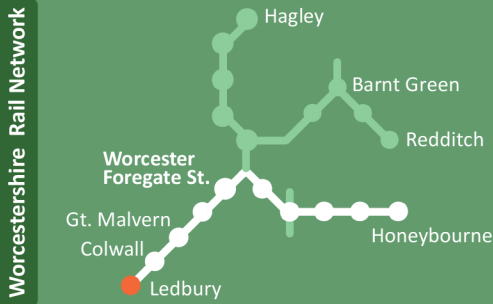




Ledbury to Colwall (Long route)

1257ft/383m
Moderate



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Train Times

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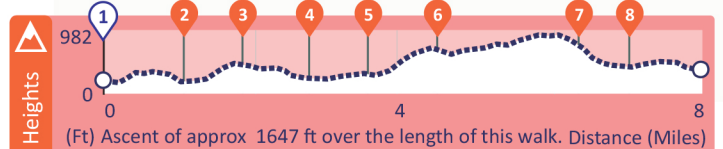
Points of interest

John Masefield, who served as Poet Laureate from 1930 to 1967, kept an enduring link to the market town of Ledbury in which he was born in 1878. Although he left the town as a young man to embark on a life at sea, his early childhood in the town became a wellspring of inspiration for his poetry and prose. He often described Ledbury as a "little town of ancient grace," and his vivid memories of its sights, sounds,

and people provided a rich inspiration for his various works.

His famous narrative poem "The Everlasting Mercy" uses real-life locations such as St. Michael's Church and the Market Hall, offering a vivid glimpse into the town's Victorian past. While he sometimes took artistic license with geography, such as in "The Widow in the Bye Street" where he humorously relocated Ledbury to Shropshire for the sake of metre. Masefield's late prose

John Masefield



Map Key Road/track Bridleway Footpath	Route keypoints Viewpoint Cafe	Live link Parking Church
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work, Grace Before Ploughing, also drew on his memories of the October Fair, while his poem "Wonderings" went on to immortalise the golden weather-cock of the church, which he thought "steadfast as life." Today, Ledbury continues

to honour the legacy of its most celebrated poet. The town is also home to the John Masefield Society, which maintains a comprehensive archive of his life and works at the Master's House.



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Directions

- 1 From Platform 2 slight R across the car park to drop down to main road. L to follow main road into town centre.
- 2 At the half-timbered Market Hall L up cobbled Church Street. R around the church then R on path to the A449. L on footway in front of Police station. At steps cross A449 to path entering woodland opposite. At the first path junction L uphill to steps. Ignoring paths/tracks to L and R continue uphill through woodland.
- 3 At the top through Kissing Gate to follow path along the L-hand side of field to a gate. Descend on track with views of the Malverns ahead. Pass through another Kissing Gate and almost immediately fork slight L on footpath that's initially parallel to the wide track. The path emerges in a large field. Cross this diagonally L on track to pass through a wooded section and down towards a church. Where track turns sharp R continue on footpath which eventually drops down steps to road.
- 4 R then opposite the church cross L to gate and tree lined footpath to road. Cross road then R and L to The Woodshed Café. Pass L of the café over a cattlegrid on well surfaced estate road. (This is a permissive section. It may be closed when events are held. Please check Eastnor Castle facebook page before starting).
- 5 At seats where road bends right drop steeply R on footpath to footbridge between two large ponds. After ponds bear L through gap in hedge then R uphill to obvious gravel track that climbs steeply up to a large obelisk. Continue on track to cattlegrid.
- 6 Just beyond the cattlegrid L on track through wood (Three Choirs Way). Ignoring paths to L & R continue on obvious track to a further cattlegrid. As the track starts to drop bear slight R on path climbing gradually through wood

to the main ridge. At top L and continue along the ridge to where paths cross. Continue on path that climbs steeply up. After passing a rock cave you arrive at a large stone directional cairn. Drop down slight L and contour on path along the hillside. In a wooded section L at the first path and R at the second to drop down and cross the main A449.

- 7 Continue on road opposite then on path L of toilets to stile into wood. Ignoring path to R drop steeply down to stile into fields. Cross the first field to another stile then the second to a footbridge with stile. In the next field pass R of a large isolated Oak. At the end of the hedge bear slight R and cross field to farmgate and stile. Continue on wide tree lined track through a further gate and stile to road.
- 8 At road L, then at a bend R up a surfaced track with speed bump. Continue straight ahead as the track turns to gravel then dirt and through metal gate into field. Continue through a further two gates into a wood. At the end of the wood drop down L to a Kissing Gate. Continue on obvious path through long field to a further gate into woods. Passing a nature reserve on your L continue to cross railway footbridge to the station.

This walk is dedicated to William Whiting, a keen walker and rail travel champion. William often led the walk from Ledbury to Colwall for Malvern Walking Festival. He remained an active, positive influence on sustainable travel until his sad and unexpected passing in January 2023.

Project partners



Eastnor Castle

Located near Ledbury in Herefordshire, Eastnor Castle is a magnificent 19th-century revivalist castle. Built between 1812 and 1820 for the 2nd Earl Somers, it was designed by the architect Robert Smirke, who also worked on the British Museum. The castle's grand, imposing facade, complete with towers, battlements, and a moat, was intended to evoke the romanticism of the feudal age.

It remains a private home for the Hervey-Bathurst family, who are descendants of the original builder. The castle and its beautiful grounds are open to the public on select days and have served as a popular backdrop for films, television shows, and events, offering a unique glimpse into the opulent lifestyle of the Victorian era.

Eastnor Castle

