

The Virgin in the Ice Trail

Cadfael's eye caught, for a moment only, the ghostly pallor beneath the ice."- The Virgin in the Ice

This most scenic of trails, 54 miles in total, takes you through market towns such as Ludlow and Bridgnorth and over the gentle rolling hills of South Shropshire.

On your journey, step back in time to winter 1139 and relive scenes from the novel *"The Virgin in the Ice"* which feature Brother Cadfael searching for two young refugees from Worcester who have disappeared on their way to Shrewsbury. Lost somewhere between *"the great hunched bulk of Brown Clee and the grimmer, more rugged shape of Titterstone Clee"*, imagine Cadfael's concern for the missing pair as it was *"lonely country, this, and wild, even within ten miles of castle and town"*. Still secluded and unspoilt, the dramatic Clee Hills, which dominate the landscape and afford magnificent views across the Marcher lands, make an ideal spot for picnics and short walks.

Away from the open countryside, stroll through narrow streets in one of England's finest country towns, Ludlow, and explore its magnificent Parish church and splendid castle ruins. Troops garrisoned in the castle in *"The Virgin in the Ice"* provided Hugh Beringar with the force he demanded to defeat the outlaws camped on Titterstone Hill. Commanding fine views over the town and surrounding hills, this superb medieval fortress, once the headquarters of the Council of the Welsh Marches, has a colourful history. Gripped by Civil War and border clashes, much of the castle has survived to provide the perfect setting for Shakespearian plays during the annual Ludlow Festival in June and July.



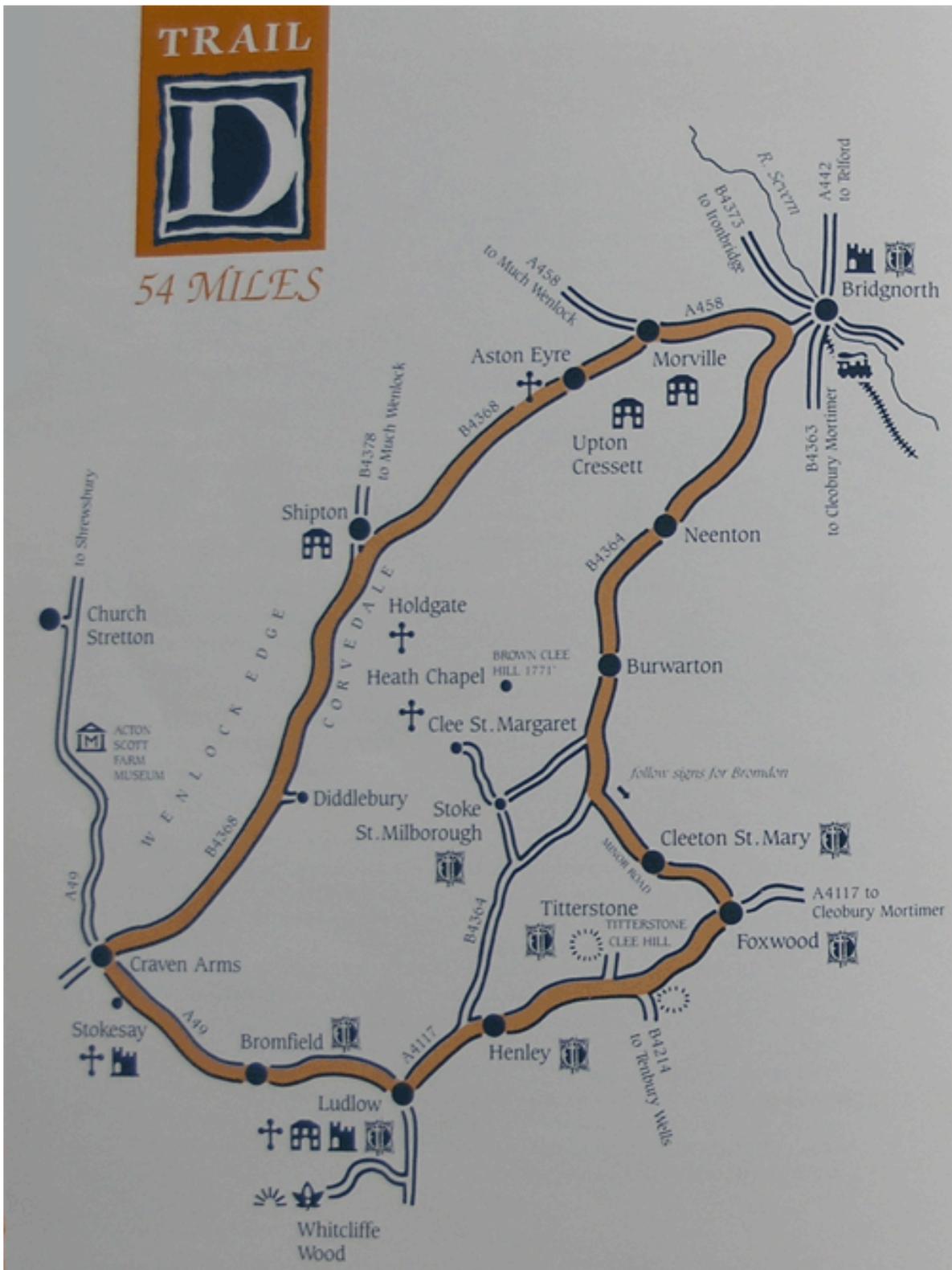
At the small village of Bromfield, a half-timbered gatehouse serves as a reminder of the 12th century Benedictine Priory, scene of so much activity in *"The Virgin in the Ice"*. Summoned to the Priory to nurse Brother Elyas, Cadfael needed all his skills to heal the monk **"found by the wayside, stripped and hacked and left for dead"**.

