

Walk 2 – Rioters’ Walk

On Monday 22nd November 1830, a mob several hundred strong attacked the workhouse in Selborne, Hampshire, turned out the occupants, burned or broke the fittings and furniture, and pulled down the roof. The next day an even larger mob, containing some of the Selborne rioters, did the same to the workhouse at Headley, some seven miles away. The parsons in both villages were also coerced into promising to reduce by half the income they took from tithes.

Less than a month later, at a special court hearing in Winchester attended by no less a person than the Duke of Wellington, nine local men were sentenced to transportation (commuted from a death sentence in the case of eight of them), and all but one sailed for Australia in the Spring of 1831 never to return.

In this walk we follow the course of the rioters when, on a cold November day, they marched from Selborne to Headley, ransacked a workhouse, and returned.

For full story see *One Monday in November* by John Owen Smith

Walk 2 – Rioters’ Walk

Selborne to Headley and return

Total distance approximately 14 miles/22.5 km

The walk starts from the *Queens Hotel* (the *Compasses* in 1830) in Selborne going to the *Holly Bush* in Headley by way of Whitehill and Standford, and returning by way of Kingsley and Oakhanger.

Starting point Queens Hotel, Selborne – map reference SU741336.

Based on the route thought to have been taken by the rioters who marched from Selborne to Headley and back in November 1830.

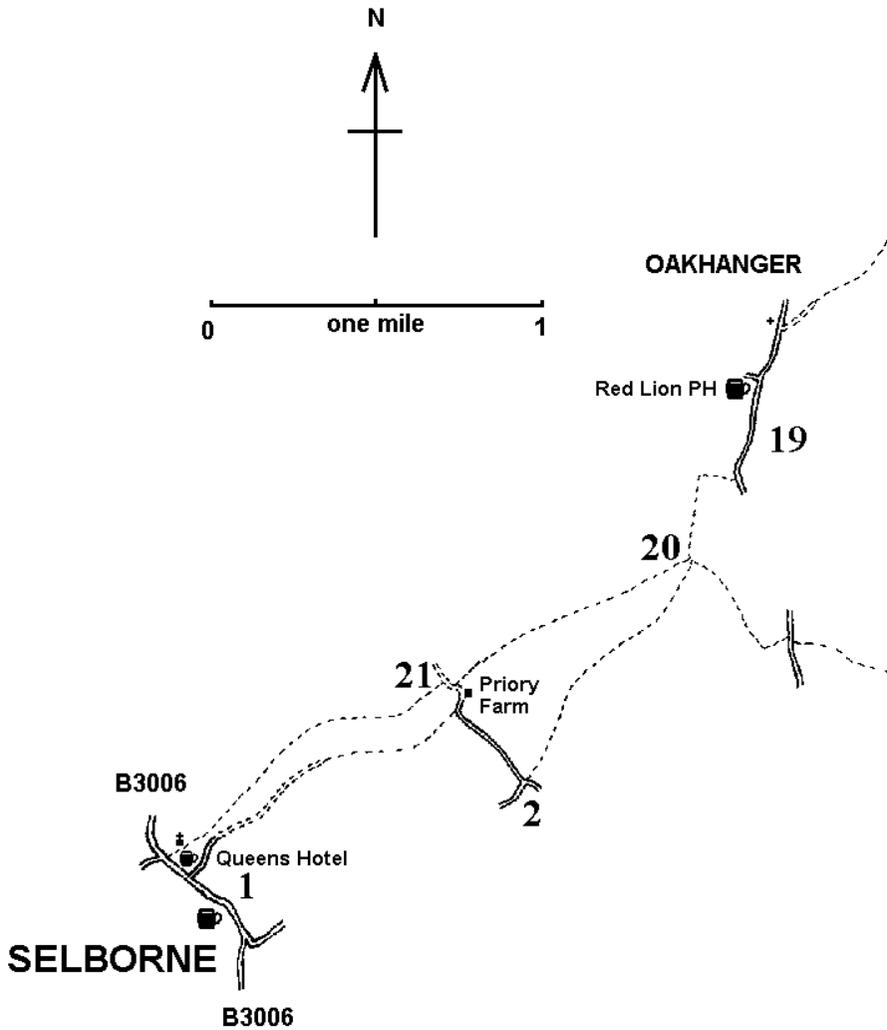
Note that suggested routes through Military and National Trust land between Whitehill and Standford, while open to walkers at the time of writing, are not marked as public rights of way on maps.

