COUNTRY WALKS

EREWASH
BOROUGH COUNCIL

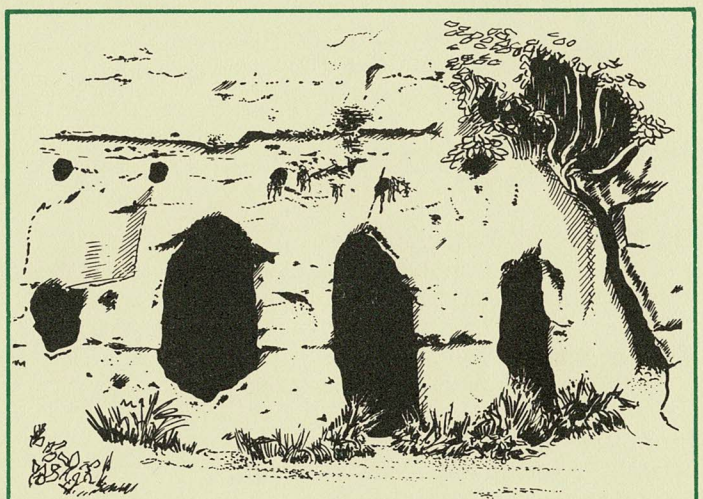
DALES · VALLEYS · MOORS

COUNTRY WALKS 1

IN AND AROUND EREWASH

Hermits Walk

3¼ Miles



The Hermits Cave

Retrace the Boroughs Monastic Past on this walk between Kirk Hallam and Dale Abbey.

GROUNDWORK
EREWASH VALLEY

The Ramblers

Supported by the
COUNTRYSIDE COMMISSION

Hermits Walk 3¼ Miles 2½ Hours

Start Pioneer Meadows, off Wirksworth Road, Kirk Hallam. Ilkeston.

Buses Services 4A, 51 and 53 (Barton); 52 (Trent) and 19 (Derby City); from St. Norberts Drive, Kirk Hallam.

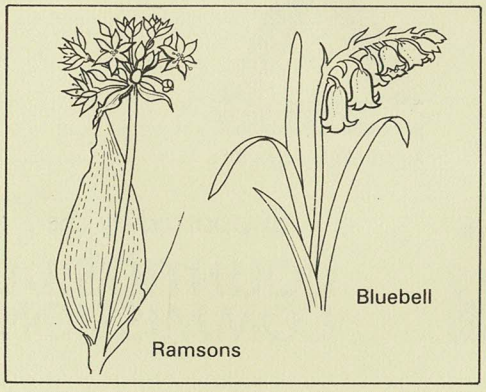
Time Allow two and a half hours.

OS Map Pathfinder series — Nottingham (South West) SK 43/53.

Type of Walk Through flat and undulating countryside.

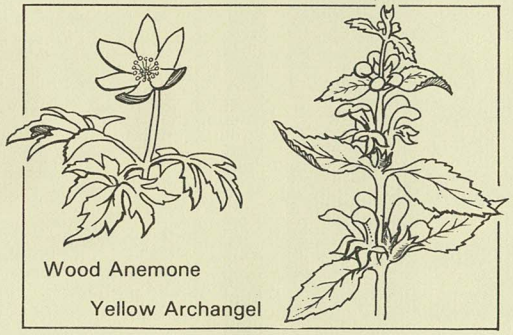
From gate at Pioneer Meadows go straight ahead to left of trees to metal footbridge across Sow Brook.

Pioneer Meadows is an area of public open space comprising wildflower meadows, woodland and a fish pond. The meadows are of special wildlife interest good for toadflax, ragged robin and lady's smock.



Cross bridge, turn right and follow field edge. Two-thirds across second field, path bears left. Cross stile and head for right of pylon. Do not cross stream. Path bears right to cross track bed of former mineral railway.

The old railway line once linked the Stanton Ironworks with the two collieries at Dale, local clay pits and a sand quarry on Arbour Hill, Dale Abbey.



Follow adjoining hedge to next stile. Bear left across next field to its far corner. Go left through gateway and follow track up to Furnace Pond.

The pond probably takes its name from 18th century blast furnaces on this site and would have been dug to power water driven bellows.

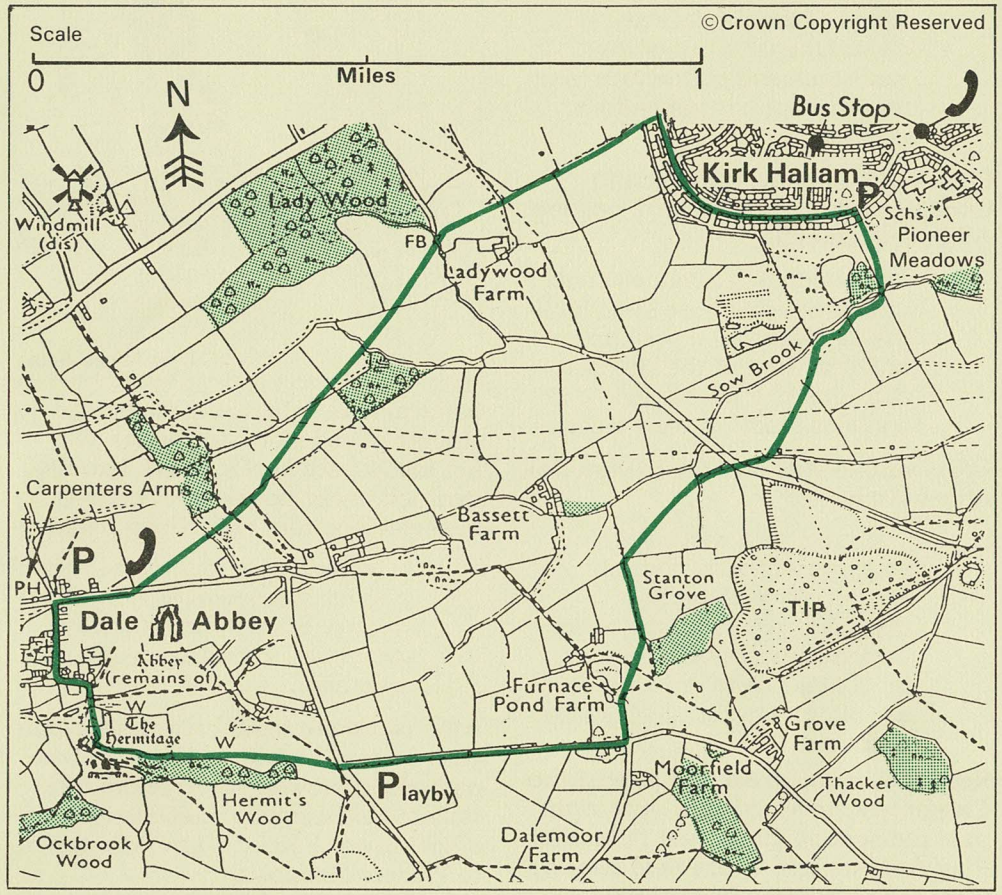
From Furnace Pond, follow surfaced farm track up to junction with Hixon's Lane. Turn Right and follow Dale Road.