Follow Brother Cadfael in his search for the fugitives which took him northwards across the Corve and the lower slopes of the Clee Hills. Discover the ancient village of Stoke St Milborough, thought to be Godstoke in the novel, *"sunk in its deep, wooded valley between the hills"*.

Visit the ancient market town of Bridgnorth and enjoy panoramic views of the Severn Valley from the castle walk and from the country's steepest inland railway. Stroll through the charming High Street with its striking Town Hall and Victorian shop fronts or take a trip on the Severn Valley Railway, home to Britain's largest collection of steam locomotives. By contrast, experience traditional farming methods at Acton Scott Historic Farm Museum or explore one of the finest medieval fortified manor houses in the country at Stokesay.

Rich in heritage and surrounded by beautiful countryside, this drive offers a fascinating insight into an area which has changed little since Cadfael's time. Remote and unspoilt, this is an ideal location for relaxation and quiet enjoyment.

[Click for Trail Map](#)



Some modern points of interest:

Craven Arms – Land of Lost Content Museum of household heritage

Wenlock Edge – much owned by National Trust, look for fossils

Morville – home of Dower House Gardens

Bridgnorth – voted Best Market Town 2017, also High and Low Towns with Cliff Railway

Neenton – The Pheasant at Neenton is a community run pub with nice food

Burwarton – Home to the largest one day agricultural show. Think of a walk to the top of Brown Clee, highest point in Shropshire's

Titterstone Clee – fantastic sweeping views reaching into Worcestershire, Herefordshire and beyond

Ludlow – Ancient capital of Wales, home to 500 listed buildings including the tudor Feathers Hotel, Buttercross Museum, Ludlow Assembly Rooms and frequent markets. Try out some top-of-the-range food at Mortimers or Charlton Arms (associated with Hibiscus in London but dissimilar prices!) other restaurants.

Bromfield – home of Ludlow Food Centre, the estate farm shop for the 2,000 acre Plymouth Estate. Stock up!