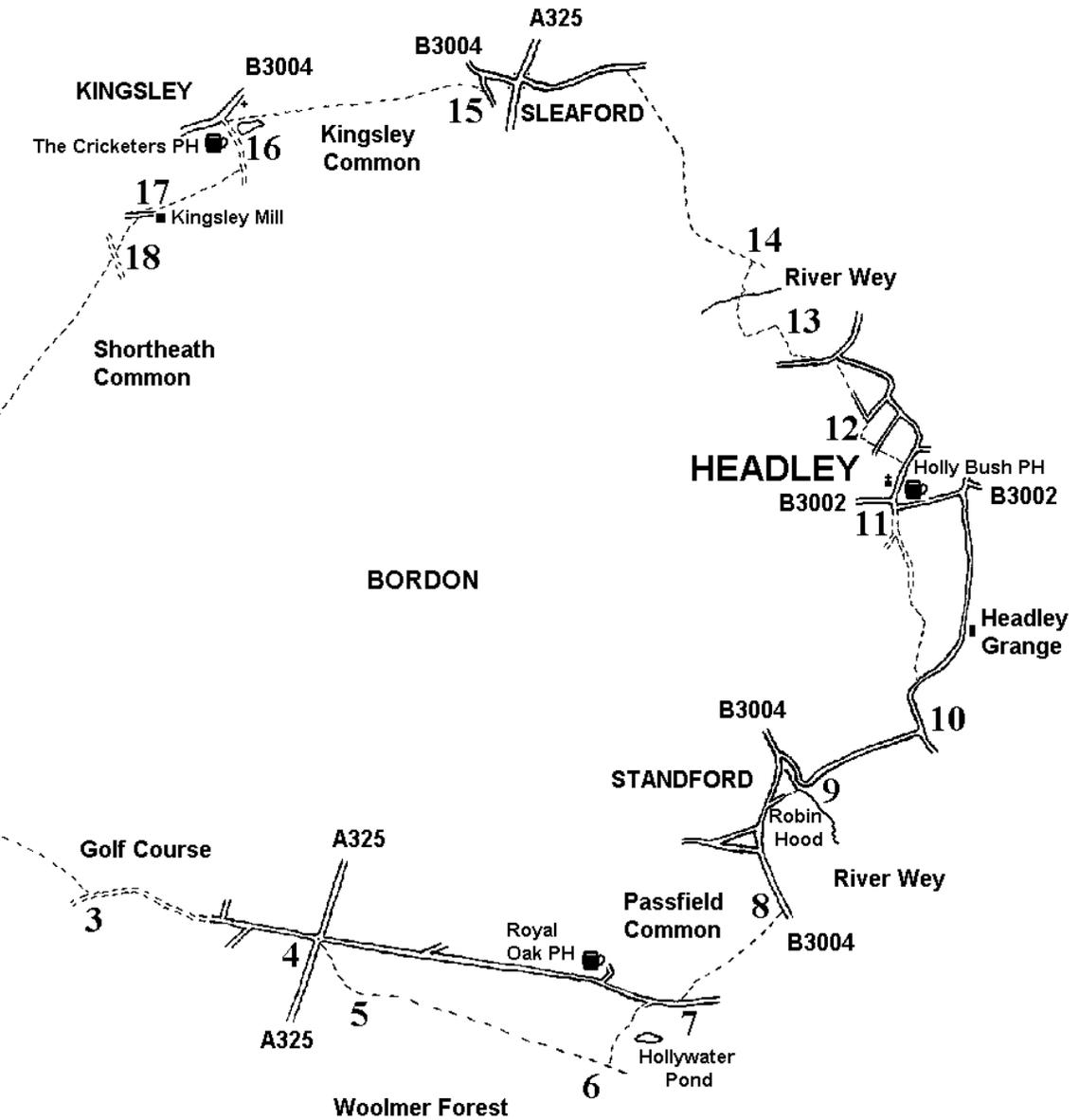
Selborne to Headley

Distance approximately 7 miles/11km

- 1 From the *Queens Hotel*, take Huckers Lane which runs by the side of the hotel garden and drops down to *Dortons*. This becomes a bridleway, muddy in places, above the valley of the Oakhanger Stream through a beech hanger and then across fields. At *Priory Farm*, turn right up a metalled road to the top of the hill where it meets Honey Lane. From here there is a view over the Oakhanger valley, today noted for its satellite tracking stations.
- 2 Take the footpath down through fields towards Oakhanger for about a mile. At the five-way junction of footpaths (which is difficult to see, but you will also meet on the way back), turn sharp right across the field, through a gate crossing a farm road, over some duck-boarding and passing a reservoir before eventually going through an old car park to meet a road. Go round the gate, cross the road, and take the track almost opposite. After crossing a stream take the track to the left of a house. This passes through Blackmoor Golf Course, joining another track known as Eveley Lane before becoming a metalled road.
- 3 Follow this road (which soon has a pavement) straight to the roundabout complex on the main road (A325) at Whitehill—cross here with care. It would have been less busy in 1830!
- 4 Take the footpath next to the metalled road (Liphook Road) ahead. This path winds through pleasant woodland and just after passing a gate to a building on the left meets a main track. Join this, going over a hill before joining the course of the old Military Railway.
- 5 On this route you pass close beside two distinct hills, or ‘clumps’ – probably these would have been treeless and therefore more prominent landscape features in 1830.

Map of the Rioters' Walk





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- 6 After passing some stone retaining walls, take a grass track on the left, alongside the garden of *Stone Cottage*, which becomes a vehicle access road, crosses the stream from Hollywater Pond, and re-joins Liphook Road opposite Passfield Common (which is National Trust land).
