



Bardsey and Pompocali

<http://www.theaa.com/walks/bardsey-and-pompocali-421274>

A rolling landscape with Roman echoes.

Distance 3.5 miles (5.7km)

Minimum time 2hrs

Ascent/gradient 164ft (50m)

Level of difficulty Easy

Paths Good paths and tracks (though some, being bridleways, may be muddy), 8 stiles

Landscape Arable and woodland

Suggested map aqua3 OS Explorer 289 Leeds

Start/finish SE 369430

Dog friendliness Keep on lead around Bardsey and while crossing A58

Parking Lay-by on A58, immediately south of Bardsey

Public toilets None on route

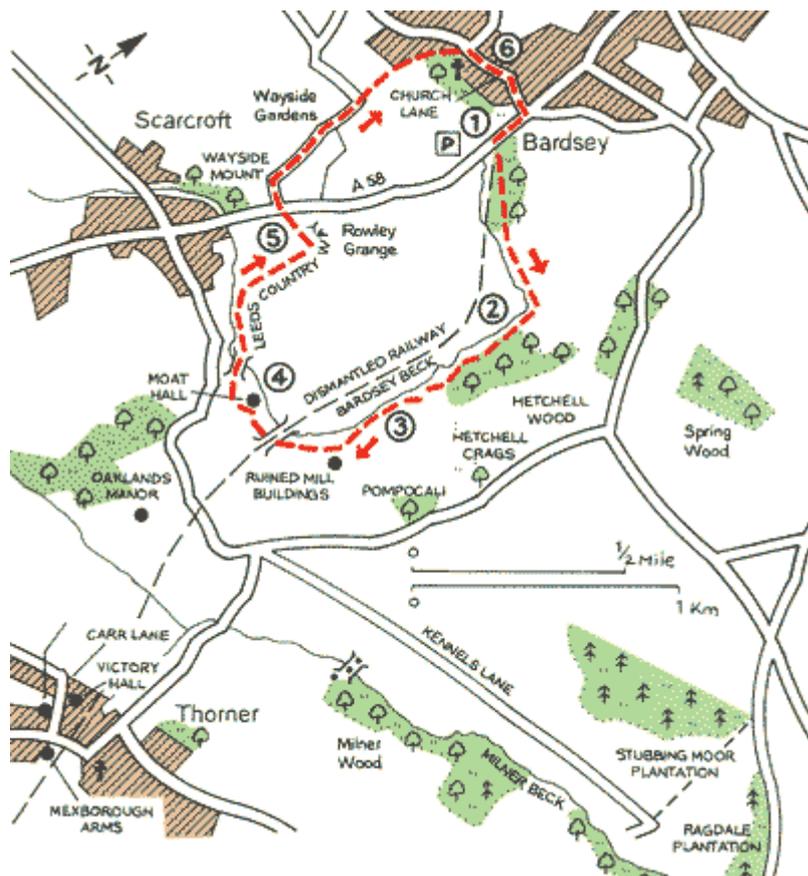
The Romans built a network of important roads across Yorkshire. They provided good transport links between their most important forts, such as Ilkley (probably their Olicana), Tadcaster (Calcaria) and York (Eboracum). And one of these roads, marked on old maps as Rykniel Street, passed close to the village of Bardsey continuing west to a small Roman camp established at Adel. You walk a short stretch of the old Roman road when you take the track from Hetchell Wood, a local nature reserve.

Adjacent to these woods - and marked on the Ordnance Survey map as Pompocali - are a set of intriguing earthworks. Though rather overgrown, they still have the power to stir the imagination, not least because they are unencumbered by signs and information panels. A number of Roman finds have been unearthed here, including a quern for grinding corn and a stone altar dedicated to the god Apollo. And a couple of miles away, at Dalton Parlours, the site of a large Roman villa has been discovered.

Once the Romans had abandoned this northern outpost of their empire, Bardsey became part of the kingdom of Elmet, and was later mentioned in the Domesday Book. By the 13th century, the village had been given to the monks of Kirkstall Abbey. After the dissolution of the monasteries, in 1539, Bardsey came under the control of powerful local families - notably the Lords Bingley. The Parish Church of All Hallows, visited towards the end of this walk, is another antiquity - the core of the building is Anglo Saxon.

Above the church is a grassy mound, where a castle once stood. From pottery found on the site, it was occupied during the 12th and 13th centuries, after which it was abandoned. Some of the stonework from the castle was incorporated into the fabric of Bardsey Grange, whose most notable inhabitant was William Congreve. Born here in 1670, Congreve went on to write a number of Restoration comedies for the stage, such as *The Way of the World*.

So close to the city, yet retaining its own identity, Bardsey has expanded beyond its ancient centre to become a popular commuter village for people who work in Leeds. It joins that elite group of places that lay claim to having the country's oldest pub. The Bingley Arms



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1 From the lay-by, walk past metal bollards into the woods. Join the old railway trackbed, going right, for just a few paces, before bearing left, over a stile, to continue on a woodland path. Soon you are on a field-edge path, with a fence to your left and a thorny hedgerow to your right. Keep straight ahead when the fence ends. When the hedge turns to the right, follow it, and Bardsey Beck, downhill.

2 Across a stile, you enter Hetchell Wood. Keep right, on a good path through the woods, soon passing beneath Hetchell Crags, whose soft gritstone façade offers a challenge to local climbers. You soon come to a meeting of paths, close to some stepping stones over the beck. Don't cross the beck, but go left for a few paces, through a kissing gate, and join a track (of Roman origin) going uphill.

3 Go right, almost immediately, over a stile. The path goes right, around the earthworks (marked on the map as Pompocali), but first you should take five minutes to investigate these intriguing remains. Pass between a stream and an over-hanging rock; take a stile next to a gate. Walk uphill to pass ruinous mill buildings, take another stile, and join a good track that takes you under the old railway line. Immediately after crossing a stream, go through a small gate and walk across a small field to another gate. Beyond the main gate to Moat Hall, follow a track for just 20yds (18m), and take a step stile in the wall on your right.

4 Take a field-edge path, with a hedge to the right (from here back to Bardsey you are walking the Leeds Country Way). Towards the far end of the field your path bears right into a copse. Cross a stile and a beck on a little wooden footbridge. Go left, as you leave the copse, and immediately left again on to a hollow way hemmed in by hedgerows. Follow this path through scrubland, past a couple of small fishing lakes, to emerge at a field. Continue

up a field-edge path, keeping a hedge to your right. At the top of the hill, walk downhill for 75yds (68m). Where the hedge ends you meet a cross-track. Ignore the good track ahead and go left here on a track that follows a wall to meet the A58 road.

5 Walk left for just 20yds (18m) and bear right on to Wayside Mount, an unsurfaced access road that serves a collection of detached houses. Beyond the last house go through a gate and follow the track ahead, with a tall hedge on your left. When the track bears left walk ahead down a field-edge path, following a hedge on the left. Bear half right, near the bottom of the field, to join a narrow path through scrubland, over a little beck, and up to a gate into the churchyard. Keep right of the church to meet a road.

6 Go right on Church Lane to the A58. Go right for 100yds (91m) to find the lay-by and your car.