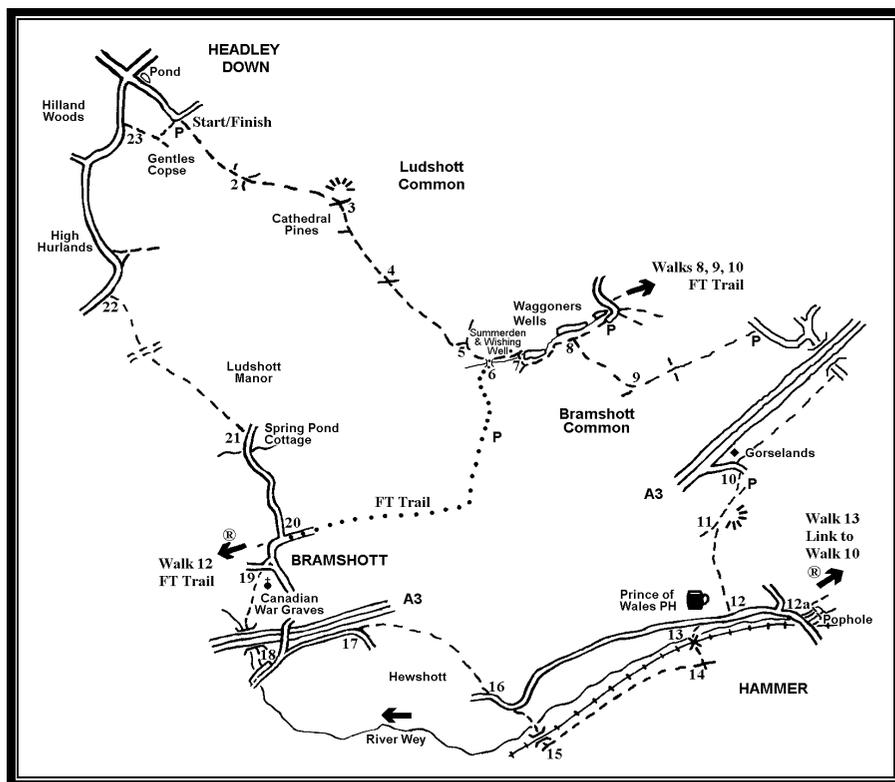


## Walk 11 – Where Three Counties Meet

Distance approximately 8¼ miles/13km

This walk starts and ends at the National Trust car park in Pond Road, visiting Waggoners Wells, Bramshott Chase, Hammer Vale, Bramshott, Gentles Lane and Gentles Copse.



For notes and illustrations up to point 7, see **Walk 8**.

- 1 From the car park, follow the track up the valley to Ludshott Common.
- 2 At a junction of several tracks (see photo p.44), continue along the centre path which rises between trees for about half a mile past another junction to a crossroads of tracks at the top of the hill with views in winter across the common to the north. This is known locally as 'Charing Cross'.
- 3 Carry straight on, descending to a valley then rising. Keep straight on where the main track bears left, and cross a bridleway to meet the track which runs round the edge of the common.
- 4 Take the footpath straight ahead between holly trees. The path crosses a stile then goes alongside a fence across a field to another stile. Descending

sharply through woods, it crosses a private woodland track to meet a bridleway at a stile.

- 5 Turn right down the bridleway, which soon meets the stream flowing from Waggoners Wells.
- 6 Do not take the bridge over the stream (where the outward leg of the Flora Thompson Trail goes, see photo p.52) but follow the path ahead to pass the National Trust's wishing well and the wall of *Summerden* on the left.
- 7 Continue uphill to the gate of *Summerden*, then turn right along the side of the valley to arrive at the dam of the bottom pond. Cross this and turn left along the south bank to pass a second dam. Halfway along the shore of the next pond turn right along a footpath up a wide valley.



*The south bank of Waggoners Wells bottom pond*

- 8 The footpath enters Ministry of Defence lands. Continue up the valley. At a fork after about half a mile bear right and more steeply uphill to meet a track going along the ridge.
- 9 Turn left along the ridge to enter National Trust land through a gate. Follow the track straight ahead, passing through another gate and a small NT car park. Turn right along the lane here which soon bears left beside the A3 road. Turn right to pass under the A3, then turn right along a track servicing Chase Villas. Follow this past the houses and continue as it enters MoD land and becomes a footpath with garden boundaries to the right until it reaches a lane at Knockhundred Cottage.

The land on both sides of the Portsmouth Road here was used during the First World War as a camp for Canadian soldiers. The Victorian house next to *Knockhundred Cottage* called *Gorselands*, originally built by Grayshott builder Ernest Chapman for himself, was the HQ. It later became a roadside café. Nearby to the left is the site of the old Seven Thorns Inn.

- 10 Cross the lane looking for a footpath through bushes opposite – this emerges onto heathland. Follow the wide track below electricity power lines – there

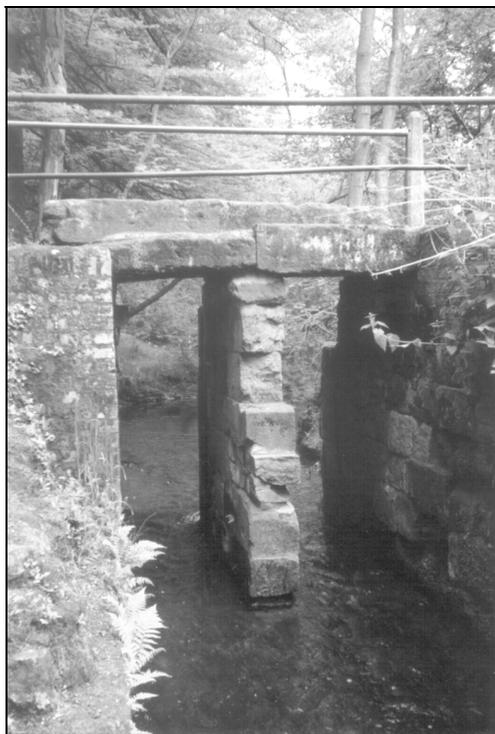
## Walk 11

are views to the left across the Wey valley. Look for a footpath signed to the left.