- 7 The Common is fenced to allow for stock grazing, but there is a gate to enter it. You will have to discover your own track across—be warned, it is extremely boggy in places. We recommend you keep to the track close to the boundary with the road, then follow some power cables towards the north corner of the common. There is a gate¹ which emerges on the B3004 Liphook to Bordon road, but it is not well-used and may be difficult to find.
- 8 Cross the road and turn left along the verge path, passing both the old Methodist Church and Gospel Hall on your left before going downhill to Stanford Village Green. Sadly the *Robin Hood* no longer offers refreshment here.
- 9 Leave the village green by the small road which leads to a ford across the River Wey. There is a footbridge. Keep straight on at its junction with Tulls Lane, following the metalled road uphill between hedges to a triangular junction at the top. Turn left here, along (another) Liphook Road.
- 10 This is the road by which the rioters entered Headley in 1830. The old workhouse (now *Headley Grange*) is about half a mile away on the right hand side – and if you wish, you may walk past it into Headley as the rioters did. However, if you have had enough of walking on roads, take the footpath to the left immediately after the first sharp bend (by an electricity sub-station) and follow it to emerge in the centre of Headley where the *Holly Bush* stands.

Notes on the walk – Selborne to Headley

We don't know for certain which route the rioters took in their march from Selborne to Headley, and it could be that several groups went different ways. The most direct route from the centre of Selborne in those days would probably have been some near-variation of the one we have chosen. However, we are told that Robert Holdaway went to collect signatures from farms near Empshott and Greatham on the way, in which case his route would have been considerably longer.

