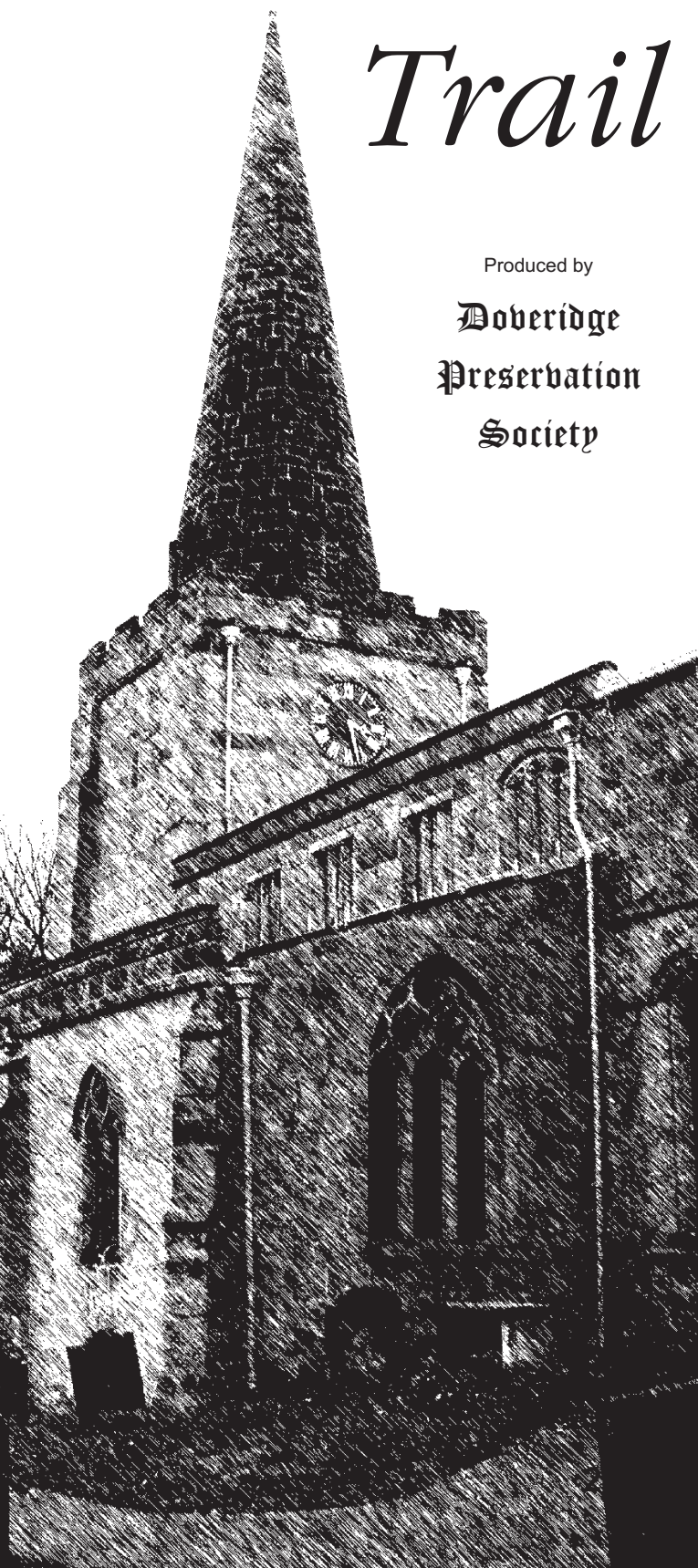


# *The Doveridge Trail*

Produced by

**Doveridge  
Preservation  
Society**





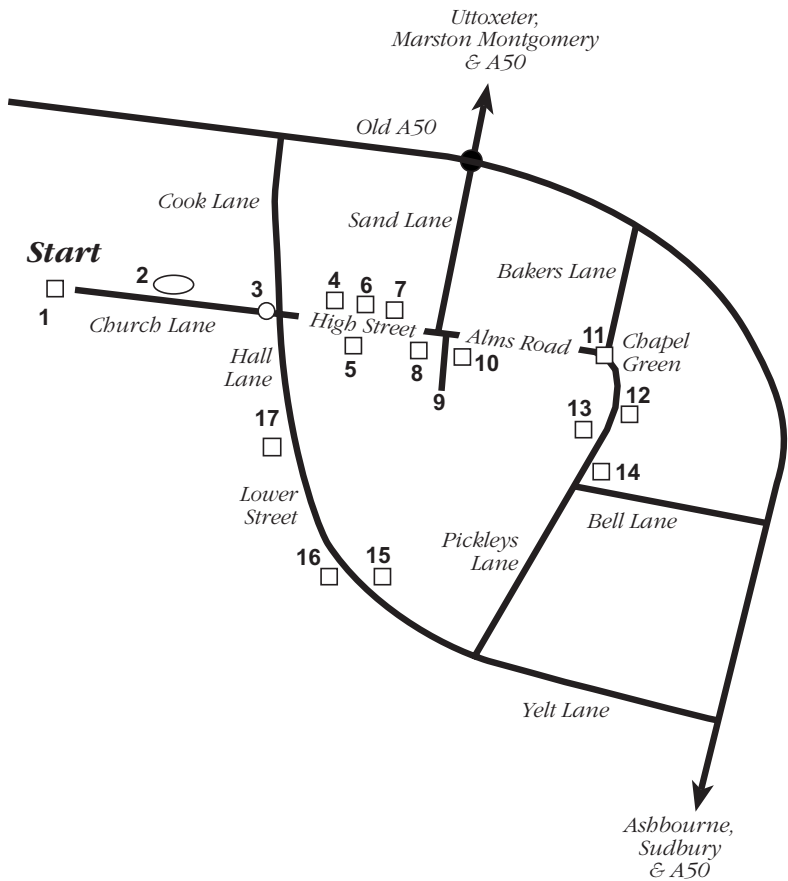
# Walk One

## Introduction

Welcome to the Doveridge Trail. These walks around the village of Doveridge are intended to give you a brief introduction to the history of our village through the buildings and landscapes that the village contains.

Doveridge had its first historical mention in the famous Domesday Book of 1087, where it is listed as containing a church, a mill and forty householders. Quite a substantial settlement for the time and one that obviously served smaller hamlets in the area through the mill and the church.

Sitting as it does on the main route from Stafford and Stoke-on-Trent to Derby, Doveridge was an important point on the map and even had a charter to hold its own market. One of the leading families to hold land in the area was the Cavendish family and it is a branch of this family that in 1769 built Doveridge Hall on the ridge overlooking the River Dove. Sadly the Hall was demolished in 1938, a fate shared by many country houses at the time. Gone too is the wonderful old mill that served this community from earliest times. But Doveridge still has many excellent buildings for you to see and this guide will give a little bit of history on each one as you walk.



We will start by the gate at **St. Cuthbert's Church (1)**, but head away from the church down **Church Lane** towards the centre of the village. The **pond (2)** is just past the last of house on your left and was originally within the park belonging to Doveridge Hall and, given a cold spell, was used as a skating pond by villagers. At the junction with Cook Lane and High Street is a small structure that looks like a miniature bandstand. This was originally the **Cavendish Memorial Well (3)**. Before mains water was laid on, this well and many others as well as pumps were the only supplies of water in the village. It is thought that the canopy over the well head was constructed in honour of Captain Frederick Cavendish, (a brother of the 3rd Lord Waterpark), who died in 1877. When the mains supply came to the village, this well was capped. In 1951 Doveridge WI commemorated the Festival of Britain by providing the central seat under the canopy. 1971 was nominated as 'Conservation Year' and Doveridge WI's contribution to that event was to create the wonderful garden that surrounds the canopy and seat. Members continue to maintain this garden to ensure that it is looking its best at all times of the year.



