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## Whixley to Little Ouseburn Circular

|                                      |   |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| Starting point and OS Grid reference | Whixley village hall ( SE 443581)   |
| Ordnance Survey map                  | OS 289 – Leeds and OS 299 – Ripon and Knaresborough                               |
| Distance                             | 7.8 miles   |
| Date of Walk                         | 1 August 2024   |
| Traffic light rating                 |  |

**Introduction:** This walk is an easy ramble in the Vale of York, which means it is relatively flat. It starts in the village of Whixley and is circular passing through the edge of Little Ouseburn.

Whixley was originally called Cucheslaga in Norman times but became Quixley, named after the Lord of the Manor before probably spelling anomalies caused it to become Whixley. It sits on an old Roman road 'Rudgate' that ran between York and Aldborough.

At one time it was famous for its cherries and an annual Cherry Feast was held in August. Some properties still include the word Cherry in their names.

A hospital for 'Inebriates' was opened in 1905 but in effect became a dumping ground for orphans, waifs and strays morphing into, a mental hospital. It closed in 1993.

The Church of the Ascension, which you pass on the return, appears in the Domesday Book in 1066. It was destroyed by the Border Reivers in the 13<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> Centuries and rebuilt in the 14<sup>th</sup> Century.

The village has a number of listed buildings and a pub.

Little Ouseburn is an attractive, elongated village with a Grade I listed church – Church of the Holy Trinity, situated some way out of the village to the north-east. Unless you make a determined diversion, you will not see much of the village or the church on this walk and indeed there is not much reason to do so as it is mostly residential housing, albeit with some attractive old cottages.

There are no particular claims to fame other than Anne Brontë worked as governess in a local house which is no longer there.

It was bombed in World War II, possibly a 'miss' of nearby RAF Linton-on-Ouse. Its church also suffered a disaster when a bomber from RAF Tholthorp (sub-station of RAF Linton) lost control in icy conditions and crashed into it.

Both villages are very rural and farming is the main local activity.

The walk starts from the centre of Whixley. There is parking at the village hall. To get there, turn north off the A59 between the A1 and Green Hammerton – signposted.

**Start:** Exit the car park (SE 443581) and directly across the road, walk along Church Street, which becomes West Lane.

Look out for a two way fingerpost and turn left following the public bridleway sign, along a stony lane (SE 438584)

Follow it as it bends right, then left and pass Ox Close Farm. Continue to follow the track until it bends sharply right but you keep straight ahead across the field, following a blue bridleway arrow (SE 527590).

At the end of the field, turn right along another broad track following a public footpath arrow on a post.

After a hundred yards or so, turn left through a gap in the hedge and follow the left hand boundary of the field (SE 422593).

At the end of the field, join a broad track and turn right along it.

Ignore a turn on the left and keep straight ahead (SE 413598).

At the end of this field, meet another broad track and turn left briefly, then right through a narrow band of trees. Once through the trees, keep straight ahead, to the right of the hedge.

Meet yet another broad track where there is a three way finger post. Turn right along the bridleway (shown as "Moor Lane" on the OS Map (SE 412604).

You reach Moor Farm. Keep straight ahead for about two hundred yards.

Keep a look out for a structure on the right, comprising a roof canopy and not much else and turn right here following a broad track.

At the top of the field, squeeze past the gate (it was too rotten to climb over!), then bear right diagonally across the field.

At the far side of the field, turn right to follow the left hand boundary, to join a broad track by Lylands Farm (SE 427603). Turn left to follow it (Note: there were two what appeared to be abandoned cars blocking this exit from the field when I did the walk, causing a 'squeeze' past the shrubbery, which were reported to NYCC).

At the road, cross carefully (it is a very fast road for traffic) and continue along the track opposite, keeping the hedge on the left.

At the end of the field, turn right along a broad track. The route is obvious and keep on this track until you see a right turn to take you into the village of Little Ouseburn (SE 449608)

At its main street, turn right for only a few yards, then turn left along a narrow path. It opens into a field. Follow to its end and join a broad track at a four way fingerpost.

Turn right. At the top of the field, turn briefly left then right following the left hand boundary.

At the end of this field, you will be adjacent to the road (SE 445600) and the big temptation might be to struggle through a thinner part of the hedge. However, the correct route is to turn left into the next field and follow the right hand boundary (even if you have to push through the edge of crops) for about seventy five yards where there is an exit to the road, directly opposite the continuation of the route.

Follow this track, signed with a public footpath fingerpost and a sign for Mill House.

When you get to the house, keep straight ahead over a stile, indicated by a yellow arrow (don't turn left towards the house). You will soon see another fingerpost.

Just after the barn, turn left over a stile and follow the fingerpost for Whixley. The next stile is visible ahead. Cross that and head for the diagonally opposite corner of the field.

Go through a walkers' gate then slightly right to the far side of the field where there is a long narrow gap in the hedge there. The chances are the path across the field will be clearly trodden.

In that gap is a walkers' gate. Go through this and keep straight ahead across the field.

The route then becomes obvious through a kissing gate. The path comes out in Whixley by the church and graveyard. Follow it down to the road then turn left to retrace your steps to the car park.

