

FOLLOWING THE PATH

LEADER: Good afternoon everyone. Today we are going to follow the path around Boxley Warren.

STORYTELLER:

Well met, good people!

I am the Storyteller. Listen to my rhyme.

I will lead you through landscape and through time.

I know all of this land and its people,

I know every woodland and farm and steeple.

I was here before England got its name,

And shall be here, more than the same time again.

LEADER: Not sure what happened there! My mind went blank for a minute. Now, the purpose of the walk is to learn about the landscape and history of Boxley Warren. As you all know, it's beside the track that is called the Pilgrim's Way. This is a route, 120 miles long, that goes from Winchester to Canterbury, and then on to the Channel Ports. It's supposed to be very ancient.

STORYTELLER: The prehistoric road;the wild, half instinctive trail of men who had but just taken on humanity; later a known and common track. The Old Road was not paved, it was not embanked... Nature herself laid down the platform of a perfectly defined ridge.

LEADER: I think it must be the weather. I do apologise. To get back to where we were, Boxley Warren has always been a place that people have travelled through, following the path. Any settlements in the area are very old. The first two were a pair of Neolithic Longhouses, some of the best examples ever found. The bigger one was up the end of the track there, but it's now under the High Speed Railway. But it was only because the railway was built that the house was found and excavated. The second one was smaller and was over the other side of the trackway over there (POINTS SOUTHWEST). The fact that they are there means that the land round here has been farmed for at least five thousand years.

SHORT PIECE OF 'DEER SONG' FROM A DISTANCE. NEOLITHIC MAN GOES THROUGH, STOPS AT A SIGNIFICANT POINT AS THOUGH COMMUNING WITH SPIRITS.

STORYTELLER: The man sings his hunting song
And dreams to bring the deer along.
Parallel to the river, he has built his house,
Close to sacred stones and water source.
Between Heaven and Earth, the longhouse stands,
Between chalk and forest, upland and lowland;
Between safety and danger, Downland and Weald;
Between hunting ground and new cleared field.
A place to sleep and a place to store,
A home for twenty five or more.
With the seasons they come and go,
Sheltering through frost and snow,
Roaming abroad with the herd in spring,
Returning in the dark time to celebrate and sing.

DEER DANCE SONG WITH INSTRUMENTS AND MORE VOICES,
CONTINUES THROUGH WORDS OF STORYTELLER AND THE
APPEARANCE OF TRAVELLERS

STORYTELLER: And as they sing their magic rite
They conjure visions by the fire's light.
They follow the path by the beat of their drum
And walk with travellers yet to come.

TRAVELLERS APPEAR AT A DISTANCE FROM AROUND THE
FIELD AND WALK OFF TO PERFORMING SPACES.

LEADER: Right, it's time we set off. We're going out through the gate and then we'll follow the path that way. On our way, we are going to be looking out for a particular plant which we should find all the way along the track. It's the one that is the emblem of Boxley Warren. You might call it Old Man's Beard, because in the winter it has a lot of fluffy seeds. At the moment it is in flower, and, because it decorates the path, some people call it Travellers Joy.

As I said, we are going to be walking a very ancient trackway. It was used even before the Romans came, to bring tin up to Kent from the Cornish mines. Now, it's called the Pilgrim's Way.

STORYTELLER: So come with me and tread the short grey grass,
And catch your breath to see the milkwort blue,
And marvel at the stunted hawthorn as we pass;
See Traveller's Joy hang heavy on the hedge
Along the Pilgrim's Way....

CELTIC FAMILY HURRIES ALONG THE PATH JUST AS THE
GROUP GETS TO THE GATE.

CHILD 1: Why do we have to go so fast?

WOMAN: Because the Romans are coming.

CHILD 2: And why are we taking all our things with us?

WOMAN: Because we're not coming back. We've got to go west to get out of their way.

CHILD 1: Father said they would go along the north road, not this one.

WOMAN: They are doing both. They have sent some of their army this way, so that they can take over as much land as possible.

CHILD 2: I'm hungry.

WOMAN: You'll have to wait till we've forded the river. Come on! Just follow the path.

LEADER: We're going in the same direction, although not so fast. This part of the Old Road is quite a narrow, rutted track, so be careful of puddles and holes. The Pilgrims Way has never actually been made up as a complete road. Parts of it are metalled, and parts of it are just like this, a narrow trackway between two hedges.

STORYTELLER:

No-one would notice that gap between two fields.
Maybe the thought would arise of an irresolute farmer
Who set a hedge, then set a second hedge
Some four yards parallel to it, changing his mind.....
There, that wasted stretch
Runs to infinity like a rusted road.....
This *is* a road, and has been, since centuries past.

LEADER: The Romans weren't the only conquerors to come this way. Duke William's army followed the same track after the Battle of Hastings. We'll follow along the path in the same direction.

WALK TO STOPPING PLACE 1. TWO MONKS COME IN THE OTHER DIRECTION.

These monks must be up from Boxley Abbey, just down the track below the path, behind us.