We will now cross over **Cook Lane** into **High Street**. On the left are houses that were originally owned by the Doveridge Hall estate in which, in late Victorian times, lived the Stud Groom and the Home Farm manager. Further long on the left and partially hidden is the **Reading Room (4)**, which started out as the Chapel of the Primitive Methodist movement and built in 1841; some thirty years after the movement had been formed. As the popularity of the Primitive Methodist movement in Doveridge began to ebb away, and with falling numbers, the chapel was closed and reopened in about 1900 as the Village Reading Room. It replaced a former reading room located in the village school.

A little further on, on the right is the former **village school (5)**. This building was constructed to formalise the education of village children and built in 1841. The part of the building nearest to you as you approach was added in 1895, as the numbers of pupils increased. This building served the villager's educational requirements until 1974, when initially the infants and later, in 1979, all the remaining pupils moved to a newly constructed building near the Manor House. The old building has recently been very successfully converted to a private dwelling.



The tall building on your left just passed the old school is **Waterpark House (6)** and dates from 1871. This served as the village shop and bakery for many years but has sadly closed for business as a general grocers. Along side Waterpark House is the **former butchers**

**shop (7)**, also now converted into a private dwelling. The bars from which joints of meat were hung under the eaves can still be seen.

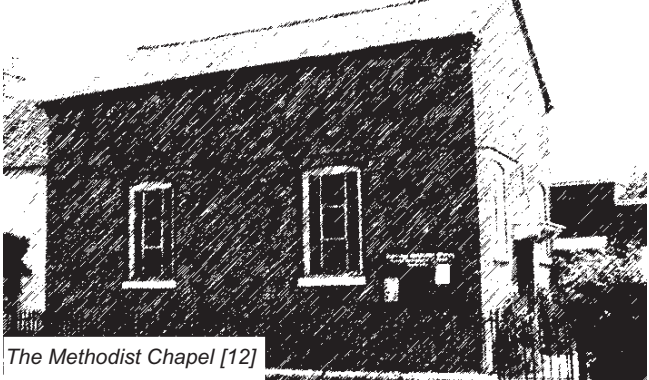
Just along from the former butchers shop is the **Doveridge Village Post Office and Stores (8)**. This building stands on what was once the industrial heart of the village. Originally known as Glebe House, the area contained not only the house, but also a wood yard and wheel wright's. Everything from carts, wheels and even coffins were made on this site over the years. The original village hall (affectionately known as 'the hut' also stood on this site for many years. The post office business moved here in the 1960s and has remained a vital contact point for villagers and visitors alike.

The set of stocks was rediscovered in 1986 and new wood was added to the original iron work.

Until the 1920's Doveridge residents relied almost entirely on well water for a reliable supply and it was by all accounts, of excellent quality. Wells and pumps were situated all over the village including here in **Pump Lane (9)**. In many cases the well and their pumps were situated within the properties. Water was eventually piped from springs near the villages of Somersal Herbert and Cubley after about 1920.

Having crossed Pump Lane, the next building along dates from 1787 and was the **very first school in the village (10)**, but was later turned into a bakery and later still the original post office. The building became a private dwelling in 1963.

Continue now for about 300 yards along the **High Street** and **Alms Road** passing houses on each side, until you come to **Chapel Green (11)**, with the **Methodist Chapel (12)** of 1805 in front of you. It is regarded as one of the oldest chapels on the Dove Valley circuit. A chapel of this size indicates the size of the congregation that supported it from the village and surrounding area. Services are still held each Sunday.



Continue on past the Methodist Chapel and the **village school (13)** of 1974 is soon after on the right. Standing on the left at the corner of **Bell Lane** is the **Manor House (14)**. This is a Grade II\* listed building dating from the early 18th Century. It has been both a farm and a gentleman's residence over its long history.

Continue on past the Manor House and follow **Pickleys Lane** down hill to the bottom, passing two **thatched cottages** on the left. Reaching the T-junction, turn right into **Lower Street**. Slade House is on the corner and some 100 yards further on is a white building known as **The Gables (15)**. This had been for a time one of the Dame Schools in the village, where education was provided before the building of the general village school in the High Street.

