



Martinstown and Maiden Castle

A moderate walk along tracks and field paths, plus an optional visit to the Iron-Age hill fort of Maiden Castle – with stupendous views to the coast

Essential Facts

- | | |
|---------------------------|----------------------|
| ▪ Route distance: | 16.3 km (10.2 miles) |
| ▪ Approximate time: | 4 hours 30 mins |
| ▪ Optional shorter route: | 9 km (5.5 miles) |
| ▪ Approx. total ascent: | 250 metres |
| ▪ Start point Grid Ref: | SY 647 889 |
| ▪ GPS Ref: | SY 64753 88980 |
| ▪ Recommended O.S. Map: | Explorer OL15 |
| ▪ Toughness Rating | Dorset 3 |

Please see the notes on Toughness Ratings at the end of this report

Up For A
CHALLENGE ?

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A Donation

An Individual Walk
A Team Effort

Full Info from the Great Walks web site

THE ROUTE

This walk starts in Martinstown, just west of Dorchester. From the village green in front of the church, **S**, go through the churchyard to a stone stile. Turn right and soon pick up a bridleway across the track to Stevens Farm. Continue through a field, to a road. Turn right to a junction and cross to an enclosed track. Follow this track through Clandon Farm and on to a cross tracks. Turn right and continue to a crossing track at the foot of Maiden Castle, **A**.

At this point you can go straight ahead to explore the immense Iron-Age earthworks of Maiden Castle.

Otherwise turn right and follow the valley to a lane. Turn right, cross a bridge and continue towards Upwey. At the main road turn left, and then immediately right to Higher Ashton Farm. Follow the track, taking a left fork. At the next gate turn right, and keep a fence on your right. At the top go through the gate by the telegraph pole, and turn half right to a gate in the top right hand corner. Beyond the gate continue in the same direction to a fingerpost at **B**.

Here the shorter route turns right to follow the Inland Coastal Path for about 750 metres to **E**, where it turns right to rejoin the main route.

For the main route go through a gate and turn right. At a stone wall, turn left to follow a track downhill, through Friar Waddon to a road. Go straight across the road and climb to a junction of paths. Turn right and follow the ridge until the path drops down to a stile onto a road. Turn left along a track, and after 20 metres turn right. Cross a stile to see Corton Farm below you, **C**.

Walk straight ahead, maintaining your height until you meet a fence on your left. Follow this, and when it turns left go slightly right downhill to a stile at a road. Turn right, and as the road bends turn left. After about 20 metres turn left, and then go through the next gate on your left. Turn right and follow the bridleway through Hell Bottom. Pass some buildings and veer right to a gap in the hedge. Beyond this, continue uphill in the same direction to a gate leading to the Inland Coast Path, **D**.

Turn right and follow the coast path along Bronkham Hill for about 2 km to the second turning to Martinstown at **E**.

Turn left to follow a track to a gate. Then go diagonally left to another gate, and walk down across the next field to a gate in the bottom left hand corner. At a junction turn right and take the right fork to follow a field edge path. Ascend through trees and cross a field to reach a track. Turn right to return to Martinstown church, **S**.

Refreshment

Brewers Arms
Public House
Martinstown
Tel: 01305 889361
Meals and bar snacks.
Garden.

Stevens Farm Shop
Coffee Parlour
Martinstown
Tel: 01305 889216
Snacks, teas and
coffees.



