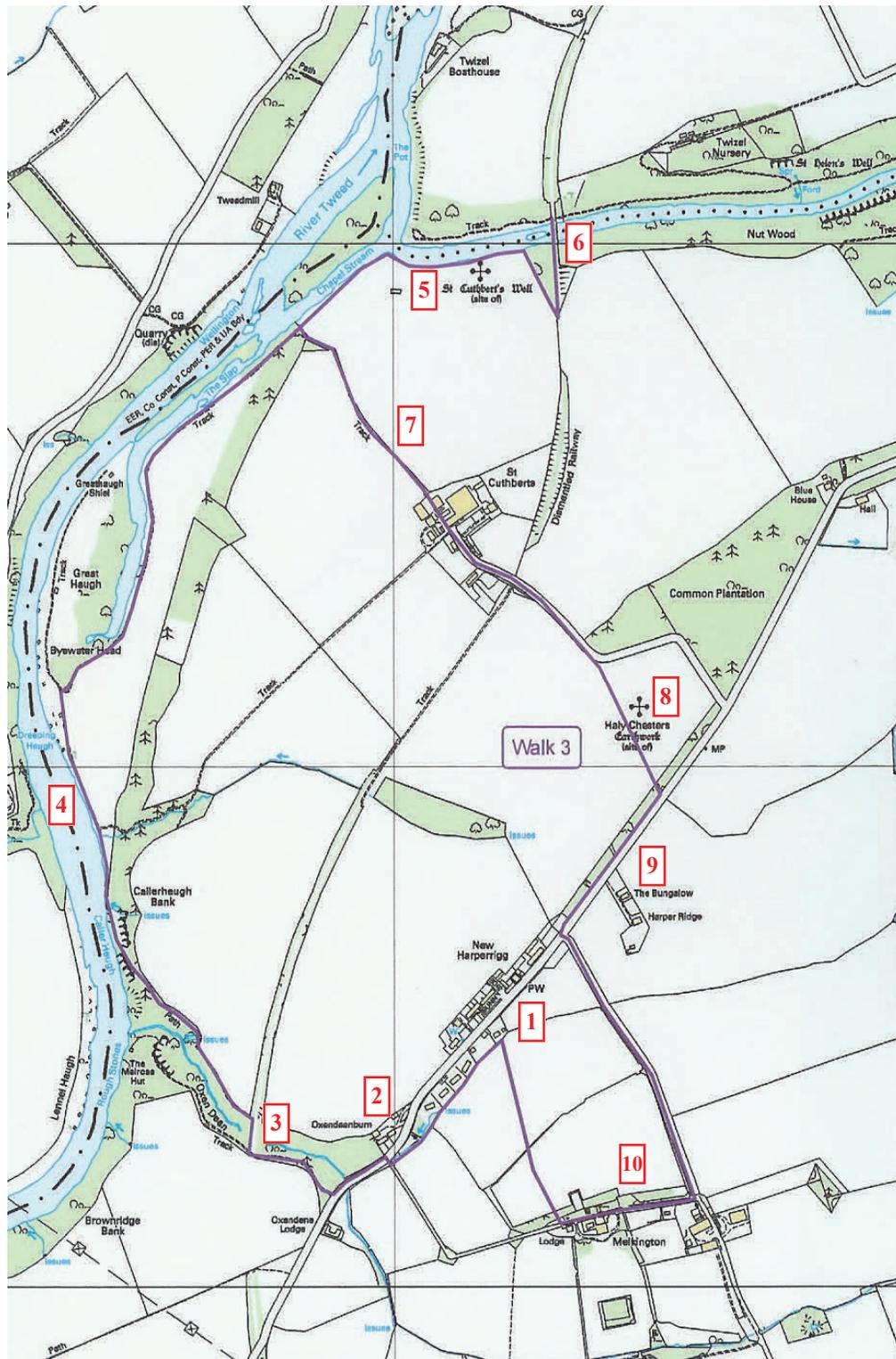


CORNHILL WALK No. 3 DONALDSONS LODGE & TILLMOUTH

4.25 miles



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4.25 miles

Refreshments can be obtained at the Tillmouth Park Hotel, or the Village Shop and Collingwood Arms, in Cornhill.

Parking There is limited parking off the main road, please park considerately and do not obstruct access.

Access This walk is not disability accessible because of steps, stiles and steep slopes. It passes very near the river edge and at times is high above the water therefore children and dogs need to be closely supervised.

Footwear Many of the paths on this walk can be wet and muddy at any time of the year, and suitable footwear is essential.

Maps In addition to the map in this leaflet, you will find Ordnance Survey 1:25,000 Explorer map Sheet 339 (Kelso, Coldstream & Lower Tweed Valley) helpful in following this itinerary. This map can be purchased at Cornhill Village Shop.

- Please follow the **Country Code**:
- Enjoy the countryside and respect its life and work
 - Guard against all risk of fire
 - Fasten all gates
 - Keep your dogs under close control
 - Keep to public paths across farmland
 - Use gates and stiles to cross fences, hedges and walls
 - Leave livestock, crops and machinery alone
 - Take your litter home
 - Help to keep all water clean
 - Protect wildlife, plants and trees
 - Take special care on country roads
 - Make no unnecessary noise

**LEAVE ONLY YOUR FOOTPRINTS,
TAKE ONLY PHOTOGRAPHS**

Produced for Cornhill Parish Council by Julie Grainger and Keith Bailey, 2008. Assistance from Northumberland County Council is gratefully acknowledged.

