

## **STEPPING OUT – a series of walks near the East Leake Area.**

This walk is a rather longer one and also somewhat farther afield. It will take you into the heart of Charnwood Forrest. You will pass the ruins of an ancient priory and visit three of the best viewpoints in the area – two of which have indicators to show you the various landmarks that you can see on a clear day.

The walk starts and finishes in Bradgate Park. You walk through the park from Old John tower to Newtown Linford so you can start from the car parks at either of these places. The following description starts from Old John tower, and proceeds via Ulverscroft priory, Bawden Castle, Charlie Chapel, Beacon Hill, Broombriggs and Lingdale Golf Course. The priory is a ruin, the castle was never a castle, the chapel is no longer a chapel and the tower is a beer mug! But the views are magnificent and the walk is well worth the effort.

The whole walk is about ten miles and I will describe it in two parts. The first part is from Old John tower to the road beyond Ulverscroft priory just before you get to Bawden Castle. Next month I will complete the description from that point via Beacon Hill and Broombriggs back to Bradgate Park.

### **Bradgate Park, Newtown Linford, Ulverscroft Priory, Bawdon Castle, Charlie Chapel, Beacon Hill, Broombriggs, Lingdale Golf Course,**

A circular walk of about 9½ miles. Allow 4½ - 5 hours

#### **Part 1.** Bradgate Park to Ulverscroft Priory (to be continued)

Start from the Hunt's Hill car park at the north entrance to Bradgate Park

Walk through the wood at the top exit from the car park and as you enter Bradgate Park you will see Old John Tower on the hill ahead of you and to the right of the tower is the War Memorial.

Either walk up to the tower then turn right and through the small wood to the War Memorial or walk directly up to the War Memorial. Either way the view on a clear day is magnificent. The advantage of going to the tower first is that there is a toposcope there which gives you information about what you can see.

From the War Memorial go down hill in the direction of the small wood on the mound (Tyburn) to your right. Take the path to the right of the wood and you will find a gate in the wall to your right. Go through this gate and take the footpath down the hill to Newtown Linford.

Turn right and follow the main road as it forks right and starts to climb up hill. About 100m after the fork look out for a footpath sign on the left. Follow the footpath down a gravel drive past two houses and into the fields.

In the first field you make for a stile about 50m. to the right of the far left corner of the field. It is fairly easy to follow the path through the next fields until you cross a footbridge into a wood and join a track at right angles. Turn left along this track for a short way to a gate where you turn right along a clearly marked path. This path goes through or alongside woods and eventually emerges into a pasture. At the end of this field there is a track which turns right into Ulverscroft Lane.

Turn left along the lane for just over a kilometre and arrive at a T junction with Priory Lane.

Go straight across Priory Lane and along a track to the Priory and Priory Cottage. Beyond the Priory You cross a cattle grid and shortly after that the track forks with no indication which fork is the right of way. It is the right fork you should take.

This takes you to a series of stiles and gates to the right of Ulverscroft Lodge Farm. Ignore footpaths to the right and left and continue straight ahead. The path through the first field opens into a large meadow. You cross this to a stile and then take the field edge path to the right round the next field and eventually you come to the road.

You cross the road and continue along the footpath to Bawden Castle and Beacon Hill. I will describe this part of the walk in next month's issue.

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