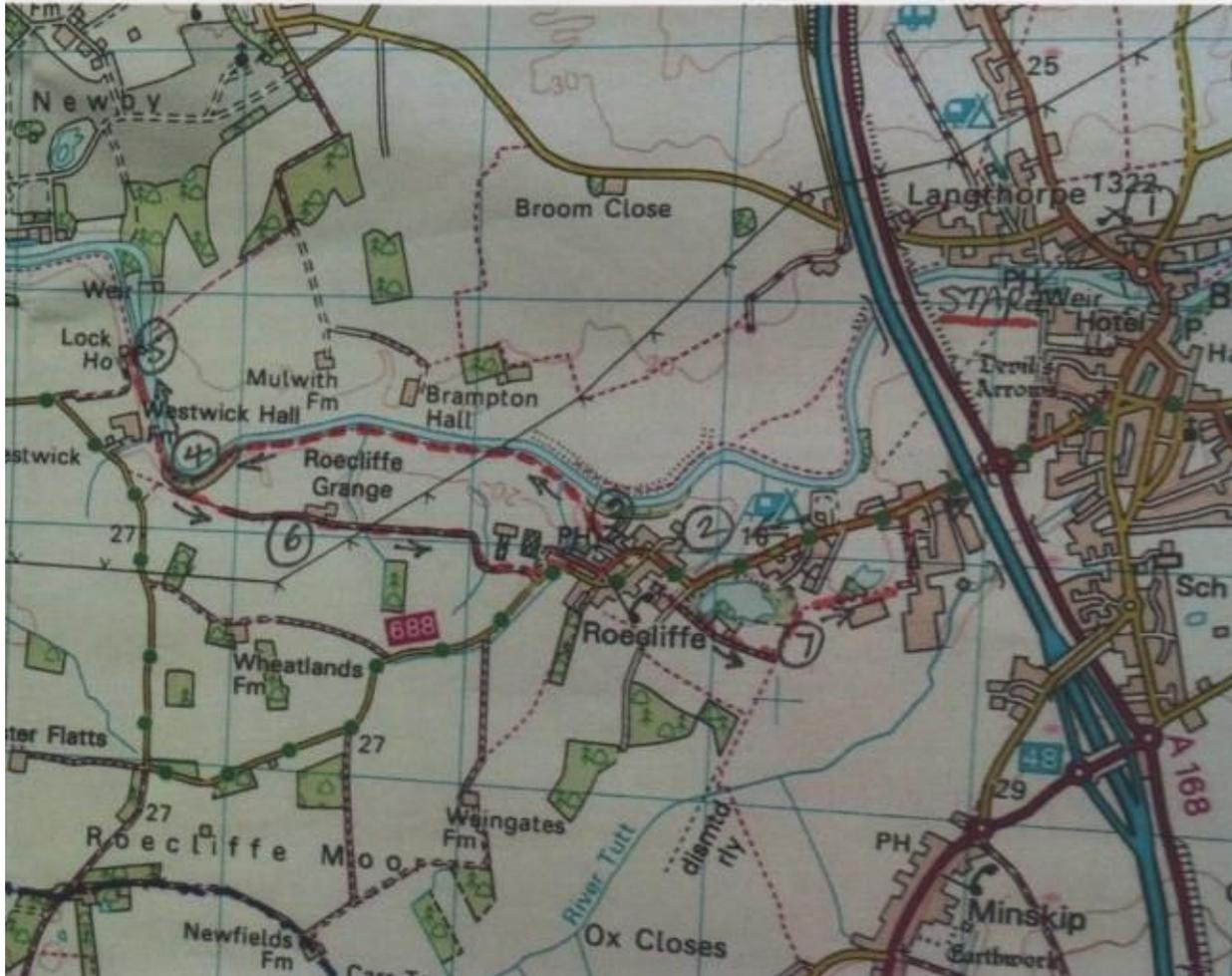


Walk 5

The Westwick Walk (from Boroughbridge or Roelcliffe)



1) **Start** in Boroughbridge and walk to Roelcliffe (or park in Roelcliffe, if you want a short walk; NB it takes 30 minutes to walk to Roelcliffe at a brisk pace); 2) Just before the church, take the path (R) through the farm and down to the river bank; 3) Walk along the river, over a number of stiles, to Westwick Farm (4); 5) Then follow the riverside path to Westwick Lock or turn round at this point; 6) for the return leg, find the strong path*, then farm road, past Roelcliffe Grange Farm, which leads to the Bishop Monkton road; 7) having walked through Roelcliffe village, suggest take the alternative route marked on the map (round the back of Roelcliffe Ponds and Reed Boardall); otherwise return to Boroughbridge using the roadside footpath

DISTANCE (Full walk from Boroughbridge): nearly **7 miles** (11km); **ESTIMATED TIME**: a) leisurely pace – at least 3 hours; b) brisk, exercise pace – can be done in 2 hours, but allow **2 hours 15 minutes**

WARNING – if the river is up, the outgoing, riverine path may not be accessible; either leave the walk until a later date or use the Roelcliffe Grange path there and back (but you may not be able to reach the lock, unless you use the road)

WALKERS ARE WELCOME – an excellent leaflet (see below) for the walk from Roelcliffe is available from Tourist Information or the Library



*See large-scale, annotated map below which shows how to locate the return path by means of a “link”

URE WALKS THROUGH TIME

Keep an eye open for gray herons.

