



03 SOMERSET HOLFORD & DOWSBOROUGH

▶ Distance: 5½ miles/8.7km ▶ Time: 3 hours ▶ Grade: Moderate



SEE
FEATURE
ON PAGE 18

Looking north from
Dosborough hillfort.

PHOTO: ROBERT HESKETH



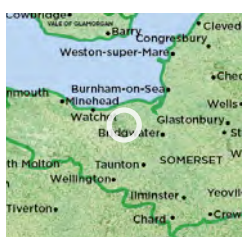
CHOSEN BY... ROBERT HESKETH

Splendid views to
the Bristol Channel,

Bridgwater Bay and South Wales open out as we climb the Quantock Hills' eastern flank to Dowsborough Iron Age hill fort. Before invasive trees grew here, the 340m elevation gave defenders extensive views and ample warning of visitors, friendly or otherwise. The rampart encloses 6½ acres (2.7ha) and would, with its complimentary ditch, have been considerably higher when first built before erosion by more than 2,000 years of rain and wind. The lane between points 3 and 4 was part of the Herepath, an Anglo Saxon military road

which ran from Cannington over Quantock and on across the Brendons and Exmoor. 'Dead Woman's Ditch' (point 4) may possibly have been an outer defence of the hillfort. The Quantocks' beautiful scenery was familiar to William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge. The Romantic poets were young and tireless walkers as was Dorothy, Wordsworth's talented sister, their companion as they rambled over the hills: 'There is everything here,' wrote Dorothy, 'sea and woods, wild as fancy ever painted...' The Wordsworths spent a marvellously creative year at nearby Alfoxden in 1797, whilst Coleridge lived at Nether Stowey, where he wrote some

PLAN YOUR WALK



ROUTE

Start/parking Holford's Bowling Green car park, grid ref ST154410, postcode TA5 1SA

Is it for me? Bridleways, footpaths and quiet lanes. One long ascent; one long descent

Stiles None

PLANNING

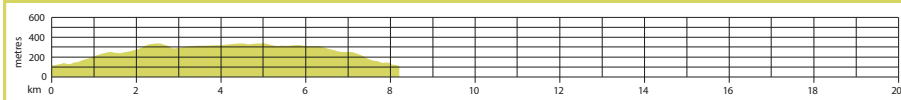
Nearest town Bridgwater
Refreshments Plough Inn, Holford (01278 741624)

Public toilets None
Public transport Limited bus 15 Minehead-Bridgwater to start, Mon-Fri (firstbus.co.uk/somerset)

Maps OS Explorer 140; Landranger 181

of his finest verse, including *The Ancient Mariner* and *Kubla Khan*, showing the inspiration of the Quantocks scenery – though sometimes with a tincture of added opium. ➔

GRADIENT PROFILE



03 SOMERSET
HOLFORD & DOWSBOROUGH▶ OS Explorer map 140 ▶ Buy maps at: ordnancesurvey.co.uk/shop

View from Hare Knap.



PHOTO: ROBERT HESKETH

1 Start

Turn R out of car park. Turn R 100m ahead. Turn L after 80m at Triangle. Follow lane up and over hill to waymark. Turn R through gate. Follow bridleway uphill. When path divides, keep L and uphill. Keep ahead at path junction. Continue uphill on bridleway to rampart Dowsborough hillfort.

2 1½ miles/2.2km

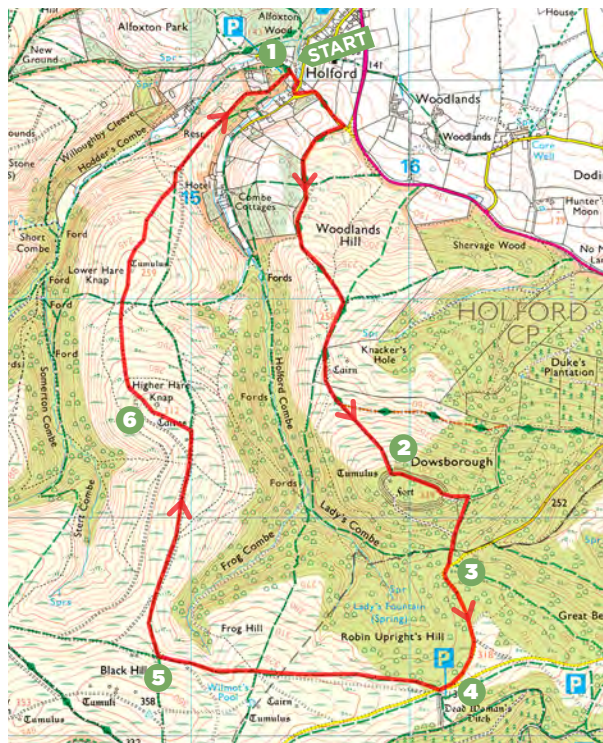
Turn L. Circuit ramparts. Return to Point 2. Continue rampart circuit for 200m. Exit rampart. Continue to cross track. Turn R. Follow track down to lane, ignoring side turnings.

3 2¼ miles/3.4km

Turn R up lane. Follow it to signpost 'Dead Woman's Ditch'.

4 2¼ miles/4.2km

Bear R signed 'Crowcombe' and R onto signed bridleway 80m ahead. Follow bridleway for 800m to



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cross track. Continue for another 400m along broad ridge track.

5 3½ miles/5.5km

Turn R along clear track heading north towards brow of hill. When track divides turn L to cairn on Higher Hare Knap.

6 4¼ miles/6.8km

Head north and downhill on broad grassy path. Continue up low rise ahead, crowned with tumuli (ruined prehistoric burial mound). Follow track

downhill. Merge with another downhill track. Continue downhill through gate. Path divides 50m ahead. Keep L. Continue downhill past cottage and ahead as signed to return to car park. **CW**

VIEW THE WALK ON OS MAPS ONLINE:

walk1000miles.co.uk/cwroutes

IN ASSOCIATION WITH



**Ordnance
Survey**

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DATE WALKED

TIME TAKEN

YOUR RATING

