

# Anchor Church Walk

This walk commences in the village of INGLEBY which is approached from Repton on the B5008 or Swarkestone on the A514. You should park in the far corner of the John Thompson Inn & Brewery car park, or a safe spot on the road.

The walk is approximately 4.5 miles long (7.2km) and takes a leisurely 2 1/2 hours\*.

For a more detailed map you are recommended to refer to Ordnance Survey Explorer™ 245: The National Forest.

*[\*Note: after prolonged rain the path beyond Anchor Church can be impassable. The alternative route below involves retracing your steps and is therefore longer at 5.4 miles (8.6km) and takes 3 hours].*

**1** Start your walk by turning right out of the car park and following the road toward Ingleby Village. Approximately 100m after the war memorial **2** take the bridleway on the left and ascend the leafy driveway. Continue past the cottage on your right **3** following the tree lined sunken lane, which eventually ends at a bridge gate. Go through this gate **4**, turn left and soon after go through a field gate. Follow the field-edge path eventually reaching a field gate adjoining a tarmac road **5**.

Cross the road carefully. Go through the field gate on the opposite side and follow the field edge track to an open gateway **6**. From here continue in a straight line, crossing the next field diagonally towards the large expanse of woodland. On reaching the far side of the field, go through the gap in the hedgerow **7**, immediately turning right and ascending the leafy lane at the woodland edge.

Continue along this delightful lane, passing a private fishing pond on your left, until you reach the junction with the driveway to the former Seven Spouts Farm **8**. Turn right here and ascend the tarmac drive with the buildings on your left. Soon afterwards the tarmac surface changes to a loose stone track, eventually ending at a road.

Once again, take care crossing the road and continue through the gate opposite **9**, following the tree-lined path across the next field towards **Heath Wood 10**.

Within **Heath Wood** is the only known Viking Cremation Cemetery in England, containing 60 burial mounds, probably dating from around the late 9th century when South Derbyshire was at the western boundary of the Danelaw. The barrows vary between 6-13 metres in diameter and 0.6-1.5 metres in height.

They contain cremated human remains along with fragments of swords, buckles, nails, pottery and other contemporary objects.



Cross the stile and follow the gradually descending ride through the mixed woodland eventually reaching a gate and stile on the far side **11**.

The present **Foremark Hall** dates from 1755 and stands on the site of a very ancient house. This Grade I listed palladian style mansion was built for the Burdett family to the design of David Hurns of Warwick. It is now home to Repton Prep School.



After crossing the stile follow the tree-lined avenue, eventually passing the old walled garden of **Foremark Hall** on your left. At the junction with the tarmac road **12**, take the left fork (straight on), and follow this until passing Foremark Hall to your left, with its ornamental lake to your right. Continue past the lake along a tree lined drive to reach a T-junction with a stone track **13**.

Should time allow, a visit to **St Saviour's Church** a short distance along the track to your left is recommended. The church was built in 1662 by Sir Francis Burdett. The altar rails were made by famous local blacksmith Robert Bakewell. After your visit retrace your steps to point **13**.



From the junction **13**, turn right and descend the track a short distance to a road **14**. Turn right and follow the road for approximately 150m and cross the stile on your left **15** into an arable field. (Beware: this road can be busy at certain times during school term, so be careful.)

Set in a sandstone crag more than 100m long and 12m in height overlooking Black Pool, are 4 interconnected caves known as **Anchor Church**, mentioned as long ago as 1648. The outcrop once formed the southern bank of the River Trent and the caves were partly formed by the action of river water on the soft rock, and partly cut out by hand. One legend says St. Hardulph used to live and pray here around the 6-7th Century. It was to isolated places such as these that the early Christians sought refuge to worship God whilst avoiding persecution. Little more is known of him, but the landmark church at nearby Breedon-on-the-Hill shares his name.



Another ancient legend tells of Sir Hugo de Burdett returning from the Crusades and being tricked into believing his wife Johanne had been unfaithful, then killing her without asking for an explanation and cutting off her left hand which bore his wedding ring. Many years later Sir Hugo was asked to visit the dying hermit at Anchor Church, who confessed he had been bribed by the Baron of Boyville to trick Sir Hugo, so he could marry the dishonoured Johanne. The guilt-stricken hermit had spent the rest of his life at Anchor Church in penance. Children at the Prep School still tell stories of Johanne wandering the woods at Foremark searching for her hand while until recently stone carvings of Johanne, Sir Hugo and the Baron of Boyville rested on the wall of Knowl Hill cottage.

The caves were also a favourite haunt of Sir Francis Burdett who enlarged the caves to their present size, fitted a door and used it as a summer dining room for picnic parties from the hall, as the sandstone guaranteed a cooler temperature.

At the far side of this field cross a stile, turn right **16** and follow the path along the field edge, passing beneath the craggy sandstone escarpment to a stile at the far side **17**. Continue on the path with Black Pool to your left, reaching **Anchor Church** after a short distance.

Follow the well-marked path alongside **Black Pool** to a stile at the far end of the crag **18**. Cross this stile, turn slightly right and follow the path ascending the grassy bank towards the top of the further escarpment. Follow the path along the top before eventually descending to a stile **19**, after which there is one gate and a stile on the short walk to the road. At the road turn left and follow this a short distance back to your starting point **1** at the John Thompson Inn & Brewery, listed in Roger



Protz's Britain's Best 500 Pubs'. A converted 15th century farmhouse, in 1977 the owners re-introduced brewing into Derbyshire with a special beer to commemorate the Silver Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II. Visits to the brewery can be arranged by phoning (01332) 862469.

**Alternative route** - Should the path near Anchor Church be flooded, retrace your steps to the previously crossed arable field, and cross the stile in the fence to the left **A1**, just before the small block of woodland. Follow this path up a slight gradient to eventually arrive at a stile by the roadside **A2**. Cross the stile and turn left along the road for approximately 450m, passing the entrance to Foremark Hall on the way.

Immediately after a mature conifer shelter-belt, pass through the bridle gate on the left **A3** and go diagonally across the field to reach another bridle gate in the far boundary fence. Descend the small dip and climb the other side **A4**, passing through two more bridle gates on the way. Follow the path, by a fence and continue in a straight line through several more bridle gates to eventually reach the road at Ingleby **A5**. Turn left here and follow the road the short distance back to the start point **1**.

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**Black Pool** is a remnant of a former course of the River Trent, but still linked at the eastern end and its level is related to that of the Trent. Like most lowland rivers the course has slowly moved over time - meandered - to its present line. It is also said that the course was artificially changed so that 300 acres of land swapped sides!