MONK 1: Brother, what a sad, cold December day this is. We'll always remember Christmas in the year 1170.

MONK 2: I couldn't believe it. Archbishop Bishop Thomas murdered by three of the king's knights in his own Cathedral! I suppose we should have seen it coming, but it's still a shock.

MONK 1: Our Abbott has received orders to go and help bury him. He's just left for Canterbury in a great hurry. No-one will notice if we follow the path up here for a while.

MONK 2: He was a good man, the Archbishop. I shouldn't be surprised if he weren't made a saint soon.

MONK 1: Now that's a thought! Hundreds of people will want to go to Canterbury to see his tomb, won't they? And our Abbey is right on the road! Think of all the money that the pilgrims will give us to pray for their souls.

MONK 2: We could use our fantastical, moving wooden figure of Christ. Do you remember how it came to us by providence? The carpenter, who had made it while he was in prison in France, was on his way up to London with it when his horse bolted and made its way

right up to the abbey gates. What an opportunity! The abbot bought it, called it the Rood of Grace and set it up by the altar.

MONK 1: I've had an idea! We can put out the word that, if someone coming to pray at the Abbey is pious enough, the head and face of the statue will miraculously all begin to move. Nobody will know that it is us that will be moving it with wires and pulleys, and we will only do so if the person has paid the Abbey enough money. Now, what can we do with that statue of St. Rumwald?

MONK 2: It's very small and light and most people, even women, can pick it up. I know! If we spread a story that only the most virtuous of women are able to lift it, they will all want to come and have a try. But if we don't like them, if they haven't paid enough, or if we just want a joke, we can find a way of bolting it to the ground!

MONK 1: Brother, we will make our Abbey rich, and its fame will be spread far and wide as the Abbey of Miracles!

MONK 2: Come on. We must go and tell our ideas to the brothers.

LEADER: He was right. Becket's tomb did bring a lot of pilgrims through Kent; and Boxley Abbey and its famous miracles drew many of them along this southern route.

STORYTELLER:

Whan that Aprill with his shoures soute
The droughte of March hath perced to the roote,
And bathed every veyne in swich licour
Of which vertu engendred is the flour,.....
And smale foweles maken melodye
That slepeth overnight with open ey.....
Then longen folk to goon on pilgrimages.....
And specially from every shires ende
Of Engelond, to Canterbury they wende,
The hooly blissful martir for to seke.

(PILGRIMS 1 AND 2 COME ALONG LOOKING TIRED AND WEARY. 2, THE MAN, IS CALM AND RESIGNED, 2, THE WIFE, IS BAD TEMPERED AND DEMANDING)

PILGRIM 1: Not long now. Boxley Abbey is just over the hill. We've just got to follow the path.

PILGRIM 2: I hope their food is good and their beds are soft. That inn we slept in by the ford at Snodland was disgusting. I couldn't sleep for the squeaking and scuttering of the rats. The bread was hard, I'm sure the meat was off, and the ale was like vinegar.

PILGRIM 1: At least the Abbey should provide better fare. I've heard they're very rich.

PILGRIM 2: I should hope so. I was beginning to wish we had gone over Rochester Bridge instead.

PILGRIM 1: We couldn't have done that anyway. The landlord at the inn told me it's been washed away again. They've got a temporary ferry, but a man drowned when it hit rough water; and we would have missed seeing the miraculous Rood of Grace if we'd have gone that way.

PILGRIM 2: I can't wait to see it, though I don't suppose it will move for you. And as for that silly little statue, I am going to lift it up and carry it away.

PILGRIMS 1 AND 2 GO OFF TOWARDS BOXLEY

LEADER: Well, let's hope she got what she wanted.

SONG AS WALK MOVES OFF
FROM 'THE GREENHOPPER' (Phil Birkin)

And the hills are green once more,
The hills the pilgrims saw,
On their way to Canterbury.
On their way to Canterbury.

The traveller's joy is twisting through the hedgerows,
The sparrows and the thrushes sing, 'Look how the sun glows'.
The skylark flies so high,
He sees a world passing by.

And the hills are green once more,
The hills the Pilgrims saw
On their way to Canterbury,
On their way to Canterbury.

LEADER: We'll just stop here for a while and see who else comes along. There were reasons other than Boxley Abbey for pilgrims to come along this way. If they were coming from Winchester or Southampton it was more direct than the northern route; and you wouldn't get lost because it followed the line of the Downs.

PILGRIM 3 APPEARS, SEARCHING ALONG THE GROUND.

PILGRIM 3: Has anyone seen my flask? It was hanging on a loop on my belt but the leather must have worn through and it's dropped off somewhere along here. I should have tied it on with a length of Traveller's Joy from the hedge. It would have been stronger than the leather. I've been up and down looking several times. It's a special Pilgrim flask, see. It's not to carry water for drinking, but to bring back holy water or oil that you can buy in Canterbury Cathedral. It's very small, it's made of plain earthenware and it's shaped like a squashed ball, with a narrow neck and a small handle on each side, a bit like a miniature of a leather water bottle. There's a picture of a saint stamped on each side. I borrowed it from my cousin who got it on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. I can't afford to go that far, so he lent it to me to take to Canterbury instead. I thought if I travelled along this lower way, I wouldn't be robbed. I've heard there are thieves all along the Watling Street route. And now I've gone and lost my most precious item without meeting another soul. You can't win.

