

Walk description:

From the heights of Black Down Heath where stands the lofty Hardy Monument, this walk takes footpaths and bridleways that give spectacular views over splendid Dorset landscape. The route circles round and down to run beside Corton Hill and along Hell Bottom, then back to the monument in wonderful heathland. The monument, now National Trust, was erected to the memory of Rear-Admiral Sir Thomas Masterman Hardy, best known as Captain Hardy of Vice-Admiral Horatio Nelson's flagship, *Victory*. He was the faithful friend of Nelson who in his dying moments uttered those infamous words, "Kiss me Hardy", after he was fatally wounded at the Battle of Trafalgar.

Access information:

Just SW of Martinstown on unclassified road off B3159, about five miles SW of Dorchester.

Additional info:

There is a public car park at the monument, where a donation is requested towards its upkeep.

Start grid ref: SY612875**OS map:** Explorer O.L.15 - Purbeck & South Dorset**Walk length:** 5 miles**Duration:** 180 minutes**Height gain:** 241.33 metres**Contributor:** Ron and Jenny Glynn**Weathercall:** Get a local forecast for this walk.

Call 09068 020 504 from your phone or mobile. Or dial 09065 22 45 02 from your fax machine to receive a fax.

09068 calls 60p/min, 09065 calls £1.50p/min.

Features:

- Hills or Fells
- National Trust/NTS
- Wildlife
- Birds
- Flowers
- Great Views
- Butterflies
- Woodland
- Ancient Monument



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- 1**  From the car park turn right just before reaching the gateway, and walk downhill from an Acorn route marker. Cross a narrow road to continue between prolific growth of ferns. Climb a stile to follow a woodland path. Over a footbridge join a road and turn left for a few yards. (Grid ref: 612875)
- 2**  Turn right on a footpath signed to Bincombe, from whence there are fabulous views over splendid Dorset countryside. Go on past a marker on the right, the little rounded Bronckham Hill ahead. Continue through two gates in pastures on a steady incline. (Grid ref: 616877)
- 3**  Pass a marker to Hell Bottom and take a gate to continue on heathland. Pass a turning to Coryates and take another gate to go on. (Grid ref: 628867)
- 4**  Reach a marker to Corton Hill and turn right to follow a track which bends right to pass a farmhouse. Continue on a slight incline, then downhill past a bungalow, then a barn. (Grid ref: 634866)
- 5**  Turn right at a junction with a narrow road and follow it along at the bottom of Corton Hill. (Grid ref: 634856)
- 6**  Turn right on an uphill footpath and turn left onto a bridleway. Take a gate on the left to continue in pastures of Hell Bottom. Go on through a walker's gate along a ridge beside pastures. (Grid ref: 630856)
- 7**  Go on through a large metal gate beside farm old buildings of Bench, the Hardy Monument standing high on a hill in the distance ahead. Reach a gate and through it bear slightly right to continue uphill, superb contours all around. Go on along the Jubilee Trail on an uphill climb in pastures. (Grid ref: 623864)
- 8**  Turn left out of a walker's gate and retrace steps of the outward journey, back to the Hardy monument. (Grid ref: 619873)