It is thought that Lower Street is possibly the original main route through the village. There are several of farms located along its route and the way eventually leads to the site of the old mill and the way through to the turnpike road. Passed The Gables is **Lower Street Farm (16)**. This lovely half timbered house is one of the earliest in the village. Sadly little of its early history is known.

Another 50 yards will bring you to **Old Hall Farm (17)**. This may have formed part of the early residence of the Cavendish family. Being of early brick construction and of impressive size, it was taxed on seven hearths in the 1600s. It is said that there is a tunnel that connects this



property with the church of St. Cuthbert's, but the purpose for which is unknown.

Continue walking passed Old Hall Farm and you will eventually return to the Well that you passed earlier. Turn left at the Well and walk up Church Lane, retracing your steps back to St. Cuthbert's Church.

Much has been written about this lovely church, and space does not allow for a long description here. It is worth noting the impressive yew tree that covers you as you enter through the gate. This tree has been calculated to be over 1,400 years old and the second oldest in Derbyshire. Just beyond is the remains of the old Saxon cross, rediscovered early in the last century, opposite what is now the village Post Office and Stores. It was originally re-erected under the yew tree, but moved to its present site and now forms part of the village war memorial. The church itself is the only one in Derbyshire dedicated to St. Cuthbert and the original building was mentioned in the Domesday Survey of 1086. Over time it has been enlarged and altered to become the wonderful building we see today. On the left, enclosed by a plantation of yew and holly is the original **Vicarage (18)**. This large and impressive Georgian residence, now a private dwelling, dates from the end of the 18th Century when the Vicar of Doveridge was appointed by the Duke of Devonshire, the senior branch of the Cavendish family. After about 1870, the appointment passed to the Doveridge branch of the family, the Lords Waterpark.

Please take some time to look around the church and churchyard, before following the footpath that leads down from the church, through the lower churchyard and brings you through the gate at the bottom, into Mill Lane and the path to the suspension bridge. Please turn over to Walk Two for a description of the walk across the suspension bridge to the old Dove Bridge and some of the history of this area of Doveridge.





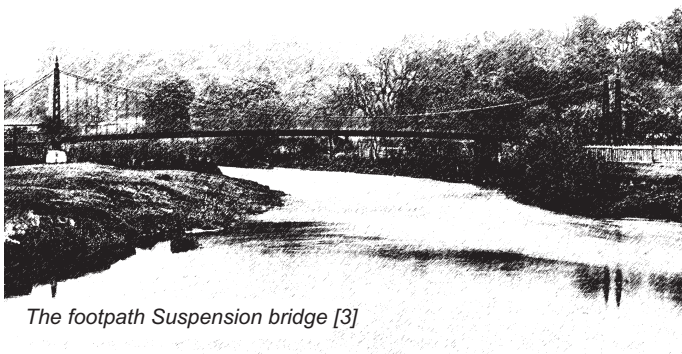
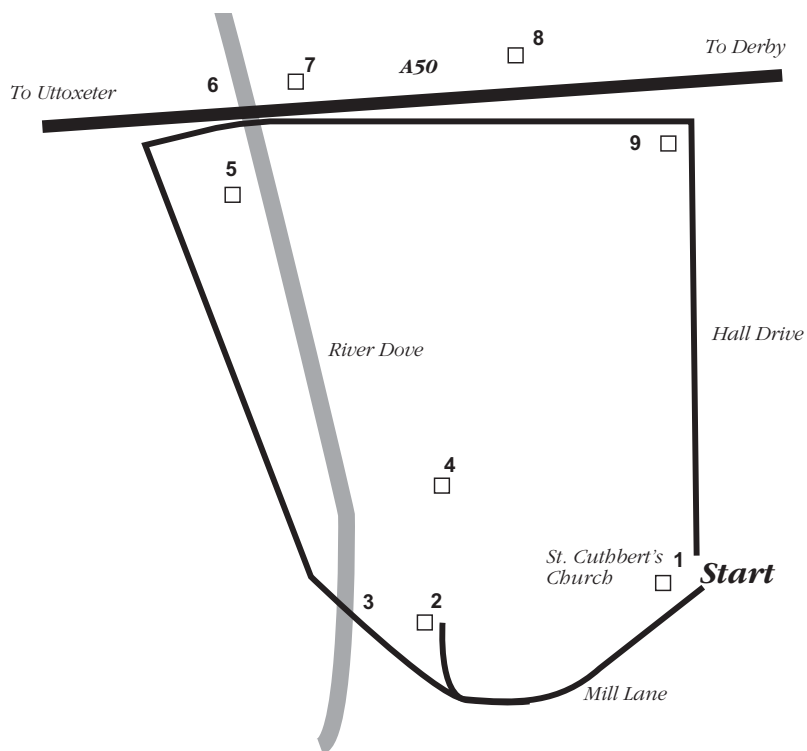
# Walk Two

