



National
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Easy Walk 2

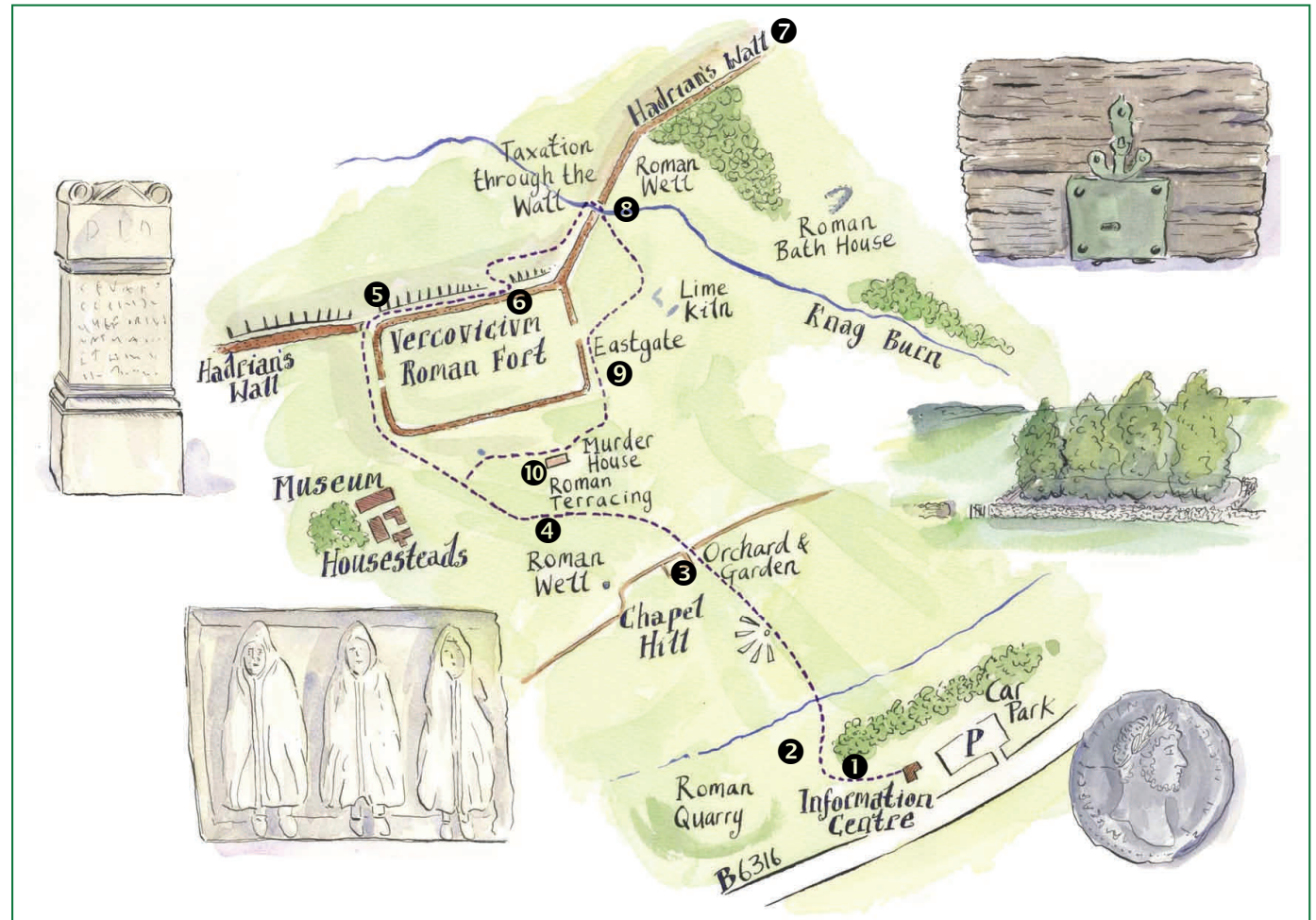
Buried Secrets—Housesteads Roman Fort

This walk emphasises the different kinds of treasures that have been buried in the soil for generations, some discovered and others still waiting to be discovered!

1. Start at the bottom and look up. You can see evidence of three different ages of occupation in the area: The Romans, The Victorians and Medieval remains.
2. As you start to go up the hill you can see the Roman quarry to the left, where they quarried sandstone to build the fort and wall. Off to the right is the remains of a spoil heap, waste from a lead mine that went into the hill side.
3. The farmhouse kitchen garden is a small walled enclosure where the Victorian farmer grew apple trees, rhubarb and vegetables to help supplement the diet.
4. Looking either side of the path you will see the remains of the Roman terracing where they cultivated the land to produce crops. This suggests the climate was slightly warmer with a need to conserve water to improve crop yields.
5. View to Broomlee Lough. According to legend a massive box of treasure was sunk in the lake by one of the ancient lords of Sewingshields with a spell. It could only be recovered by the co-operation of “two twin yands (horses), two twin oxen, two twin lads, and a chain forged by a smith that claims descent of unbroken succession from six ancestors of the same trade”. An attempt to recover the treasure was made, but failed. Just as the chest neared the edge of the lough the chain broke and it sank back into the depths. The cause was due to the questionable ancestry of the smith.
6. As you turn right to walk down to the tax-gate you can see King and Queens’ Crag. Supposedly King Arthur was talking to Guinevere but she was ignoring him. So he threw a rock at her which she deflected with her comb. The rock (boulder) still lies between the two today.



7. Buried somewhere beneath Sewing shields there is the legend of King Arthur's court. All his subjects are entranced in sleep, only to be awoken if someone should first blow on a bugle horn that lay on the table near the entrance and using 'the sword of the stone' cut a garter also placed there beside it. The Sewingshields farmer found the entrance through fortune and when confronted with the enchanted court forgot to blow the horn but cut the garter. The King awoke briefly to scorn him, causing the Farmer to flee and forget the way to the entrance through fear.
8. Checkpoint to allow trade through the wall.
9. Eastgate – As you look into the fort you are looking up the main street leading to the fort headquarters. This is where soldiers got their orders and wages were banked in a secure strong room.
10. On completing the loop around the remains of Housesteads Fort you come to the remains of a house. During the excavation of the building a grisly discovery was found under the building's floor; a skeleton which had the broken tip of a dagger lodged in its ribs. Ever since this place has been known as the Murder House.



We hope you enjoyed this Easy Walk. There are more in the series at other National Trust sites in Yorkshire and the North East. Go to our website to find out more www.nationaltrust.org.uk/yorksandne