I'm still glad I followed the path this way. It's much better for us poorer people. The trouble is, there are a lot of peasants that are beholden to their lords and are forbidden to travel beyond the bounds of the manor. Now, we all dress alike, and it would be easy for me to be mistaken for one of them. Then if some do-gooding lord who saw me on the northern track, got the opinion that I was absent without leave, he could set up the hue and cry and my life wouldn't be worth living. No, I'll stick to the quieter route and just drop down into the villages when I need refreshment. I've heard the monks of the Abbey brew a good ale that they sell to travellers at a house that's outside

the Abbey grounds. The Kings Arms they call it. I might go down there tonight. But I must find my flask first.

LEADER: He never did find it. It was discovered during an archaeological dig not long ago. I wonder if he bought a new one in Canterbury?

SONG: FROM 'THE GREENHOPPER'

And the hills are green once more,
The hills the Pilgrims saw
On their way to Canterbury
On their way to Canterbury.

PILGRIMS 1 AND 2 RETURN THE OTHER WAY. PILGRIM 1 CHASING AFTER PILGRIM 2.

PILGRIM 2: I have never been so insulted in my life! I never want to come this way again. To be so shown up in front of all those people! I can't bear to think about it. I strained all my muscles trying to move that statue and it wouldn't budge a finger's width! Don't stand there smirking. I don't know why that statue moved for you. If I'm not virtuous, I wouldn't call you pious.

PILGRIM 1: Now, now, let's just forget all about it. You'll never see any of those people again and you needn't tell anyone when you get home. Let's turn around and follow the path again. Look, it's beautiful today, with Traveller's Joy flowering in all the hedges.

PILGRIM 2: Well, it hasn't brought me much joy.

Pilgrim 1: Come on. We'll find an inn to sleep in instead of the Abbey, and we should be in Canterbury within the week. I'll buy you a new gown.

PILGRIM 2: It had better be a good one.

PILGRIM 1: It will be. Come on.

THEY RETRACE THEIR STEPS TOWARDS CANTERBURY

LEADER: We'll let them go off to Canterbury and move on again.

SONG: FROM 'THE GREENHOPPER'

And the hills are green once more,
The hills the Pilgrims saw
On their way to Canterbury
On their way to Canterbury.
Canterbury.

WALK GOES TO WOODEN CARVED BENCH. STOP TO LOOK AT THE VIEW

LEADER: This is a fantastic viewing point. You can see right over the Weald from here.

STORYTELLER:

Centuries have passed,
So what would they see,
The pilgrims and all their company?
The hills and the valleys are the same.
Gone are the forests since the enclosures came.
Hedgerows have sprung, the land is under plough,
And orchards bloom with blossoms on the bough.
Sussex and Kent are like a garden fair,
But sheep still graze upon the ridges there;
The Pilgrims Way still winds above the Weald
Through wood and brake, and many-a fertile field.

MONKS 1 AND 2 APPEAR AGAIN FROM BOXLEY DIRECTION

LEADER: Here come some more monks. What brings them up here, I wonder?

MONK 1: Well, that's goodbye, Boxley Abbey. It was a good life, but now King Henry VIII's men have come and closed us down, we'll have to move on. They didn't give us a proper reason, did they? They didn't even accuse us of being heretics, like they have with all the other monasteries. All they said was that we have been too fond of gillyflowers and roses. What kind of a reason is that?

MONK 2: And fancy giving us all a pension! That's unheard of. Other monks have been turned out with nothing. Shame about our Rood of Grace being discovered, and publicly burned in Maidstone market, but nobody accused us of extracting money through false pretences, so no harm done.

MONK 1: I think it's something to do with our Abbott. You know the King has given the monastery to Sir Thomas Wyatt? Well, Abbott John has been a great friend of Sir Thomas. He visited him frequently at Allington Castle, didn't he? And there was even a story going about that he was trying it on with one of Sir Thomas's maids.

MONK 2: O, yes, and Lady Wyatt had him put in the stocks for it outside the castle. When the Abbott complained to the king, no less, the king asked Sir Thomas why he had allowed his wife to treat a valued guest in such a way!

MONK 1: There must have been a lot of intrigue going on between the King, the Abbott and Sir Thomas Wyatt in all kinds of affairs; but the good thing is that we are all free men with a pension for life. I might even see if I can be made a priest in the Church of England.

MONK 2: Not me. I'm going off to London, to be a music tutor to some wealthy lord's son.

MUSIC: GREENSLEEVES

LEADER: Time to follow the path again. In a minute we are going to turn off this track and follow another old path up the hill for a bit.