Park outside the gates of the churchyard perimeter wall and proceed through churchyard gates. Immediately you are under the canopy of the second largest yew tree in Derbyshire (the largest and oldest being the Darley yew). The Doveridge yew is estimated to be about 1,400 years old. Under its spreading ancient branches Maid Marian is said to have been married to Robin Hood with the vicar of Doveridge in attendance. Passing from under the canopy of yew branches, you come to the **Church of St. Cuthbert (1)**. It is the only church in Derbyshire to be dedicated to the saint. The origins of the structure date back to the Domesday Book, where Doveridge is listed as having a church, mill and forty householders. Gradually added to over the centuries and cared for by the community that has worshipped within its walls, St. Cuthbert's is a well loved church and one of the jewels of this Derbyshire village.

If gradients are a difficulty, then retrace your steps and use the tarmaced road to the left of the churchyard to reach the bottom of the hill. The path in the churchyard begins to descend quite steeply and can be slippery. Passing through the gate out of the churchyard at the bottom of the hill, turn left, picking up the path that leads to the suspension bridge walk. If you have come down the tarmaced road then the footpath you need to follow is just opposite the gateway that leads into the bottom of the churchyard. The footpath, known as the suspension bridge path, was constructed at the behest of the Brace family who were living at Doveridge Hall at the turn of the 20th Century, and cost some £6,000 to construct. It opened in 1901. Raising the



Doveridge mill [2]



The footpath Suspension bridge [3]

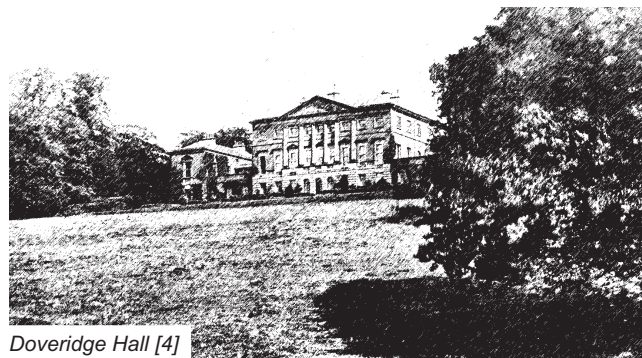
pathway allowed people to continue to use the path even when the Dove was in flood.

The first bridge that you cross is a replacement for an earlier structure. Beneath this bridge once flowed the mill stream from **Doveridge mill (2)**. As mentioned earlier, Doveridge had a mill from the time of the Domesday survey. It was situated just below the church and was fed from the River Dove by the mill stream. Sadly the building was lost to demolition in the 1970s. In its time it had ground corn and in later years supplied electricity to the Hall from turbines and accumulator batteries. This came to an end when the weir that helped retain the level of the River Dove was demolished and the mill stream dried up. It was used as a farmhouse for some years until it was demolished.

