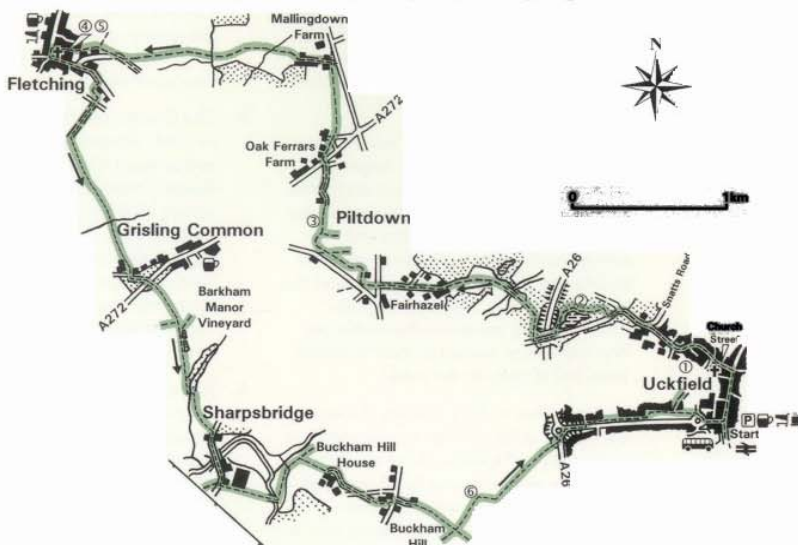




# "A walk of MYSTERIES"

*A pair of brass gloves, a 130 year old railway which has never carried a train, a skeleton of our very earliest ancestor - the 'missing link' between man and ape - dated to the twentieth century. This walk around Uckfield and Fletching takes in many mysteries, not to mention the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, in only eight miles.*



**Length 8 Miles - 13 Kilometres**  
**Approximately 5 hours - Grade 3**

**START -** Uckfield Station (O.S. Explorer 18 - NGR 473209)

**ACCESS -** Car - Luxford Field car park, Civic Approach, Uckfield  
Bus - 28, 128, 129, 245, 246, 248, 249, 261, 265, 728, 729 and 770.

Train - Uckfield Station

**PUBLIC TOILETS -** Luxford Field car park and Bridge Cottage, Uckfield

**REFRESHMENTS -** Pubs at Uckfield, Fletching and Piltdown  
Restaurants at Uckfield  
Village shop at Fletching

**CAUTION -** This walk includes one crossing of the A22 and a section of road walking in Uckfield. Beware of golf balls on the Piltdown Course.

8  
Miles



# "A walk of MYSTERIES"

- 1 Lord Lucan. On the left, the sheltered housing at Grants Hill House masks a tragic secret. On 7 November 1974, Lord Lucan, a rich aristocrat, allegedly killed his children's nanny at his London house. He fled to his friend's home, Grants Hill House, in Uckfield. Early the next morning he left the house. His car was found near Newhaven, but Lord Lucan has never been seen again. The house was later demolished and the present building erected.
- 2 Rock Tunnel. On taking over Rock House in 1789, the Streatfield family began to landscape their new estate. At Lake Wood, a three acre pond was created surrounded by massive sandstone outcrops and planted with many exotic specimen trees and shrubs. To complete a walk around the lake, tunnels were driven through the rocks and they remain in use to this day. The land is now owned by the Woodland Trust and is open to the public.
- 3 Piltdown Man. In 1913 Charles Dawson discovered ancient bones and flint tools in a gravel pit in Piltdown. On further study they were proclaimed to be of great age. British science was triumphant and crowds flocked to see the "missing link" in evolutionary terms between apes and man. However, further investigation in 1953 revealed that this was because they were composed of an ape's jaw and a man's skull. The whole affair was a forgery but who did it or why will never be known.
- 4 A pair of brass gloves. Around 1450, Peter Denot, a glove maker of Fletching, died and was buried in the church. His relatives looked for a way to commemorate him but were unable to afford the monuments used by the gentry. However, they were just able to pay for the casting of two brass gloves and a small, inscribed plate, which they mounted on a stone slab to form a unique memorial.
- 5 The Decline and Fall of Edward Gibbon. In 1789, Edward Gibbon, author of the monumental "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire", fell ill and died whilst visiting his friend, the Earl of Sheffield, at Sheffield Park. The Earl buried him in the huge family mausoleum occupying the north transept of the church, thus explaining why such a famous historical author should be interred in the church of a relatively small village.
- 6 Half a bridge. In 1864 a new railway was to be built from the main Brighton to London line, down the Ouse valley, to provide a new, fast route to Eastbourne and Hastings. Works had already started when the money ran out. An immediate halt was made to the works, leaving isolated lengths of embankments and cuttings and half-finished structures, such as this bridge, along the route. Work was never restarted leaving a ghost railway which never actually carried a train.

8  
Miles