WALK TOWARDS ENTRANCE TO THE HOLLOW WAY.

LEADER: This is where we go in.
STOP AT BOTTOM OF HOLLOW WAY

STORYTELLER: There has been from time immemorial a warren for rabbits here, the lands of which lay close at the foot of the chalk hills, it formerly belonging to Boxley Abbey, and was afterwards in possession of the Wyatts.

WARRENER APPEARS FROM THE BUTTS

WARRENER: A good bag today. Four big coneys. The cook will be pleased. She'll make a fine stew. Then I'll dress the fur. Sir Thomas will find a use for it, maybe as a bed-cover, or maybe to line a fine cloak with it for the Lady Elizabeth to wear when she travels up to court. It's really warm in winter is coney fur.

I mind the warren up at the edge of Boarley Woods. The monks used it first and now we've improved on it and made a pillow mound – a big rectangular bank of soil and stones that the coneys can dig burrows in and use for shelter. It's a good use for the scrub land.

Coneys are delicate little creatures. That's why we have to build them a home. They were brought over from the Continent by the Normans to supplement food stores, and they couldn't survive in our cold, damp climate, even here in the south-east; so a lot of land-owners had warrens made for them and appointed warreners like me to watch over them.

People do say that each litter of rabbits (that's the name for the young ones) is stronger than the one before and that one day, there will be coneys all over the land, running wild and eating all the crops. But, if it ever happens, it won't be in my life-time. I'll still have a job when I'm old.

I'll be getting back along the path to the Abbey. I'll pick some dried stems of Traveller's Joy on the way. They're good for stringing up game. Then I have to get to Penenden and back before nightfall. We've got another warren down on the heath. So long.

LEADER: (INDICATES HOLLOW WAY) Just stand here and look at this – a hollow way, one of the best and the most beautiful in Kent. They are the remains of the old trackways which came from the north of Kent, across the Downs, and down into the Weald.

STORYTELLER: Trodden by innumerable feet, cut by innumerable wheels, they are the records of journeys to market, to worship, to sea. Like creases in the hand, or the wear on the stone sill of a doorstep or stair, they are the consequences of tradition, of repeated action. They archive the past customs of a place.

SONG: THE HOLLOW WAY

(Music = Juniper, Gentle and Rosemary)

From the northern coast to the Kentish Weald

Follow, follow the hollow way

The deep rutted track between the fields.

Follow the path of the hollow way.

Worn by feet, by hooves and water,

Holding the echoes of shouts and laughter.

A thousand years have seen them travelled,

Through thorns thick tangled and tree roots ravelled.

A tunnel of trees and earthen banks,

On either side the traveller flanks.

Each step you take on the sunken path,

Continues the story of travellers past.

TWO DROVERS APPEAR COMING DOWN THE TRACK, ONE YOUNG, ONE OLDER.

OLDER: We'll rest round here for the night. There's a field just through the woods where we can pen the sheep. Then we can get an early start for Maidstone market in the morning.

YOUNGER: That is the best idea I've heard all day. It's been a long walk from Faversham.

OLDER: Want a smoke?

YOUNGER: What's that?

OLDER: Poor Man's Friend, or Boy's Bacca to you. Although you may know it as Travellers Joy. I makes a good smoke. It draws well and doesn't burst into flame; and, best of all, it's free. Go on try it.

YOUNGER TAKES THE SMOKE

YOUNGER: Not bad. How old is this road we're walking?

OLDER: Centuries old. Some say it was even used before the Romans to drive animals from the coast down to the forest. The Saxons certainly came this way. They used it for pigs. The thing pigs like best is acorns and you can't get those up in the north of the county as it is all open land. So they drove them down into the Forest of Anderida for the winter, stopping off at woodland like this on the way so the pigs didn't get thin and hungry. Pannage, they called it, the fattening of pigs on acorns in the woods.

YOUNGER: Where was the Forest of Anderida?

OLDER: We call it the Weald now. And you've heard of all those villages with names ending in 'Den', they were once just clearings in the woods where the pigs were grazed. Very often they were owned by the landowners on the coast. Do you know where the name Tenterden came from? 'Tant wara den', which means the den belonging to the people of Thanet.

YOUNGER: And they came all that way with herds of pigs! I thought bringing sheep from Faversham to Maidstone was far enough.

OLDER: You don't know you're born, lad. Let's get some sleep.

LEADER: This track was used as a droveway until the railways were built in the mid-nineteenth century. After that, most of the animals went to market by rail.

SONG: THE DROVERS (Keith Marsden)

O, I was a lad when I first saw the sight,
The gathering of beasts and men,
The cobs off the halter and dogs running free,
For the drovers were on the road again.

O the droving days are done,
And the drover's way is run,
For there's railways laid and they've taken the trade,
And the droving days are done.

We cursed down the valleys, we cursed up the hills,
We stumbled through marsh, bog and fen,
Each year was the last but we knew in the spring
That the drovers were on the road again.

O the droving days are done,
And the drover's way is run,
For there's railways laid and they've taken the trade,
And the droving days are done.