Moving on you arrive at the only **footpath suspension bridge (3)** in Derbyshire. This bridge was constructed as part of the raised walk in the early part of 20th Century. It must have looked quite a picture in its heyday. It was rebuilt and altered during the war as the original structure was in need of some urgent repair work. Since then it is been constantly maintained to a high standard. The small brick structure at one end is a flood warning station.

Once you have crossed the suspension bridge you are now into open pasture with the walkway leading your eye away to the north and the A50; the town of Uttoxeter lies away to the left. The spire of the parish church of St. Mary's can be clearly seen. Continue along the raised walk.

This area was once part of the Doveridge Hall estate and the location of **Doveridge Hall (4)** can still be seen. Look for the tower and steeple of St. Cuthbert's Church on the ridge and keep your eye moving to the left. The plantations of yew give way to a clear area on the ridge above



Doveridge Hall [4]

the river, which is now occupied by two modern houses. Prior to 1938, this was the location of Doveridge Hall, former home of the Doveridge branch of the Cavendish family - the Lords Waterpark. Before the Doveridge Hall estate was broken up after the sale of 1934, the walkway and the bridges were maintained by the estate staff. One day each year was set aside to carry out repairs to the pathway and the bridges.

Doveridge Hall was built in 1769 by Sir Henry Cavendish, 1st Bt, employing an architect named Edward Stevens. William Eames of Derby is thought to have laid out the park. Guests at the Hall included

The Prince of Wales (later Edward VII) and Lily Langtree, as well as Sir Arthur Sullivan. The Cavendish family remained at the Hall until 1863. Later occupiers and owners were the Lords Hindlip, who had made their fortune in the brewing industry and the Brace family who made their money in the leather industry. The estate was eventually broken up in 1934. The house lingered on until 1938, when it was finally demolished. Since then new houses have been built in different areas of the estate and the new A50 has carved a large slice out of the old park.

Following the raised path you will eventually arrive at the A50. You may notice at least one **concrete Home Guard post (5)**. These were built during the Second World War to try to prevent enemy insurgents from moving up the river towards the arms depot at Fauld. Also, with such a large area of flat land, there was the ever present danger of enemy parachutists being dropped over the area. Follow the footpath signs over the stiles to gain access to the bridge walkway. You will notice that there are actually three bridges, the very old one is mentioned by the author Celia Feinnes writing of her journies in the 17th Century.

In order to gain access to the **old Dove Bridge (6)**, you need to completely cross the new bridge and follow the footpath down the other side, before turning back on yourself and following another path that leads under the new bridges, before emerging in a small plantation. Follow the path through this plantation and so up onto the old bridge structure. This bridge and the old road once formed part of the important turnpike road from Derby to Newcastle-under-Lyme and cattle were driven along this road for sale in the market at Uttoxeter. The bridge itself eventually became too narrow to cope with the traffic load of the 20th Century and was



Old Dove Bridge [6]

replaced by the first modern one in 1977. Retrace your steps back through the plantation. You can just see a glimpse of the old **Toll House (7)** where toll money was paid in order to cross the bridge. The revenue was meant to go towards the upkeep of the toll roads in the area.

Once you rejoin the main footpath again, it is easy walking and you are now heading east and back up towards the village. To the right lies the former parkland of the Doveridge estate mentioned previously.

The house in the trees on the other side of the A50 with the turret is **Eaton Lodge (8)**. This was built in the early part of the 20th Century as the home of a branch of the Bamford family. They had interests in the large agricultural machine factory that formed one of the main employers in the area. Latterly the Bamford name has become more familiar through the JCB factory based at Rocester further up the valley.

Continue along the path and so onto the former route of the A50, until the top of the hill is reached. On your right is the **gateway and lodge (9)** that formed the main entrance to the Doveridge Hall estate. The lodge was built at the same time as the Hall and is thought to have been the work of Thomas Gardner of Uttoxeter. Turn into the drive and proceed back to St. Cuthbert's Church which lies at the end of the drive.