Hardy's Monument



Friar Waddon



Corton Farm



Brewers Arms

LOCAL INFO

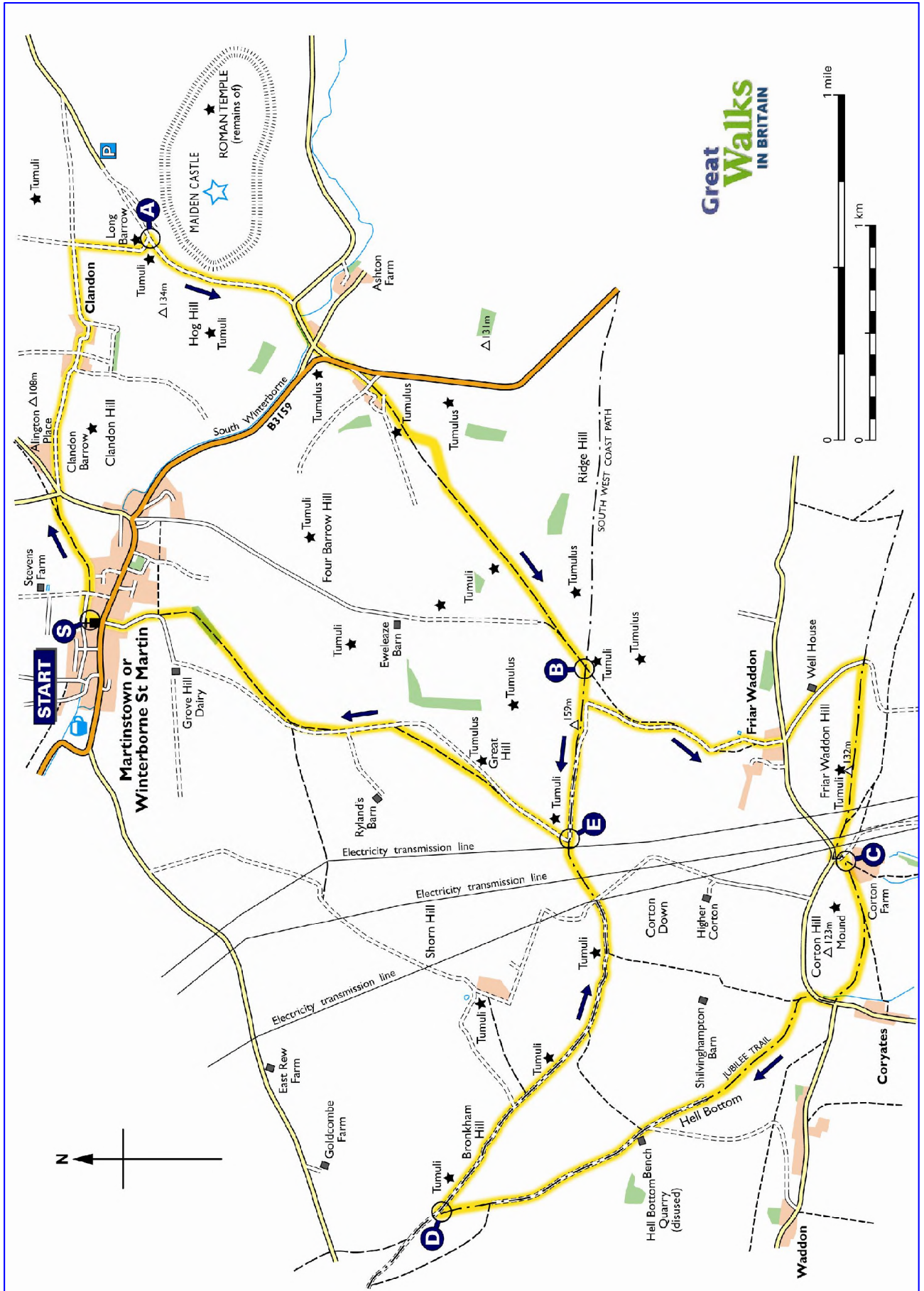
Maiden Castle is the largest and most complex Iron-Age hill fort in Britain, with dramatic views over the Dorset landscape. During the Iron Age it was densely populated, being abandoned when the Romans established the town which became Dorchester. In the late 4th Century the Romans built a temple complex on the abandoned fort. In the 1960s it was used in the filming of *Far from the Madding Crowd*, when David Hemmings, as Sergeant Troy, delighted Julie Christie's Bathsheba with his weaponry - especially his swordsmanship.

Many fascinating artefacts discovered by archaeologists at Maiden Castle can now be seen in the Dorset County Museum in nearby Dorchester.

Hardy's Monument is seen high up on the hillside for much of this walk. There are excellent views of this 22 metres high Portland stone monument, and at Waypoint **D** you are only half a mile from it. The monument was erected in 1844 in honour of Vice-Admiral Sir Thomas Masterman Hardy, who was Nelson's right-hand man at the Battle of Trafalgar. It is entirely coincidental that this great structure surveys some of the scenes portrayed by the other Thomas Hardy, the Victorian novelist.

Martinstown: Martinstown (or Winterbourne St Martin) is a delightful village with the Winterbourne stream flowing between the cottages and the road. There is a small village green in front of the church. The village has a shop, pub and farm shop.

MARTINSTOWN & MAIDEN CASTLE					
G.P.S. WAYPOINTS					
WAYPOINT NAME	MAP REF		CO-ORDINATES		ELEVATION: Metres
MAR S	S	SY	64753	88980	82
MAR A	A	SY	66543	88751	107
MAR B	B	SY	64527	86717	168
MAR C	C	SY	63404	85511	88
MAR D	D	SY	61973	87426	180
MAR E	E	SY	63721	86807	170



MAP LEGEND					
	Great Walks route		Church with tower		Spot height - metres
	M6 Motorway		Church with spire		Information centre
	A23 Main road		Other place of worship		Parking
	B2116 Secondary road		Cathedral / Abbey		Public convenience
	Minor road		Building		Public house
	Other road		Built up area		Picnic site
	Track		Woodland		Camp site
	Footpath		Sand, shingle or mud		Major tourist feature
	Bridleway		Water feature		Other tourist feature
	National trail				
	Railway				

Safety First

Safety should always be your first priority in planning and undertaking a walk, whether on your own or leading a group. Please read these Safety First and Walking Our Routes notes.