For we had the freedom of high hill and down,
No fences, no walls bound us then,
The meeting with old friends at farmstead or fair,
When the drovers were on the road again.

O the droving days are done,
And the drover's way is run,
For there's railways laid and they've taken the trade,
And the droving days are done.

LEADER: Now we are going to follow the path through the woods and across the hill.

WARDEN AND WOOD SPIRIT APPEAR ON RIGHT. WOOD SPIRIT IS OUT OF SIGHT TO WARDEN

WARDEN: I see you've just come from the hollow way. Did you notice the yew trees growing up on either side of the path with all their roots twisting down the bank? Very ancient, they are, planted specially to mark the track. Nobody knows when. Yew trees can last a long time, both when they're growing and when the wood has been made into something useful, like a spear or a bow, or the back of a chair.

WOOD SPIRIT:

Yew is the sacred tree of immortality,
Of death and rebirth; the tree of eternity.
Long life brings wisdom, and the sacred yew
Keeps the knowledge of every tree that ever grew.

WARDEN: If you'd have carried on up to the top of the hollow way to the woods at the top, you would have found some oak trees, maybe grown from acorns that the pigs left behind all those years ago, or their descendants at least. Who knows? Oak is another tree that grows for a long time and lasts when it is cut. Some of ours were used for ship-building in the old days, over at the Dockyard in Chatham.

WOOD SPIRIT:

Oak is the tree of the Midsummer Sun,
Who ensures the success of the harvest to come.
Just and noble, honest and brave,
Warriors like him, he will protect and save.

WARDEN: We've got some big beech trees up the top there too; beautiful old trees. You feel very still when you're amongst them. I always think beech is a very homely wood. We use it to make spoons and bowls, chairs and the handles of tools.

WOOD SPIRIT:

Carry a twig to bring creativity,
Understanding and knowledge and maybe prosperity.
Lovers' initials in bark carved by hand
Will make love grow, as the bark expands.

WARDEN: We once had a beautiful old elm wood. It was very dark and damp and there was a well in the middle of it, so the place was called Well Wood. The boys used to hang down the well for a dare. Elms have been here since the Stone Age, and their wood will last forever, even in the wet. They used to be a common sight all over the country, but you would be lucky to find one now.

WOOD SPIRIT:

The tree of the elves is the elm tree;
A gift, to help you rise above adversity.
Cornish folk, so the stories say,
Danced round the elm pole on the first of May

WARDEN: Once this place was famous for its box trees. Well, you would expect so, wouldn't you, from the name, Boxley Warren? The first ever writing about box trees in 1695 said: 'At Boxley in the county of Kent, there be woods of them'. The name means 'the clearing in the box-tree wood'. But numbers went down to about five trees. These were damaged in the great storm, and then there were two. Disaster, you might have said. But then the Countryside Project took cuttings from the original trees, and planted them on the slopes and they seem to have taken. There aren't exactly woods of them yet, but you never know.

WOOD SPIRIT:

Since Stone Age man first walked this place
Evergreen box has been laid in graves.
And houses were hung with the green box leaves
From Candlemas Day to Easter Eve.

WARDEN: Keep following the path and you'll find the box trees on the other side of the field.

LEADER: Time's getting on. We'd better do as he says.

WOOD SPIRIT: Wait!

First, I'll ask a riddle, answer if you can.
What plant is called Whiskered Old Man;
Witch's Rope and Devil's Guts,
Because the other plants it chokes;
Maiden Hair and Virgin's Bower,
Because it bears bright, star-like flowers;
Basket Cane, and Skipping rope?
You'll answer me with joy, I hope?

STORYTELLER: The Travellers Joy. It is found in the borders of fields among thorns and briars, almost in every hedge from Gravesend to Canterbury.

WOOD SPIRIT: Go with joy, travellers!

LEADER: I think we'd better go before anything else happens!

MOVE OUT ONTO THE OPEN TRACK

ROYALIST SOLDIER APPEARS FROM THE BOTTOM OF THE HILL AND WALKS UP TOWARDS THE TRACK, LOOKING TIRED AND BATTLE WEARY. AT TOP OF THE HILL, BY THE TRACK, HE SITS DOWN AND LOOKS OVER MAIDSTONE.

STORYTELLER: Kentish Sir Byng stood for his King,
Bidding the crop-headed parliament swing,
And pressing a troupe, unable to stoop,
And see the rogues flourish and honest folk droop.

SONG: THE BATTLE OF MAIDSTONE TOWN

(Music = Poor Old Horse)

In 1648, in the spring.

Chorus: And we say so, and we know so.

In May when all the birds do sing.

Chorus: At the Battle of Maidstone Town.

The King was in prison on the Isle of Wight,
The Royalists still had plenty of fight.

They took the ports round the county of Kent,
And off to Penenden Heath they went.

They were called to muster at Burham Down,
And three thousand were sent into Maidstone Town.

The Parliament general, Fairfax named,
Was sent with his troops to win the game.

