



The Ramblers' Association

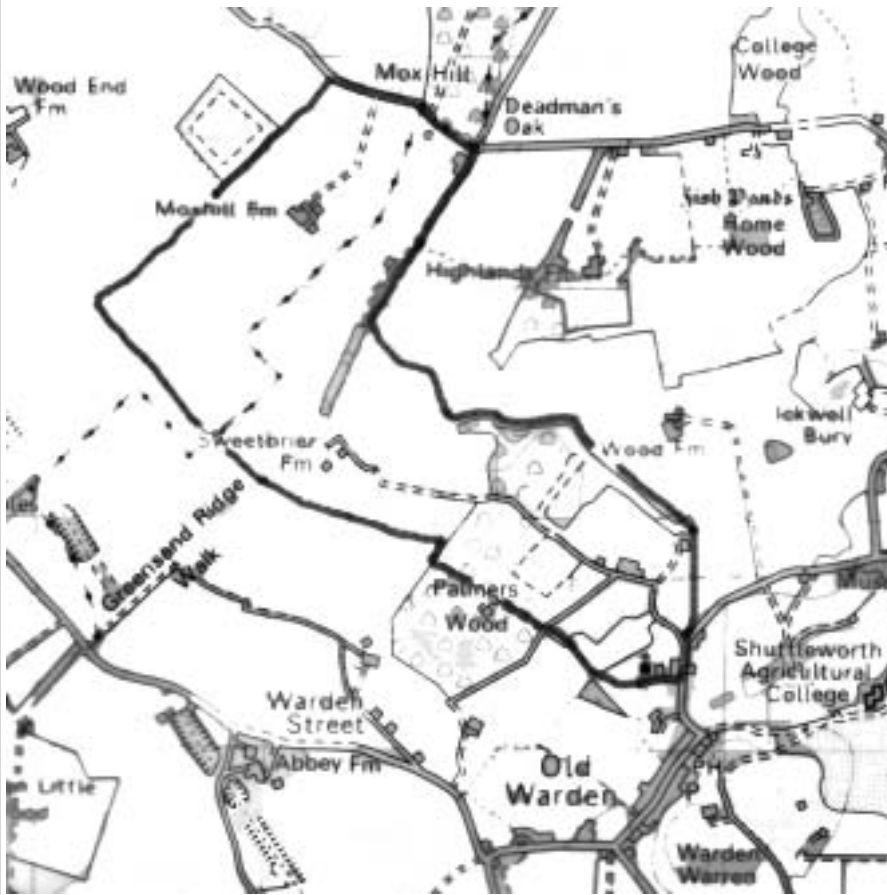
# Ouse Valley Group

Ouse Valley Ramblers' Guided Walks

## Mike's Walk N° 10

## Old Warden, Bedfordshire

Area	Old Warden, Bedfordshire
Walk Leader	Mike Dawson
Start Point	Old Warden Church
End Point	As above at 12:30 to 12:45 pm (approx) depending upon progress
Places Visited	
Approximate Distance	6.0 miles
Time To Complete	2:1/2 hours depending upon amount of mud and duration of stops.
Difficulty	Easy- Undulating countryside.
Car Parking	Old Warden Church - Please leave a donation for the church in the box provided



### Walk Itinerary

The itinerary below is a guide to the walk

[1] Depart Old Warden Church by the footpath to the North

[2] Go straight through the woods and then turn right following the footpath signs.

[3] Turn left at the field end and follow path to the Greensand Ridge path.

[4] At the Greensand ridge path continue on North down the hill towards Cardington

[5] Walk through two fields and then turn right following the field edge until a road is met. At the road turn right walking up the hill. Be careful of the traffic which although light is frequently can be fast in its' approach..

[6] At the top of the hill turn right at the farm and then left in a signposted detour around the farm. This is the Greensand Ridge path heading West.

[7] Following this path at the second sign posted path to the left, Turn left.

[8] Follow the footpath until you enter a field, walk to the other side of the field and turn left keeping the wood to your right.

[9] Follow the edge of the wood until a gate is seen to the right.

[10] Go through the gate and follow the footpath until a t-junction is encountered.

[11] At the t-junction turn right.

[12] follow the field edge until the road is met.

[13] At the road turn right and follow the road until the first turning to the right, back to the church and the start point.

