

CANONS AND CORNMILLS

A flat walk from the village of Ripley. The route follows part of the River Wey Navigation, which was one of the earliest British rivers to be made fully navigable, and is now a popular waterway for recreational boating. The walk passes Pyrford Church, Pyrford Lock and Ockham Mill, and close to the ruins of Newark Priory which was formerly occupied by Augustinian canons.

Start point:	Ripley High Street
Grid ref:	TQ 052568
Ordnance Survey Map:	Explorer 145 Guildford and Farnham
Distance:	9 km (6 miles)
Typical time:	Allow 2 ½ hours, with extra time for stops
Footwear:	Stout shoes, boots, Wellingtons
Transport:	Buses run between Guildford and Kingston via Ripley, Cobham and Esher (number 515, provided by Tellings Golden Miller). Buses also connect Guildford and Byfleet, via Ripley, Send and Woking (number 436, provided by Arriva). Get off at the bus stop in Ripley High Street by the Post Office.
Parking:	Car park on Ripley Green or at Pyrford Lock (point 7)
Facilities & Refreshments:	There are a number of shops and pubs in Ripley. There are public toilets on Ripley Green. The Anchor Pub at Pyrford Lock (point 7) serves food all day.

This walk follows public footpaths and bridleways which cross private land. Use of the River Wey towpath is by courtesy of the National Trust. Take care when crossing golf course. Information is included for your interest, but PLEASE respect people's privacy, keep dogs under control ... and remember the Countryside Code and National Trust byelaws.

Walk Directions:

1. From bus stop in Ripley High Street, go to the entrance to Green and follow tarmac track between playground and cricket pitches. Pass Dunsborough Farm buildings and cottages on left, then swing left with track and keep ahead. In 130m pass cottages and follow footpath ahead. At Walsham Lock do not cross weir but turn left along towpath with Wey Navigation on right. Continue for 850m to reach Newark Lock.

The ruins of Newark Priory can be seen across the meadows to your right. The ruins are private. This rich Augustinian house was founded at the end of the 12th century by Rual de Calne and his wife Beatrice of Send. In the 16th century King Henry VIII dissolved the monasteries and the surrounding land was taken into the King's hunting park. The dressed stone of the priory has been removed, and all that remains standing are the flint walls of the south transept and the north and south walls of the presbytery.

2. Turn right over the Lock footbridge and continue along canal towpath to reach road.

Newark Mill, a large 19th century weather boarded mill with three undershot water wheels, stood on the far side of the canal near the road until it was burnt down in 1966. It was the last of a series of mills that had served the area since at least Norman times.

3. At road turn right along the pavement to cross the River Wey after 80 metres. Keep ahead along road.

In the clump of trees to your right just after crossing the river there is an eel trap – a brick structure with a sluice gate and iron grid on which the eels were stranded. The water level in the derelict pool was controlled by sluices and a large culvert running under the road from the river. This trap dates from the 19th century but earlier traps were used by the canons from Newark Priory.

4. At end of pavement cross road with care to pavement on other side. When road bends sharp right in 200m, keep ahead up path to pass St Nicholas Church, Pyrford.

The name Pyrford means ford marked by a pear tree. The small Norman church was built on a knoll around 1150. Many of its original features remain, and several medieval wall paintings have been uncovered and restored. William the Conqueror granted the manor of Pyrford to Westminster Abbey, and it is likely that the church was built by the Abbot of Westminster. The church was acquired in 1258 by Newark Priory.

5. Turn left along verge and then pavement for 300m. At house and bridleway sign on left, cross the road and turn right over stile by gate. Go along field edge parallel to road for 60m then turn left to follow fence line downhill. At end of field, turn left and go along field edge with hedge line on right and pylons on left. In 200m pass stile on right and go ahead over two stiles. Keep ahead towards pylon for 50m and then turn right across field to fence corner. After fence corner bear left keeping fence on left. Cross stile and go down drive to road.

The timber framed Glebe cottage to your right dates from the 16th century.

6. Cross road going slightly right to follow field edge path over footbridge. Follow yellow waymark arrows over golf course to reach road by metal field gate. Turn right at road to cross canal bridge by Pyrford Lock.

The Wey Navigation links Guildford to the River Thames at Weybridge. It was made navigable using stretches of separate canal, and opened to barges in 1653.

7. Turn right along canal towpath. After 700m pass Pigeon House Bridge and continue for 100m. Turn left on path through trees to cross footbridge over the River Wey.

8. Continue on path and go over two small footbridges to meet track. Follow track, go over stile by gate and follow driveway round to left, crossing bridge over the mill race, and passing Ockham Mill on right.

There have been mills on the site since medieval times. The first Earl of Lovelace built this five-storey mill in 1862. The earl's coronet can be seen either side of the lucam – the projecting timber loading entrance which contained a sack hoist for receiving deliveries.

9. Pass through gates ahead and go down Ockham Mill Lane. In 70m turn right on path. Keep ahead crossing two footbridges, then bear slightly left and go along bridleway into woods. Follow bridleway ignoring cross tracks and paths, and continue for 550m through woodland to reach houses. Turn right and walk towards green with cricket pitch on right and clubhouse and cottages on left. Bear left to reach Ripley High Street.