The communities of Bordon and Whitehill did not exist then, but I was interested to know if the Farnham to Petersfield turnpike (now the A325) had been constructed at that time of the Riot in 1830. If so, it might have formed a convenient route for the marchers to move from Greatham to Whitehill instead of cutting across the uncharted tracks of Woolmer Forest on their way to Hollywater – but although the turnpike had received Royal Assent in 1826, it was apparently not completed until 1832.

When William Cobbett rode through Woolmer Forest in his Rural Ride of 24th November 1822, he said of it, “The road was not ... without its dangers, the forest being full of quags and quick-sands.” He also said of it, “This is a tract of

¹ SU 8165 3410 or [///party.branded.marmalade](http://party.branded.marmalade)

Crown-lands ... on some parts of which our Land Steward, Mr Huskisson, is making some plantations of trees, partly fir, and partly other trees. What he can plant the fir for, God only knows ...”

Close to Hollywater Clump is the spot where the old parishes of Selborne, Headley and Bramshott met, at the chimney of a house which has since been demolished.

The hamlet of Hollywater is still located where three parishes meet – and as such is claimed by no-one and forgotten by most. It has had a reputation in the past of being a place where the people described as “forest dwellers and travellers” who joined the march might well have lived.

Standford was one of the main local centres of industry in 1830, with two paper mills and a corn mill operating on the River Wey. The Warren family, who ran the paper mills there from the 1820s until the early 20th century, were staunch Methodists, and the ‘non-conformist’ nature of the community is in evidence even now with its Methodist Church and Gospel Hall.

Although paper mills in Buckinghamshire were being attacked by mobs in the very week that ‘our’ riot occurred, those at Stanford were not touched as far as we can tell. Perhaps there was no machinery installed in them at that time, or at least none that could be seen to be causing unemployment. For whatever reason, the mob appears to have passed through Stanford, crossed the ford and headed up Tulls Lane towards the workhouse.



Headley Grange, once the Workhouse

The Headley ‘House of Industry’ had been built in 1795 at an estimated cost of some £1,500 for the parishes of Headley, Bramshott and Kingsley, to shelter their infirm, aged paupers, and orphan or illegitimate children. After the 1830 riot, the building was repaired, and in the 1841, 1851 and 1861 censuses it is shown still being used as a workhouse. It was sold in 1870 to a builder for £420, and he converted it into a private house, now known as *Headley Grange*. In November 1872, he resold the building to Mr Theophilus Sigismund Hahn for £490.

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After two further changes in ownership, *Headley Grange* was used during the 1970s as a recording studio, and there, early in 1971, “Out of the clear blue pool of creativity arose the eight-minute extravaganza which would become Led Zeppelin’s ultimate trademark, a song of shimmering and flourishing beauty, a supreme accomplishment which Robert Plant would later describe as ‘our single most important achievement’ ... *Stairway to Heaven*.”‡

Today the house remains a private residence. On St George’s Day 1994, descendants of four of the rioters, along with representatives from Selborne and Headley, assembled in the garden to plant a cutting from the old Selborne Yew in memory of the transportations.

The present *Holly Bush* in Headley High Street is not a building which would have been present in 1830. In fact we believe the old *Holly Bush* to have been situated across the road in the house now called *Wakefords*. William Cobbett mentions visiting here on his Rural Ride of 24th November 1822.

Mr Lickfold’s shop is still to be seen, though no longer a shop – it is the building now called *Crabtree House* which faces north along the length of the High Street, with a good view of what was going on there at the time.



