

Monks & Mysteries Walk near Wetheral

A walk on the banks of the river Eden, in the former Forest of Inglewood. The route visits ancient oak woods, the remains of a medieval monastery and the mysterious St. Constantine's cells, a series of caves on a rocky outcrop with magnificent river views. Cross the spectacular viaduct footway linking the villages of Wetheral and Great Corby, and perhaps sample the hospitality in one of the friendly local pubs.

Grade: Easy, ideal for families

Start/Finish: Wetheral village green, NY466545

Distance: 3.5 miles (5.6 km)

Time: 2-3 hours

Height gain: 150ft (46m)

Maps: OS Landranger 86,

1. Start from the village green in the centre of Wetheral. This is up the hill from the railway station, past the Crown Hotel. Leave the village green by the south-east corner, down past the cross. Take the road to the right towards the Priory Gatehouse, the only remaining part of the previous Priory building.
2. Continue up the lane and turn left at the first kissing gate and follow a short sloping path to enter Wetheral Woods. After about $\frac{1}{4}$ mile, fork to the left. Keep to the left, with the river below you, until you reach a flight of stone steps leading down to St. Constantine's Cells, a series of square caves cut deep into the rock. Various descriptions as a 6th Century prince or a 10th Century king, there is no evidence that Constantine actually lived in the caves. It is more certain that they were used as storage chambers by the monks from Wetheral priory.
3. Go back up the steps and now keep to your right, with some steep drops to your right as the river has gouged a rocky gorge through the landscape. At a merging of paths, keep right downhill. Leave the woods by a kissing gate, staying on a path along the riverbank.
4. On the opposite side is Corby Castle, whose classical façade and ornate cascades were created by previous owners, members of the Howard family. Continue along the riverside path to a grassy area dominated by the Eden Benchmark sculpture, 'Flight of Fancy', made by Tim Shutter. Turn left uphill for a short distance and then right, along the narrow lane. Watch out for traffic! (For a short detour, take the sloping path uphill on the left which brings you to the churchyard by the back gate). Stay on the lane with the river on your right, past some cottages and approaching the arches of Wetheral Viaduct, built for the North Eastern Railway in 1830-34.
5. Under the viaduct turn left up a flight of stone steps. Cross the footbridge over the tracks at Wetheral station, then turn right and cross the viaduct on a footway. This allows you some spectacular views of the border hills, and of the river Eden itself. Follow a path to a level crossing with the Corby Bridge Inn opposite.

Walking route: Monks & Mysteries Walk near Wetheral

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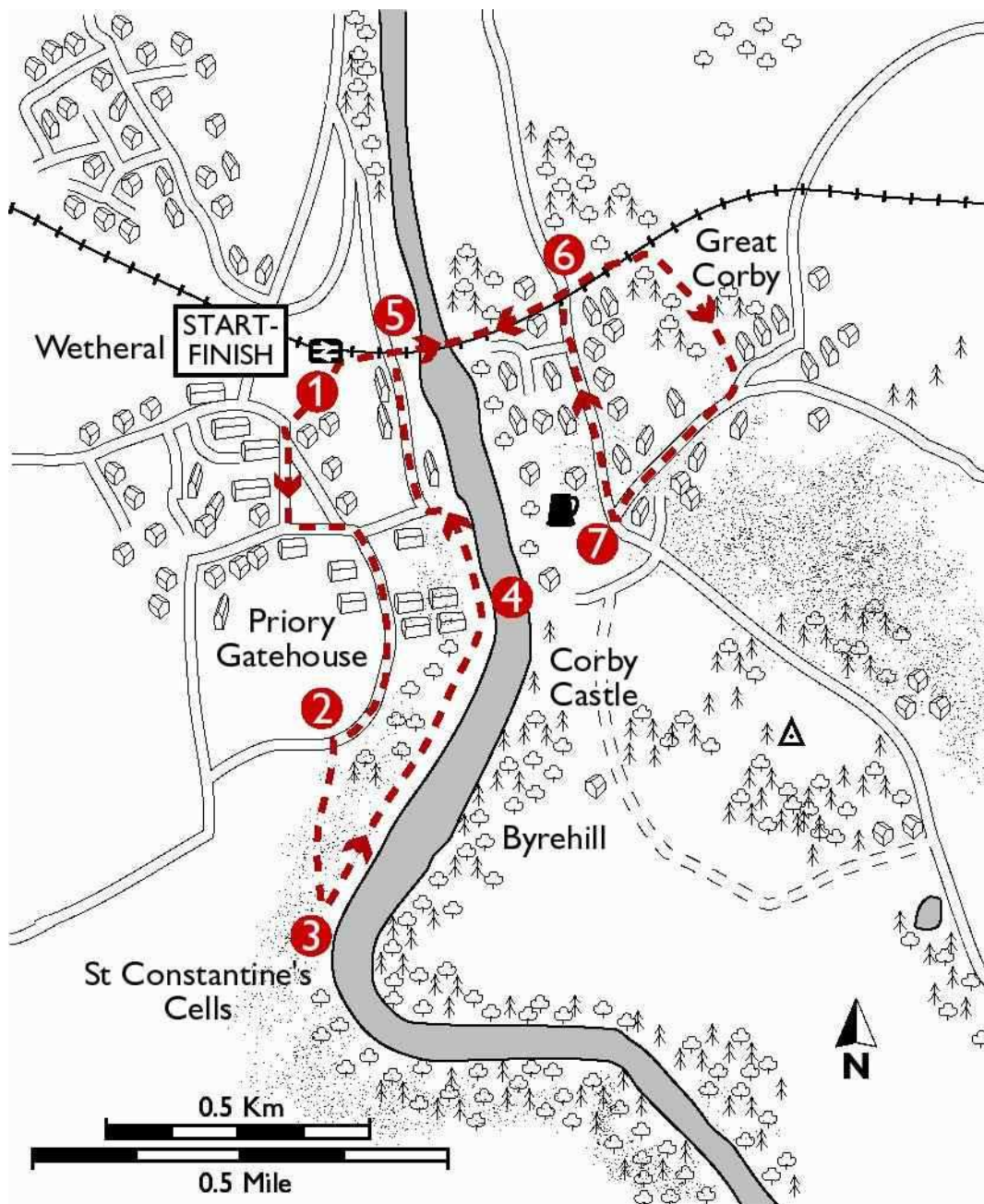


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6. Cross the railway and turn immediately left on a footpath which turns sharp right after about 50 metres. Follow the path to emerge from the trees with Great Corby's lower green and school spread below you. At the road, turn right and follow it slightly uphill to a crossroads outside the Queen Inn.
7. At the crossroads turn right and follow the road towards Carlisle until you reach the level crossing once more. Turn left after crossing the railway and retrace your steps across the viaduct. Cross the station footbridge again and turn right uphill to Wetheral village green to complete your walk.

Map



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