To the right of the wide track is an area which has been used during two World Wars as a military hospital. The Connaught Hospital, here during the Second World War, was finally closed in 1962.

- 11 Follow the right of way down into Hammer Vale. It is not very well signed at times – if you fork right at the first parting of the ways and left at the second, you should find yourself on a path which narrows and sinks between gorse bushes before crossing a couple of tracks and passing alongside a hedge to reach a surfaced road.
- 12 In order to stand with a leg in each of three counties, turn left along the road and follow it for about a quarter of a mile to the point where it crosses the young River Wey.
- 12a Just after the bridge, take a path to the left into the woodland alongside the river. This rises to a T-junction, joining a path which runs along the top of the old dam which was once part of Pophole Mill. Turn right to cross a footbridge over the channel where a water wheel once worked. It is here that Surrey is to the left of the path, Hampshire to the right, and Sussex straight ahead across the stream. Having experienced this, retrace your steps back to point 12 to continue the walk.

Pophole Mill was used until 1776 to make iron. The sluice in the north channel controlled the height of water in the mill pond upstream, which operated a water wheel in the south channel. The wheel was connected to a cam inside the mill building which operated heavy hammers to crush iron ore. It also operated bellows for the hearths where ore was smelted to produce iron ingots.



*The Northern sluice at Pophole*

*Note: It is possible to continue from Pophole Mill to Critchmere by turning left at the T-junction and following the path on the Surrey bank of the river, and from there by side roads and tracks up to Hindhead to link with **Walk 10**. See **Walk 13** – ‘The Missing Link’.*

- 13 Proceed west along Hammer Lane towards the *Prince of Wales* pub, which is a good mid-point stop. Just before the pub, take a track which forks left off the road and descends beside houses to cross both the river and the railway, the latter on a local level crossing.
- 14 After crossing the railway and passing through a farmyard, turn right at a gate and stile and follow a bridleway through a field. A hundred yards or so after another gate, fork right along a footpath which follows the railway line, sometimes above and sometimes below it, and joins another bridleway coming in from the left at the top of a hill. Looking right, across the railway line, you can see the ponds of a fish farm. Follow the bridleway past the buildings of *Bridge Farm* to turn right on a track which goes under the railway through a bridge.
- 15 Follow the track over the river and uphill to meet a road (Hewshott Lane). Turn left along the road and follow it as it rises and bends left.



*Bridge taking the track under the railway*

- 16 Turn right along the drive to *Old Barn Farm*. This right of way passes farm buildings and then continues as a narrow path between a hedge on the left and a field fence on the right. Follow this for about half a mile as it crosses stiles and passes a house to meet Hewshott Lane again at a bend.
- 17 Follow Hewshott Lane alongside the A3 trunk road downhill to a junction. Turn left here along a pavement, crossing the road just before a bridge over the river and passing through a gap in the hedge to the old London Road, now a cul-de-sac.

Just to the north of the road bridge here you can see an old aqueduct which took water in an irrigation channel from one bank of the River Wey to the other.

- 18 Turn right, and in about a hundred yards left along a footpath (see photo p.84). This path, known locally as ‘The Hanger’, follows the course of the River Wey under the trunk road and then rises to enter Bramshott churchyard near the Canadian military graves from the First World War (see photo on next page).

“This path is, and has been from time immemorial, the approach from this side of the parish [of Bramshott] to the Parish Church. A more beautiful or tranquillising approach to a place of worship cannot be imagined...” – Flora Thompson in her *Guide to Liphook*, 1925.

## Walk 11

- 19 Go through the churchyard to the church and exit by the lych gate. Cross over the road and proceed straight ahead to the left of the green triangle. The road bears right passing Limes Close. Shortly, take the next road to the left.



*Canadian military graves from WW1 in Bramshott Churchyard*

- 20 The road becomes a sunken lane, dipping down to cross the stream coming from Waggoners Wells before passing *Spring Pond Cottage* on the right.  
Note the horse-jump across the stream. This was part of the course which Princess Anne used to ride in the Downlands trials – apparently the language was occasionally colourful at this point!
- 21 Take the footpath opposite *Spring Pond Cottage*. This rises sharply before crossing fields and a track (with interesting iron steps instead of stiles in a couple of places). Note that the course of the path across the fields is not very obvious – follow the direction of the waymark arrows at the stiles. Ludshott Manor can be seen across fields to the right. The path eventually meets another sunken lane (Gentles Lane).
- 22 Turn right along the lane and follow uphill as it bears left. After about half a mile at a three-way junction of roads keep right (with Hilland Woods on your left) and after about two hundred yards, just after a house on the right, take a bridleway into Gentles Copse (National Trust) on the right.
- 23 Follow the bridleway and, where it emerges onto heathland, turn sharp left from the marked way and down a shallow valley to return to the start point.