The Route

The church of St Mary's was built in 1844. It is believed to be the only one in the country with an entirely vaulted roof, which is in a shape known as 'wagon-head'. Its marble floor and the steps to the chancel were originally part of the pavement in front of the high altar at York Minster.

Follow the footpath to the right of the church, signposted 'Public footpath to Westwick Lock' and, following the blue waymarkers, turn right in a farmyard through a five-barred gate and make your way down to the banks of the Ure.

Wildlife abounds around this stretch of gently-flowing river. At different seasons of the year roe deer, barn owl, tree sparrow and finch flocks can be seen over the farmland. Buzzards are also evident in winter and spring. Waterfowl abound, especially geese on autumn stubble.

Follow the riverbank, over stiles and bridges, through fields and into Cherry Island Wood. (after exiting the wood, if you wish to shorten the walk, turn left uphill as per final paragraph and return to Roecliffe)

Continue along the bank to Westwick Lock. You might pause to watch canal boats heading to or from Ripon Canal. Large information panels here tell you about the history of the river.

Follow the path to just beyond a stand of trees, where you'll be met with an uninterrupted view of Newby Hall across the river. This fine Adam house was built in the 1690s, and you'll also catch a glimpse of its 25 acre gardens.

The waters here may look tranquil, but in 1869, two gardeners from the Hall and four members of the York and Ainsty Foxhounds were drowned. The hunt was using the ferry here, which was

The huge key to St Mary's Church door.

Roe deer.

manned by the gardeners, to follow a fox when the overloaded craft capsized.

Now retrace your steps along the riverbank until, just this side of Cherry Island Wood, you branch right uphill past the blue waymarker to a metal gate. Walk along Sheaflands Lane passing Roecliffe Grange and on to the common. Pass to the right of a small pond, then through woodland, until you come back to the village by road. You'll pass The Crown which stands where inns have stood since the 14th century - and you may feel that you've earned yourself a drink and a bite to eat as you finish The Roecliffe Ramble.

Looking across the Ure to Newby Hall and Gardens.

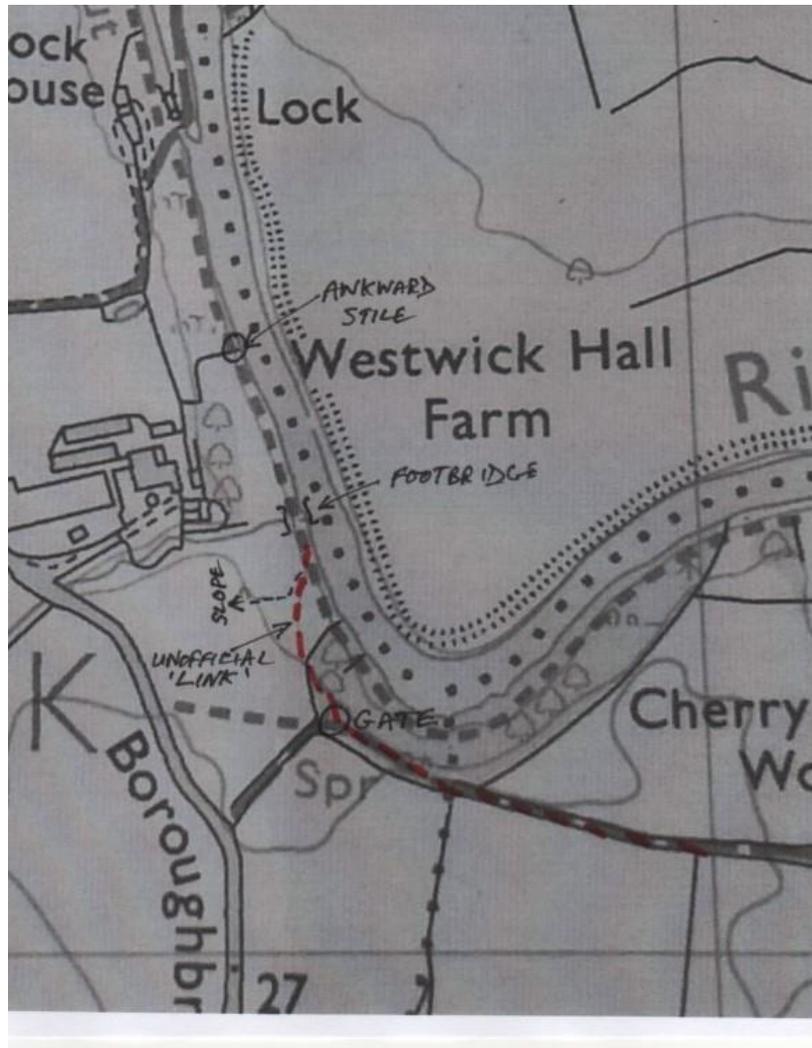


Path to river bank (2 on map) starts just to the right of the church



Westwick Lock (5 on map)

OS MAPS: Explorer 299, 1: 25 000; Landranger 99, 1: 50 000



Link path (red) for use on return leg after visiting the lock

Scale: it's about 500 m from the lock to the gate