



ramblers
at the heart of walking

The Ramblers is Britain's biggest charity working to promote walking and improve conditions for all walkers. In Herefordshire there are four groups: Hereford, Mortimer, Ross-on-Wye and Leadon Vale. For more information contact Tom Fisher, tel: 01886 821544 or email: tom.fisher@virgin.net

Drink in the views

By Tom Fisher of Leadon Vale Ramblers and chairman of the Bromyard Walkers are Welcome group



Start/parking: Stoke Lacy church
Grid Ref. SO620494

Maps: Ordnance Survey Explorer 205

Distance: 5.5 miles

Grade: Moderate

Stiles: 20

Nearest town: Bromyard

Refreshments: Three Horseshoes, Little Cowarne 01885 400276; The Plough, Stoke Lacy 01885 490658

Toilets: At the pubs

Public transport: 420 bus between Hereford and Worcester goes through Stoke Lacy.
Ring Traveline on 0871 2002233

THIS walk is a delightful stroll through the Lodon valley, with marvellous views. It also has the potential to be quite a boozy journey, as we pass two excellent pubs and an award-winning brewery.

The walk is taken from the Walks around Bromyard book. The pack of eight walks is available from Food for All, Bromyard Live, and many other outlets. Bromyard has now joined the growing list of towns which has "walkers are welcome" status. The Bromyard Walkers are Welcome group has been busy refreshing the waymarkers, and trying to ensure the paths are in good condition. If you do encounter any problems please notify Amey, Herefordshire's contractor, on 01432 261800.

We start at Stoke Lacy church, described by the great architectural historian Pevsner thus: "The church was restored in the Early English style (at a cost of £950). The chancel arch is

Norman. The responds have scalloped capitals and a single step arch." The most famous rector of Stoke Lacy was Henry Morgan, rector for 50 years from 1887 to 1937. His son, H.F.S. Morgan, founded the famous Morgan Motor Company of Malvern in 1913. It is said that the first prototype three-wheeler was assembled in the Stoke Lacy rectory garden. This was after H. F. S. survived a hair-raising first drive in a 3h.p. Benz that ran away with him down the 1-in-6 hill into Stoke Lacy; he emerged intact but considerably poorer. Damages to the car cost about £28 for repairs (£2,000 in today's money) and delayed his ambition of owning his own car. Now, let's start the walk!

1. Cross the main road from the church and turn left then right up an unmade road, Herb Lane, to a gate next to the garage of the last house. Make for a footbridge ahead, and then walk up a large field to a footbridge at the top left corner. Cross to another footbridge over

the main stream and turn right along it for three fields and then a garden fence. Go through a gateway near the end of the fence and turn left onto a stile onto the drive and road. Climb the steps up the opposite bank to a stile in the corner and follow the left-hand hedge to another stile. Walk up the field to a gate and pass a cottage to the road. Turn right along it and then left at the first gateway. Keep to the right hand hedge past a shed and up two fields then along a garden hedge to a drive. Admire the splendid views across towards Hereford and turn right along it to the junction of several tracks. It is possible that so many tracks converge here because the wood on the left was the meeting place of the Hundred of Broxash. Hundreds were the local government of Anglo-Saxon England. All the free men from an area of a hundred hides (a hide was about 150 acres) were supposed to meet monthly to settle disputes. The Normans took over the organisation but