Through the streets went a furious battle,
Swords they clashed and houses rattled.

Cannons boomed from Gabriels Hill,
But the Roundhead army were coming still.

By the Church of St. Faith's the King's men stand
When thunder it raged all over the land.

They bravely fought but they had no chance
In the wake of the New Model Army's advance.

The survivors escaped up the Boxley Downs,
To regroup once more by London Town.

SOLDIER GETS UP AND WALKS TO WOODS IN LAST VERSE.
LOOKS BEHIND HIM, GOES INTO TREES.

STORY TELLER:

Kentish Sir Byng stood for his king,
Bidding the crop-headed parliament swing.
But in Maidstone Town, his luck came down,
So he followed the path over Boxley Down.

LEADER: And that is the story of the Battle of Maidstone. Time we moved on.

WALK ON A SHORT WAY.

LIME BURNER'S WIFE COMES UP TOWARDS THE TRACK FROM THE SIDE, CARRYING A FOOD BASKET.

STORYTELLER: Another industry with which the Pilgrims Way must have been associated was the quarrying of chalk to make lime. All along those higher reaches of the road where it runs along escarpments and embankments of the chalk downs, it passes the lime-pit workings.....

WIFE: Fancy my husband forgetting his food supplies! I know he had an early firing at the lime kiln today, but leaving his beer behind...! You know what they say, 'Thirsty as a lime burner'. And it's a thirsty job they do up there. They load the kiln in a special way, layering it with brushwood and loads of chalk that come from the quarries up at Harp Farm. Then, once they've set fire to it, they have to watch over it for three or four days. They even sleep near it, which can be dangerous if you don't watch out, because of all the poisonous fumes. But the worst job is unloading the lime when it's burned out. You have to make sure you cover your face, because if you breathe in too much dust it makes your nose bleed. It's the Devil's job, so people say. And you can see why, with all that smoke and fire and danger. The workers say they are burning the bones of the Earth, and they have got their own little ritual for safety. Before they light the fire, they sprinkle some holy water on top and make the sign of the cross, just to make sure the Devil stays away. Why do they work there? It's well paid because it's so dangerous; and it's a useful job. Round here the lime is mostly used on the fields, to make the soil better, so the farmers can grow more crops. But without lime, we wouldn't have mortar for building, or whitewash

either. My friend puts a bowl in her pantry to take away the damp,
but I tell her she wants to watch out, or it might catch fire.
They do say that some of it is bought by the London theatres to burn
in the lamps that light the stage. Limelight, they call it.
Well, I must follow the path, before my husband dies of thirst!
SHE GOES AHEAD, AND UP THE HILL

LEADER: We had better move on.

TENNYSON APPEARS ALONG THE TRACK

LEADER: This looks just like the poet, Tennyson. He once lived in
Boxley, and used to come up here for peace and quiet and
inspiration.

TENNYSON: What a noisy party! I'll tell you about it. I've written a
poem.

AT BOXLEY, BY ALFRED LORD TENNYSON (that's me)

Sir Walter Vivian, all on a summer's day
Gave his broad lawns until the set of sun
Up to the people: thither flocked at noon
His tenants, wife and child, and thither half
The neighbouring borough.....I was there....
'Come out', he said, 'to the Abbey: there is Aunt Elizabeth
And Sister Lilia, with the rest'. We went...
Down through the park: strange was the sight to me;
For all the sloping pasture murmured, sown
With happy faces and with holiday.
There moved the multitude, a thousand heads....
.....a herd of boys with clamour bowl'd
And stumped the wicket; babies rolled about
Like tumbled fruit in grass; and men and maids
Arranged a country dance, and flew through light
And shadow, while the twangling violin
Struck up with Soldier Laddie, and overhead,
The broad, ambrosial aisles of lofty lime
Made noises with bees and breeze from end to end.

I'm glad to come up here for a bit of peace and quiet. The only
sounds are

'The moan of doves in immemorial elms
And murmuring of innumerable bees'.
Mmm, I like that. I can put it in a poem somewhere.
I'm going to follow this path for a while. It's like the brook down by
the Abbey: men may come and men may go, but it goes on forever.

LEADER: We had better go on too.

LAND GIRL COMES HURRYING ALONG THE PATH TOWARDS THE GROUP

LAND GIRL: I should take cover if I were you. The man with the red
flag's fallen asleep again and firing might happen at any time. What
he's supposed to do is wave his flag when the firing begins to warn
people not to walk by the Butts. But he comes up here with his
sandwiches and his bottle of beer and falls asleep in the sun. That's
not what you do in wartime, is it? You have to stay alert. That's what
all the posters tell us.

Still, I suppose you are safe enough here. You know where the Butts
are, don't you? Back along this track just the other side of the hollow
way. There are six concrete pillars that have been used for target
practice since the time of Napoleon, so they say. The range was
closed down in 1933 because someone said the pillars were
dangerous, but because of this war, all the regiments based in
Maidstone are using it again. You've got to use everything you've got
in wartime.