Headley to Selborne

Distance approximately 7 miles/11km

- 11 From the *Holly Bush*, turn right along Headley High Street, past the church and the old rectory, and just before *Belmont* take a path to the left. This crosses a road and then passes along two sides of the Holme School grounds, emerging in Church Lane at a right-angle bend.
- 12 Turn left along Church Lane (a cul-de-sac) and at its end pass through a footpath gate and downhill across fields. You emerge by *Huntingford Farm*, at the junction of Curtis Lane and Frensham Lane. The original route to Trottsford would have gone right and then left here, past *Linsted Farm* and *Headley Wood Farm*, but this is now closed as a right-of-way. Instead, turn left, following Frensham Lane towards Lindford for a short distance, then take the footpath to the right, which follows the road uphill for a while before bearing right and becoming sandy.
- 13 After passing through some woodland, this diverted right of way crosses the River Wey by way of an old aqueduct and then zigzags sharply uphill and across a field to a junction of paths.
- 14 Here you rejoin what would have been the original route of the path. Turn left along the track and follow it for just under a mile to Pickett’s Hill road. Turn left, and follow the road down to its junction with the main A325 at Sleaford. Here there is a set of traffic lights. **Take care – the crossing here is not easy!** Turn left along the verge, cross the main road at the lights, and go briefly along the road to Alton (Forge Road), taking the nearby side road

‡ *Led Zeppelin, the definitive biography*, by Ritchie Yorke

left towards the rear of the *New Inn* complex (now redeveloped). Turn sharp right on the old road which passes over the River Slea.

- 15 After crossing the river, take the public track leading off through Army land across Kingsley Common. Note that the route is not as straightforward as the OS map suggests – about 100 yards after crossing the open space by *Coldharbour*, look for a less significant track branching to the right, just past a ‘crossroads’ of vehicular tracks. Follow this until it passes the pond on the left. Here, in Kingsley village, you will find the *Cricketers* available for refreshment.
- 16 To continue the walk, follow the track between the pub car park and the pond, pass Ockham Hall, and shortly turn along the first track on your right past some houses. Follow footpath signs left and right and go between fences across a flat field.
- 17 Turn right at a T-junction of paths, passing the garden of Kingsley Mill on your left. Cross a stone slab bridge over a culvert, and cross the drive of the mill. Follow a footpath diagonally across the orchard, over the mill leat, and round a bend to a stile.
- 18 Cross a field, go over a stile and up onto a disused railway embankment. From here the original course of the path has been diverted due to quarry works. Leave the embankment over another stile and follow the path round the edge of the quarry, coming eventually to Shortheath Common. Once again the OS map is somewhat unhelpful. Follow a footpath sign, cross one vehicular track, then another and take a track running south-west (any track going in that general direction will do – keep all houses to your left). Continue across the common and into the centre of Oakhanger village. Here, at the village green, turn left along the metalled road through the village. *The Hanger* (once the *Red Lion*) soon offers refreshment on your right.



Cottage at Oakhanger – footpath passes in front after leaving the road

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- 19 At the bend in the road as you leave the village, take the footpath to the right, along the garden wall of an old thatched cottage (*see photo above*). Cross the field, then a plank bridge and stile over a culvert (note the satellite tracking ‘golf ball’ to the right), and follow the footpath to the left, arriving after several gates and bridges at the five-ways junction you met on your outward journey.
 - 20 You may, of course, return to Selborne by following the outward route in reverse from here. Alternatively, turn right and follow the course of the stream more closely towards *Priory Farm*. Be warned – this can be tough on the ankles if muddy hoof-prints have hardened! Cross the stream by a foot-bridge, then cross over a track by *Priory Farm* to continue on the footpath towards Selborne.
 - 21 After walking through a portion of Coombe Wood and past some ponds, you arrive at the end of the Long Lythe which is National Trust property. Follow the path along both Long and Short Lythes to emerge in the meadow below Selborne Church. Climb the hill and go through the churchyard to the Plestor. Turn left along Selborne High Street to arrive back at the *Queens Hotel*.
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Notes on the walk – Headley to Selborne

Next to Headley church stands the old Rectory, which had been under repair in 1830. It was described in 1783 as: ‘A very good house, consisting of two parlours and hall, a kitchen and pantry on the ground floor; four bed-chambers, six garrets, four underground cellars, with a brew-house, milk-house, and other convenient offices; also of two spacious barns, a stable, cow-pens, granary, waggon-house, fuel-house, ash-house, etc. The gardens, yard and rick-yard amount to about one and three-quarter acres’.