Lead a group of other walkers only if you have leadership and navigational experience adequate for the 'worst case' conditions which may be encountered on the particular walk, bearing in mind the terrain, possible weather and navigational demands.

Weigh up the capabilities of your party, in terms of fitness and walking speed. Adjust your time expectations accordingly.

Ensure all your party are adequately clothed for the weather and conditions. Footwear is particularly important. Clothing must protect against cold, wet or strong sun according to the time of year.

Emergencies are quite rare, but it is essential to think ahead about what to do if someone in your party sustains an injury. Will you have a First Aid kit? Is there a qualified First Aider in the party? How could help be summoned in a serious eventuality?

Refreshment, particularly water, can be vital. Dehydration in hot summer conditions can be rapid, and frequent intake of fluids is essential.

On tougher walks it is a good idea to tell someone where you are planning to go – and when you expect to be back. Remember - mobile phones often lose reception in mountainous or isolated areas.

All our walks use legitimate routes: Public Rights of Way, Public Footpaths, Bridleways, Permissive Paths, Access Land, Byways and Roads.

Road walking calls for particular care. When there is no defined footpath or verge wide enough for safe walking it is usually best to walk on the right – facing oncoming traffic. An exception may be a tight bend, where walkers would be more visible on the left.

Occasionally you may find a public footpath blocked or unuseable. It is perfectly in order to take the shortest available diversion without damaging crops, perhaps around a field margin.

It is courteous to close gates after passing through, sometimes even if the gate was open when you arrived – particularly if it is obvious livestock may escape.

Mutual respect for farm animals is to be encouraged! Don't frighten or annoy them, but equally don't put your party members in danger or discomfort. You certainly wouldn't be the first walkers to go round the outside of a field of frisky bullocks.

Dogs should always be kept on a lead anywhere near farm animals, and under close supervision elsewhere in the countryside.

Walking Our Routes

Our walks are designed to be negotiated using the route directions in conjunction with the map section provided. We suggest walkers also take the Ordnance Survey Explorer or Outdoor Leisure map recommended for each walk.

On mountain, moorland and open heathland walks it is **ESSENTIAL** to have navigational expertise and tools, including the recommended Ordnance Survey map(s).

Take care to observe any cautions in the route description; exposed paths, areas liable to flooding etc.

Consider conditions before setting off. Will heavy rain have made a water meadow impassable? Will frost or snow make a path slippery?

When navigating the route look for clues to confirm you are in the right place. Are map features where you would expect on the ground? Are features mentioned in the text where expected? If you suspect you may have taken a wrong turn, take action sooner rather than later. It is better to re-trace to a known point rather than carry on regardless with the possibility of becoming increasingly confused.

All our routes are carefully checked before publication, but features can change on the ground – sometimes surprisingly quickly. Footpaths may be re-routed, buildings can appear or change significantly and these days pub names seem to change frequently.

The approximate time given for each walk is based on an average walking speed of 2.5 miles per hour (4 km/hour), plus an allowance for ascent, descent and any difficult terrain.

Total ascent is the approximate total ascent over the whole walk.

GPS users can enter in the waypoints provided in each of our walk reports. It is important to read our guide **Introducing GPS for Walkers**, available as a PDF file from the Great Walks in Britain web site.

Remember that GPS is a great navigational tool, but only one of those available to the navigator. Never dispense with conventional map and compass – and the training and skills to use them, especially on mountain, moorland or open heathland walks.

TOUGHNESS RATINGS

All our **Dorset** routes can be undertaken by reasonably fit walkers able to utilise our map segments, together with the route guidance notes. Always consider recent and forecast weather.

Each walk has been allocated a **Toughness Rating**:

1. Easier walks with modest ascent and generally on well defined paths. There may be stiles or narrow gateways to negotiate.
2. Routes which are more demanding. They may include more ascent and possibly paths which are looser or more difficult underfoot.
3. More strenuous walks with some steep sections, higher paths or places which may be wet and boggy.
4. The most demanding walks in this edition. There may be prolonged steep ascents. Conditions may be challenging underfoot.

Toughness Ratings are allocated in the context of the terrain in the edition area. For example a walk rated as demanding in Dorset may be equivalent to a moderate route in Devon & Dartmoor..