Some of these new recruits haven't a clue what they're doing. I was
lifting potatoes yesterday in a field just below the hill, when some of
the rookies came up and started firing off a Brenn gun. I thought I
was going to get hit!

You'd think working on the land was a safe bet, but not along these
Downs. They are a real landmark for planes. The pilots follow them
between London and the Channel. When the ack-ack guns fire at the
doodlebugs, or when there are dog-fights going on up there, the
shrapnel just falls down into the fields, so we have to watch out.
And talking of watching out, I had better follow the path to the Butts
and wake up the man with the red flag. Stay safe!

MUSIC: THE WHITE CLIFFS OF DOVER

LEADER: We're nearly back at the start. Just a few more yards down the path to the car park.

STORYTELLER: There are primal things which move us....Of these primal things, the least obvious, but the most important, is The Road....Men feel a meaning in it;it explains its own vagaries, and it gives a unity to all that has arisen on its way.

WOMAN TRIALS BIKER COMES FROM THE CAR PARK
CARRYING A TOOL BOX.

BIKER: The bike's broken down again! Follow the path back for the tools, he says, while I try and fiddle with it. I'll give him fiddle with it. He tried to convert it from a 250 to a 350, and ever since then it's been unreliable. I don't mind coming up here every weekend. It's a great challenge riding up the hollow way and sideways across the Butts, and the other bikers are great mates, but breaking down all the time makes it tedious. We bought our trials sidecar outfit from a champion. Norman Wager his name was. He comes up here too, along with Dennis and his two boys and a chap called Rache. We were winning awards with the 250 engine, but then, as I said, he tried to convert it. If it works, don't fix it, I reckon. Maybe I'll resign as the sidecar passenger.

I'd miss this place, though, and I must admit, we have made a bit of a mess of it with our tracks. They stand out from miles away, have you noticed? You can see them from the edges of Maidstone. Maybe I should come back as a conservation volunteer and put it to rights! That's years in the future though. Meanwhile, back with the tool box.

LEADER: Now we're back to our starting place. Let's just go back to the gate.

STORYTELLER: There are more ways than one of getting close to your ancestors. Follow the Old Road and, as you walk, think of them. They climbed the Downs just as you did. They sweated and paused for breath, just as you did today. When you see the bluebells in the spring, the wild thyme, and the cowslips, you're seeing what their eyes saw. You ford the same rivers; the same birds are singing. When you lie flat on your back and watch the clouds sailing, you are so close to those other people that you can hear the footsteps of

travellers, the horses' hooves, the talk and laughter, the songs that they sang, and the cries of the children.

TWO CHILDREN RUN DOWN THROUGH FIELD AND ONTO THE PILGRIMS WAY IN THE SAME DIRECTION AS THE ORIGINAL CELTS.

CHILD 1: Look. There's a path.

CHILD 2: Let's follow it and see where it goes.

CHILD 1: It looks like it goes on for ever.

CHILD 2: It probably does. Come on. Let's explore.

STORYTELLER: And the dream comes full circle, and the dreamer wakes and sings of his dream.

ALL CHARACTERS APPEAR UP ON THE HILL.
SONG, WHILE THEY WALK DOWN AND FOLLOW THE CHILDREN THROUGH THE GATE AND ALONG THE PATH. STORYTELLER FOLLOWS THEM.

FINAL SONG: FROM 'THE GREENHOPPER'
And the children run helter-skelter across the land,
And the people on the path they wave their hand,
They follow and then they're gone,
But the path goes on and on.

And the hills are green once more,
The hills the Pilgrims saw
On their way to Canterbury,
On their way to Canterbury.
Canterbury.

LEADER: We hope you enjoyed your walk. Thank you very much for coming.

Deer Dance

Dm C Dm
 Ga-na wey_ yo hey ya - na hey, Ga-na wey_ yo hey ya - na hey,
 3 C Dm C Dm
 Ga-na wey yo hey ya - na hey, Ga-na wey yo hey ya - na hey,
 5 C Dm
 Ga-na wey_ yo hey ya - na hey, Ga-na wey_ yo hey ya - na hey,
 7 C Dm C Dm
 Ga-na wey yo hey ya - na hey, Ga-na wey yo hey ya - na hey, Hi
 9 C Dm C D
 yo hey ha - na, Ya - na hey, Hi yo hey ha - ha, Ya - na hey, Hi
 11 C Dm C Dm
 yo hey ha - na, Ya ne hey, Hi yo hey ha - na, Ya - na hey.

Gana wey yo hey yana hey-hey-hey
 Gana wey yo hey yana hey
 Gana wey yo hey yana hey
 Gana wey yo hey yana hay

Gana wey yo hey yana hey-hey-hey
 Gana wey yo hey yana hey
 Gana wey yo hey yana hey
 Gana wey yo hey yana hey

Hi yo hey hana	yana hey
Hi yo hey hana	yana hey
Hi yo hey hana	yana hey

The Hollow Way

Trad.

