

WALK 1

HAM MANOR & MANOR FARM LOOP

1¼ miles/2 km : 30 minutes

generally level, no stiles



- 1 From the Crown & Anchor pub car park turn left onto the road heading towards Buttermere. Immediately on the left is the 16th century Rose Cottage with its later well-winding gear outside it. Twenty metres further on turn right along Church Lane. Thirty metres further on there is a public bridleway sign to the right. Turn right through the gate marked Humphrey's gate, unless you decide to view the church, after which visit return to the gate.

The 12th century All Saints' Church was built by Henry of Blois, grandson of William the Conqueror and powerful Bishop of Winchester, who owned the village. The tower of the church is reputed to have been built in 1349 as a thanksgiving for the village surviving the Black Death

- 2 Cross to the pedestrian gate on the far side of the field and turn left down the track known as Field Lane. Continue along the track for 400 metres and follow the track when it turns sharp left between hedgerows. Emerge from the hedgerows, with fine views of the downs ahead. The more dominant bridleway turns sharp right to the village of Shalbourne.
- 3 Don't turn right but continue straight on along the fence line beside the field for thirty metres, before turning slightly left towards a kissing gate across the large arable field that extends to the foot of the downs.

This field, once part of Manor farm, is now part of Three Counties Estates (formerly Wandsdyke Farm).

- 4 Continue straight ahead to another kissing gate.

Looking left as you cross this field there are views of Ham Manor, a fine old Queen Anne Manor House and to the right fine views of the escarpment.

- 5 The path now goes through the garden of Manor Farmhouse and after 50 metres joins the road. Turn left at the road and head back slightly downhill. Shortly after successive bends in the road you will pass (up a lane to the right), the village hall and to your left, the whitewashed thatched Forge Cottage, once the blacksmith's forge. After a further 100m you reach the Crown & Anchor.