* Turn right *(SP Coxwold)* and climb up to go through a gap in the hedge. Follow the right hedge and go through a gate. Head straight across Town's Pasture and go through a white kissing gate leading to the main road just outside Coxwold

20 *(GR 530 773)* Turn left and descend along the road through the village to the road junction. Turn left and return to the car park behind the village hall.