F B \flat C Dm B \flat

From the nor - thern coast to the Ken - tish We - ald_ Fol - low, fol - low the hol - low

8 C C F B \flat C

way. The deep rut - ted track bet - ween the fields.

13 F B \flat C F

Fol - low the path of the ho - llow way.

From the northern coast to the Kentish Weald
Follow, follow the hollow way
The deep rutted track between the fields.
Follow the path of the hollow way.

Worn by feet, by hooves and water,
Holding the echoes of shouts and laughter.

A thousand years have seen them travelled,
Through thorns thick tangled and tree roots ravelled.

A tunnel of trees and earthen banks,
On either side the traveller flanks.

Each step you take on the sunken path,
Continues the story of travellers past.

The Greenhopper

Based on 'The Greenhopper' by Phil Burkin. New lyrics by Gail Duff.

G C G C

And the hills are green once more, — The hills the pil-grims saw, On their

5 G C G C F C

way to Can-ter - bu ry. — On their way to Can-ter - bu ry. The

10 C G C

travel - ler's joy is twist - ing through the hedge - rows, The

12 C G C

spar - rows and the thru - shes sing, 'Look how the sun glows'. The

14 G C G C

sky-lark flies so high, — He sees a world pass-ing by. And the

18 G C G C

hills are green once mo - re, The hills the pil - grims saw, On their

22 G C G C F

way to Can - ter - bu - ry. — On their way to Can - ter - bu

26 C F C F G C

29 C G C
And the chil-dren run hel - ter - skel - ter ac - ross the land, And the

32 C G C
peo - ple on the path they wave their hand, They

34 G C
fol - low and then they're gone, But the

36 G C
path goes on and on. *And the*

38 G C G C
hills are green once mo - re, *The hills the pil - grims saw, On their*

42 G C F
way to Can - ter - bu - ry. *On their way to Can - ter - bu -*

46 C F C F G C
ry. *Can - ter - bu - ry.*

And the hills are green once more,
The hills the pilgrims saw,
On their way to Canterbury.
On their way to Canterbury.

The traveller's joy is twisting through the hedgerows,
The sparrows and the thrushes sing, 'Look how the sun glows'.
The skylark flies so high,
He sees a world passing by.

And the hills are green once more,
The hills the Pilgrims saw
On their way to Canterbury,
On their way to Canterbury.
Canterbury.

And the children run helter-skelter across the land,
And the people on the path they wave their hand,
They follow and then they're gone,
But the path goes on and on.

And the hills are green once more,
The hills the Pilgrims saw
On their way to Canterbury,

The Drovers

Keith Marsden



O, I was a lad when I first saw the sight, The gath' ring of beasts and men, The
cobs off the hal-ter and dogs run-ning free, For the Drov ers are on the road a-gain. Oh the
dro- ving_ days are_ done, And the dro- ver's way is run, For there's
rail ways laid and they've ta- ken the trade, And the dro- ving days are_ done.

O, I was a lad when I first saw the sight,
The gathering of beasts and men,
The cobs off the halter and dogs running free,
For the drovers were on the road again.

O the droving days are done,
And the drover's way is run,
For there's railways laid and they've taken the trade,
And the droving days are done.

We cursed down the valleys, we cursed up the hills,
We stumbled through marsh, bog and fen,
Each year was the last but we knew in the spring
That the drovers were on the road again.

O the droving days are done,
And the drover's way is run,
For there's railways laid and they've taken the trade,
And the droving days are done.

For we had the freedom of high hill and down,
No fences, no walls bound us then,
The meeting with old friends at farmstead or fair,
When the drovers were on the road again.

O the droving days are done,
And the drover's way is run,

The Battle of Maidstone Town

Melody trad. Lyrics by Gail Duff

The musical score is written on two staves in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The first staff contains the melody for the first line of lyrics, with a 'D' chord above the first measure and an 'A' chord above the last measure. The second staff contains the melody for the second line of lyrics, with a 'D' chord above the first measure, 'Bm' above the fourth measure, 'A' above the fifth measure, and 'D' above the eighth measure. The lyrics are: 'In_ six teen fough-ty eight in the spring. And we say so, and we know so. In_ May when all_ the_ birds do_ sing. At the Bat-tle of Maid-stone Town'.

In 1648, in the spring.
Chorus: And we say so, and we know so.
In May when all the birds do sing.
Chorus: *At the Battle of Maidstone Town.*

The King was in prison on the Isle of Wight,
The Royalists still had plenty of fight.

They took the ports round the county of Kent,
And off to Penenden Heath they went.

They were called to muster at Burham Down,
And three thousand were sent into Maidstone Town.

The Parliament general, Fairfax named,
Was sent with his troops to win the game.

Through the streets went a furious battle,
Swords they clashed and houses rattled.

Cannons boomed from Gabriels Hill,
But the Roundhead army were coming still.

By the Church of St. Faith's the King's men stand
When thunder it raged all over the land.

They bravely fought but they had no chance
In the wake of the New Model Army's advance.

The survivors escaped up the Boxley Downs.

