

## Tuesday, 18th October “Odcombe and Ham Hill” with Iain Ure

On a lovely misty morning, 12 members travelled into South Somerset to meet up at Odcombe Village, near Montacute. We set off along leafy footpaths and tracks across fields on an uphill leg-stretcher towards Ham Hill and its massive earthworks, where we had a coffee stop. Then we crossed the top of the hill, part of Hamdon Hill Country Park, past quarries and car parks, to a large stone war memorial, which is visible from far and wide and the A303. Ham Hill is a very impressive iron age hill fort, one of the biggest in England. Fortunately, it was a warm sunny day and the views from it were superb, and we were able to pick out distant hills and Glastonbury Tor.



From there we followed woodland paths to St Michael’s Hill, on top of which is a stone tower folly. A very steep, slippery descent took us down towards Montacute, and we stopped for lunch in a pleasant field, and were invaded by an “aggregation” of ladybirds, which were flying all around. We walked through parts of Montacute Park, and across fields back to Odcombe. Some of us called in at the church, where a pair of stone shoes hang inside. These are a replica of the pair of leather shoes belonging to Thomas Coryate that had hung in the church since he used them to walk to Venice and back in 1606. He was very famous and eccentric in his day and wrote the first travel guide after his wanderings.



It was such a lovely warm Autumn day, and a real joy to be wandering about in the delightful rolling hills and Ham Stone villages of Somerset. Many thanks to Iain for finding this interesting walk.

Dee Woods