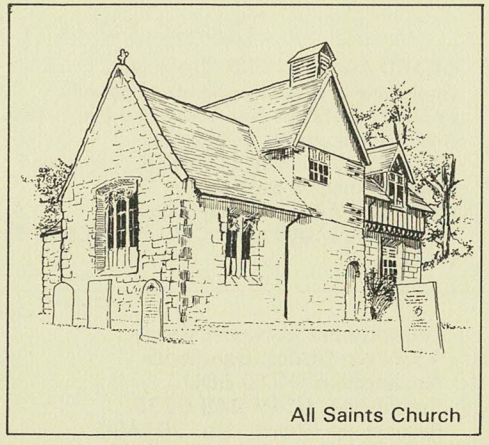
From its high point, about half-way, Cat & Fiddle Windmill, the spire of Ilkestons United Reformed church and the tower of St. Mary's church are all visible on the horizon.

Continue to end of Dale Road to junction with Potato Pit Lane and Woodpecker Hill. Cross road, pass through field gate, bearing slightly right of wood along bridleway to Dale. Proceed below Hermit's Wood, entering it at far corner of field.

Hermit's Wood is an ancient woodland with magnificent trees of beech, ash, oak and lime. In Spring, a scented carpet of bluebells ramsons, wood anemones and yellow archangel covers the woodland floor.

A short flight of steps leads up to Hermit's Cave. (concessionary public access)




All Saints Church

The hermit, a baker from Derby (c1130), was led to Depedale (the old name for Dale) by a vision of the Virgin Mary. He carved the cave out of the sandstone and built a lean-to at the front for himself and his animals.

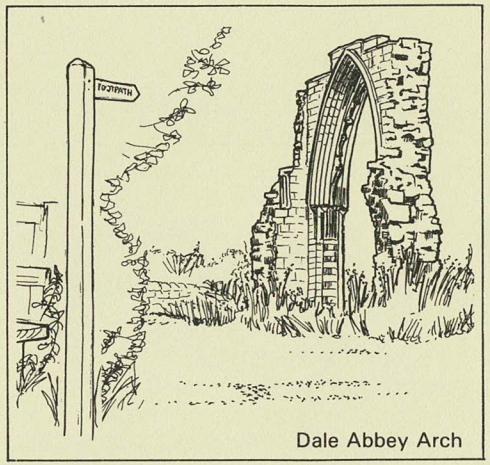
Return to bridleway, turn left and through yard of Church Farm, passing All Saints' Church.

The building is a rare example of church and house (and, until the 19th century a pub) under one roof. Part of the church dates back to c1150 and contains many unusual features.

Cross second stile on right to view Dale Abbey Arch.

The great east window stands witness to bygone days of greater glory. Upon its dissolution in 1538, the abbey owned some 24,000 acres of land. Legends tell of knights in armour and of unfound hidden treasures.

Return to main street and proceed to Carpenters Arms. At pub, turn right past old school. Enter first field after Play Area on left. Cross field bearing right towards barns in next field.



Dale Abbey Arch

barns in next field. Cross footbridge, go straight ahead alongside hedge. (Do not follow path beside wood) into field. Bear left under power lines, go over next stile and turn right along hedge.

The path here follows the line of the narrow gauge section of the former Stanton/Dale tramway which fell into disuse early this century.

After two more fields cross bridge onto path passing Ladywood Farm. Follow path along brow of hill to rejoin Kirk Hallam below small recreation ground off Wirksworth Road. Turn right down to Pioneer Meadows.

PLEASE FOLLOW THE COUNTRY CODE

GUARD AGAINST FIRE Every year, carelessness costs thousands of pounds.
FASTEN GATES - even if you find them open. Animals will wander if they can.
KEEP DOGS UNDER CONTROL - on a lead wherever there is livestock.
KEEP TO PATHS - if they exist.
AVOID DAMAGING FENCES, HEDGES AND WALLS
LEAVE NO LITTER
SAFEGUARD WATER SUPPLIES Do not pollute streams or cattle troughs.
PROTECT WILDLIFE, PLANTS, TREES
GO CAREFULLY ON COUNTRY ROADS Keep in single file, facing on-coming traffic, on the right.
RESPECT THE LIFE OF THE COUNTRYSIDE

For Further Details

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