### Notes On The Walk

This walk is mostly on farm tracks and bridleways, some are in good condition, and others waterlogged or cut up by horses and go through a mix of woodland, ancient byway and the odd field. The good news is there are no flooded areas at this elevation. The bad news is there are two fields to cross which are muddy. Due to the amount of recent rain the land is waterlogged. There is only one stile but this can be easily circumvented.

No livestock is expected on the day but there is evidence of cattle and sheep so if walking this route at other times of the year be prepared for livestock.

Wildlife is widely evident with a good chance of spotting deer near the woods. Whilst I was researching this walk I spotted a buzzard soaring over the spring lane area along with a hawk.

### Notes On the Walk Area

#### Old Warden - The Village

Although only a very small village Old Warden has several well known institutions and attractions - the Shuttleworth Agricultural College, Shuttleworth Collection of historic aircraft and the Swiss Garden.

A market and fair, granted in 1218, were formerly held, but both have been long disused.

Many of the cottages are thatched and have fancy chimney pots and date back to 1830's-1850's.

#### Old Warden - The Church

The church is dedicated to St. Leonard: and contains in the cemetery the mausoleum of Lord Ongley, the then Lord of the Manor.

The church is best known for its oak carvings collected by Lord Ongley in 1841 from Belgium, France and Italy. It also contains medieval stained glass which came from Warden Abbey, itself famous for the Warden Pear.

The Church underwent considerable repairs in 1841/2, when the interior was renovated, pews of black oak, elaborately carved, were added and several stained windows inserted, the whole being executed at the expense of Robert Henley, third and last baron Ongley, and late owner of the estate, who died in 1877..

The parish register dates from the year 1576.

#### Old Warden - The Cistercian Abbey

The Cistercian Abbey for monks from Rivaux was founded by Walter De L'Espece in 1136, and was sited one mile west from the church, The refectory is the only portion now remaining. It was dissolved on December the 4th, 1538, by the abbot and 14 monks, the revenue being estimated at from £389 to £442 per annum. Near the church is the site of a supposed Roman encampment, known as "Quince Hill": various relics found here are now in the Fitzwilliam Museum, at Cambridge.

#### Old Warden - The House

This was formerly the seat of Lord Ongley, the original house was replaced with a stone mansion in the Tudor style. This was erected on the same site by the then owner, Joseph Shuttleworth in 1876.

It is now the home of the Shuttleworth Agricultural College which first opened its doors to students in 1946

### Swiss Garden

In the early 19th century, the third Lord Ongley recreated the village in a Swiss-style which was the design influence of the day.

The gardens began life in 1830 as a romantic gesture by Lord Ongley for his mistress, who was Swiss.

The gardens fell into disrepair until they were leased by the Bedfordshire County Council in 1939 and restored. The 10 acre site is rich in trees, with Lebanese Cedars, Arolla Pines, and unusual variegated sweet chestnut. Numerous small canals are spanned by wrought-iron bridges fashioned by Lady Emma Hamilton's uncle, who was a blacksmith at Old Warden.

The garden is striking in the spring, when flowering bulbs emerge beneath azaleas and rhododendron bushes. The grotto and fernery provide a startling contrast in dark and light. The garden is said to be haunted, and gardeners of old would only work in pairs!

#### Old Warden Park

This is now owned by the Richard Ormonde Shuttleworth Remembrance Trust. Richard Shuttleworth inherited the Old Warden Estate on his 23rd birthday and took a keen interest in farming and estate management as well as in motor racing and aviation. He was killed flying in 1940 at the age of 31 and four years later his mother Dorothy Shuttleworth founded the Trust as a permanent memorial to him.

Joseph Shuttleworth (1819-1883) was born the son of John and Rebecca Shuttleworth of Dogdyke in Lincolnshire, where he inherited a boat building business. He formed a partnership with Nathaniel Clayton, an iron foundry owner in Lincoln. Together they set up and developed a successful engineering firm, Clayton and Shuttleworth, and specialised in building steam engines and agricultural machinery. Joseph Shuttleworth married Sarah Grace Clayton in 1841 and had two sons: Alfred and Frank.

Old Warden Park is now also a renowned conference venue and is also home to the English School of Falconry.

#### Shuttleworth Collection

This is a collection of vintage aeroplanes, cars and motor cycles. The unique feature of this collection is that the cars and aeroplanes are in working order. Aeroplanes dating back to before work war one can be seen flying, given favourable weather. The special flying days run throughout the summer and are a popular event.