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The route is generally described in an anti-clockwise direction, starting from Donaldsons Lodge, although it can be followed in the reverse direction.

1. The walk begins the Methodist Chapel in the roadside hamlet of Donaldsons Lodge, which takes its name from the early-19th century white-painted house halfway down the south side. Part of the township of Tillmouth, this was a much larger place 150 years ago. The township population was 352 in 1851, its highest ever level, but had already declined to 168 in 1901. It grew from c.1750 to replace the medieval village of Tillmouth, whose site you will pass later on the walk. Lines of cottages fronted the improved turnpike (toll) road, that on the north side called New Harperridge (or Harperrigg), that opposite taking its name from Mr. Donaldson's new house. Apart from some stone footings near the junction of the road to Melkington, little trace remains of the latter, and of New Harperridge only a few cottages next to the Methodist chapel. Gone are the shops and smithy, victims of the steep decline in the farming population and mechanisation of agriculture since the 1900s.

Walk down the hill from the Methodist Chapel to

2. Oxendeanburn Farm, on your right, named from the stream flowing through a valley once noted for its oxen.

Continue towards Cornhill to a finger post on the right marked "Great Haugh 1½ miles, St Cuthberts 2 miles". There is also a "Tillmouth Fishing" sign. Follow the grass track for about 20 metres and then turn right at a partially hidden way marker post. (Yellow marker)

3. You are crossing the valley by an embankment, which once carried the Tweedmouth-Kelso railway line, opened 1849, closed 1965.

Cross the stile and turn left to skirt the edge of a field until you come to a ladder stile. Cross the ladder stile and turn left. The track goes through pine trees and the River Tweed comes into view. Steps lead down the side of the River to "Ash Tree" fishing stand. Views up and down the River are spectacular at this point. Continue along the side of the River to " Bloody Breeks" fishing stand. Cross over a small wooden bridge and go straight on at the way marker, following the Tweed.

4. On the left, note the 19th-century fishing stations, shaped like boats at the upstream end, probably to withstand the periodic flooding of the Tweed. The Great Haugh was once one of many islands in the slow-flowing Tweed, but water access at the south end is now blocked. Willow trees and a great variety of wild flowers surround the former island.

After 200yds at a metal post marking a gas pipeline take the right fork and again take the right fork at the next way marker. You are now above the Great Haugh. Proceed along this track until you reach the sign for "Chapmans" fishing stand on your left.

Go through the gate immediately in front of you. The finger post is marked "Norham 4 via Twizel Viaduct permissive path". Continue on the track around the field and cross over the stile in the fence into a hard wood plantation.

5. In the field on the right is St. Cuthbert's chapel (not accessible). In its present form it is an 18-19th century gothic folly, built by Sir Francis Blake. It includes some medieval stonework, however, and was originally the chapel of St. Margaret serving the now-vanished village of Tillmouth. A tower or castle stood near here, overlooking the confluence of the Till and Tweed, although no trace remains.

A steep climb on a well marked track through the plantation takes you onto the viaduct. Your climb is rewarded by a superb view up and down the River. The viaduct provides an excellent spot for a picnic.

6. Twizel Viaduct rises 90ft above the Till, one of several imposing civil engineering works of 1846-9 on the Tweedmouth-Kelso line. The climb is steep, but worthwhile. Keep your eyes peeled for sight of an otter along the banks below.

There are two alternative routes back to Donaldsons Lodge:

A: Retrace your steps past the chapel to the gate with the fingerpost. Turn left through the gate and proceed along the road through farm buildings and then St Cuthberts Farm. As the track bears left, a footpath straight ahead takes you to the A698 road.

7. The medieval village of Tillmouth lay in the field to the left as you walk towards St Cuthberts, a typical farm-and-steading complex created in the late-18th to early-19th century. The present farmhouse is more ornate than usual, replacing the earlier building behind. Tillmouth was once a village as large as Cornhill, and probably began to decline quite rapidly once the former open, communally farmed fields had been enclosed. It seem to have gone by 1850, leaving the paradox of a village hall by the Berwick road with no village.

8. The footpath passes a site formerly known as Haly [Holy] Chesters. This appears to have been an Iron Age site, possibly defensive. It is now ploughed out.

Turn right at the A698, cross the road at the first turning on the left.

9. Harper Ridge on the left may take its name from an Anglo-Saxon harpist or from *herepæð* 'track used by an army'.

Turn right and pass close to Melkington House.

10. There were once two farming hamlets here: East and West Melkington, possibly of medieval origin, but little survives. Melkington House is a fine 18th-century building.

Turn right onto a footpath, which brings you back to the A698 at Donaldsons Lodge.

B: Commences at St Cuthbert's Farm, but before you get to the actual farmhouse, turn right onto a gravel track. Views as you walk along this track are spectacular with the Cheviot Hills rising in view on your left. Proceed to the wood and follow the track through the wood. Various wild flowers are abundant.

Turn left with the track along the River bank and over the wooden bridge Take the waymark left to a ladder stile and once in the field turn right and proceed along the edge of the field. Take the stile on your right and walk straight on to your starting point.