The Holme School takes its name from Dr George Holme, Rector of Headley 1718–65, who had given the parish a school in 1755. The original building stands beside the Village Green.

Church Lane takes its name from the fact that it forms part of the old track from Headley church towards the outlying parts of the parish on the way to Farnham. You will follow it, with some modern diversions, as far as Trottsford.

Huntingford Farm was built around 1774, according to a rent-roll of that date which has an entry for John Huntingford of: “one close called Church-field with a tenement thereon newly erected containing 4 acres lying at Lackmore-cross on the south part of Curtis Lane” – we assume it is this building. It was thatched until 1959, when the roof was lost in a fire.

The aqueduct over the River Wey is part of an extensive system of channels which would have extended along the river, through this parish and beyond, to regulate the watermeadows. Water was diverted from the river by a weir into a header ditch, which had a number of sluices along its length allowing water to be spread evenly over the meadow in a controlled fashion before draining back into the river. This system added nutrients to the land, allowing early crops of fodder to be produced, and a second cut to be made later in the year.

As you arrive at Pickett's Hill road, note the footpath straight ahead which marks the old route to Farnham prior to the building of the turnpike.

Near the point where you cross the A325 at Sleaford there once stood a tollhouse, opposite the *New Inn*. It was eventually removed when the road was widened. The *New Inn* itself consists of a 'new' section facing the turnpike, and an older section behind facing the road which existed prior to the turnpike's construction. [*The New Inn site was redeveloped in 2002, retaining the existing buildings*]

In crossing the River Slea you pass from Headley into Kingsley parish. There is a stone set into the west side of the old bridge indicating this.

At Kingsley Pond, note the area on higher ground to your right behind the church which was called 'Kingsley Green' on old maps. It was at Kingsley Green, we are told, that Holdaway in 1830 "called out ten persons as the representatives of the ten parishes of which the labourers had formed your dangerous and illegal assembly" and shared out the spoils of the day. The church would not have been here at the time, having been built only in 1876.



Kingsley Pond

In reality, the various men from 'ten parishes' must have made their separate ways home from here in several different directions – but we follow a probable route of those heading back to the centre of Selborne.

Kingsley Mill is of some antiquity, and legend says that it may even have been the mill that Geoffrey Chaucer had in mind when writing his *Miller's Tale*. His son Thomas was Lord Warden of Woolmer and Alice Holt Forests at the end of the 14th century, and is said to be buried nearby at East Worldham, where he lived.

The disused railway viaduct belongs to the spur from Bentley to Bordon, opened in 1905 and closed in the late 1960s.

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Oakhanger is a hamlet in the parish of Selborne, and so to some of the 'Selborne' rioters it would be home. In particular, the Heighes brothers lived here. For others, there were still a few miles to travel cross country.

Priory Farm is on the site of Selborne Priory, closed in 1484 due to bad debts and the stones reused for various local and not-so-local building projects.

The Long Lythe and Short Lythe (pronounced 'Lith') are footpaths which were mentioned in the writings of Gilbert White.



*St Mary's Church, Selborne
with the remains of the Great Yew tree standing by the tower*

Within the church of St Mary, Selborne, is displayed the collar of vicar Cobbold's large mastiff, which he bought to protect himself after the riot.

The Great Yew of Selborne sadly blew down in 1990, and never recovered. According to Mrs Cowburn, men climbed into its branches on the evening of Sunday 21st November 1830 to overlook the vicarage and make sure Cobbold would not get away in the night.

The *Queen's Hotel* was, in 1830, stated as being the only public house in Selborne. At that time it was called the *Compasses*, or some say the *Goat and Compasses* which may be a corruption of 'God encompasseth us'. Robert Holdaway was the landlord here until about a year before the riot. It was renamed the *Queens Inn* in 1839.

