Directions continued

6 Here turn right down track by poplar tree screen and continue bearing left, following power lines initially, to reach a gate and a road. Turn right along road and in 200 yards, where road bears left, take the bridleway right. Stay on this bridleway to reach another road.

Cross to stile at left-hand of cottage (Old Forge). In field, head towards farm buildings and on reaching boundary, turn left with buildings on your right. Go through gate and, keeping buildings on your right, walk round farm into next field with garden walls on your right. Here, using single tree in field as a line, aim to the right of Pitts Mill towards a slight hollow. Cross stile and continue to a stile in bottom right-hand corner of field by a stream. At bridleway turn left, and pass to the right of the Pitts Mill **7.**

Short Walk B leaves main walk here.

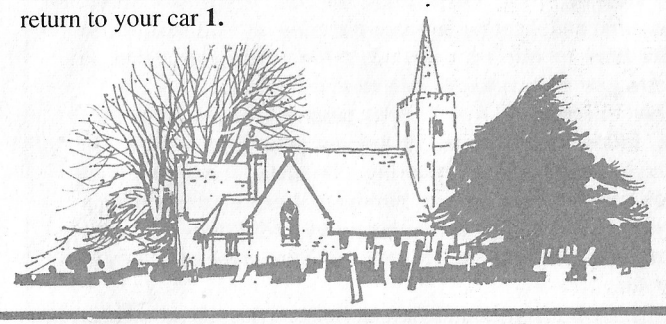
Turn left up field. In 60 yards past barn ruin, cross ricketty stile into field on left and continue ahead, with hedge on your right, to footbridge and road. Turn right up road and in 200 yards turn left at signpost "Shalimar" then bear right at marker post into green lane. At junction in green lane follow marker direction right. At end, in farm lane, turn left. Continue to T-junction and here turn left along road.

In 150 yards turn right at signpost, up track. Where track ends continue forward, keeping hedge on your left, round field past cottage to stile. Over stile, keep hedge on your left. At corner, turn right and cross to first gate in left-hand hedge. Pass through and continue, with hedge now on your right, and over stile near right-hand corner of field. Turn left and follow the field boundary to the stile and main road (A417).

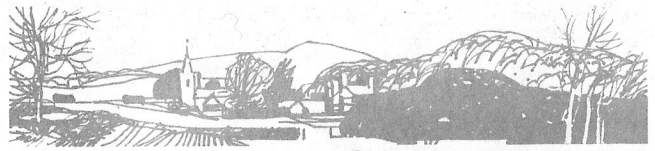
Cross and at the stile follow instructions displayed there: (this permissive path may be withdrawn, if so follow public footpath). At a stile on the far side of the field turn left down the road, passing Staunton Mill **8,** then turn right at the bridleway sign behind the disused mill pond. Pass through the gate and head uphill along the track. Continue along the ridge, through gate. Keeping close to woodland on your left, then hedgerows, pass through another gate.

At the corner of the field, where the ground levels, turn right along the field boundary. Do not go through the gate in front of you at this point. Continue along the boundary over three stiles to reach a short fenced path to the main road **9.** CROSS CAREFULLY HERE ON THIS BUSY ROAD, turn left, and in 60 yards at signpost cross footbridge to paddock.

Cross stile opposite and the lane to enter a path through a small gate by a house. After second gate, cross field with hedge on your right to stile, after which head slightly right to reach lane. Turn right in lane then left at signpost, through gate by track to follow field edge on your right to cross stile in right-hand corner of field. Turn right past bungalow to stile, turn left after and continue with hedge on your right to stile. After crossing, keep left into narrow field and, where hedge bears left, continue along narrow field with brook on your right to farm buildings. Keeping the buildings on your right, and just before field boundary ahead, turn right onto farm track and continue to main A417 road **10.** Turn right to return to your car **1.**



Points of interest along The Whitmore Way



In the Middle Ages, **STAUNTON** was apparently a flourishing market town (hence Stauntown) with several regular streets at Hethelpit Cross, then known as Gilder's Green. In 1347, Robert de Staunton, then lord of the manor, obtained a grant of a Wednesday market there and a fair for four days at the feast of St. James, to whom the parish church is dedicated but this prosperity had disappeared by the 17th century. Until the 1950s cider and perry were produced in large quantities (still made and sold at Flat Farm). It is watered by two streams, the Glynch brook and the river Leadon – "a deep, melancholy river which empties itself into a branch of the Severn at Maisemore; on this stream are seven corn mills." The walk passes two of these – Pitts Mill and Staunton Mill – both now purely residential.

STAUNTON COURT was originally a 13th century monastery when the main hall with its magnificent fireplace was the only room. Additions were made to the main building in the 16th century and subsequently. It is now inhabited by Mr. J. Hawkins whose father, Joseph, purchased the manor of Staunton in 1901. Its gardens are open to the public on most Sunday afternoons (donations to Cancer Research). The dovecote to the south-west of the house is probably a successor to one which existed in 1287. It houses more than 300 nests.

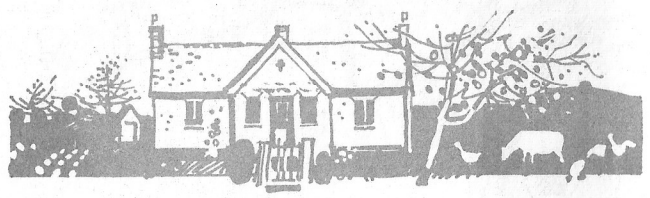
ST. JAMES' CHURCH has Norman origins and a piece of herring-bone walling is clearly visible on the south wall of the nave. Much of the rest is 14th century. A number of good traceried bench ends remain. Its most famous monument is that erected in 1612 to the Horton family. It has a ring of six bells and a timber lych gate erected in 1887. To the north-west of the tower is an ancient yew (at least 1500 years old) and with a girth of 28ft. 9ins. the largest in the county.

CORSE (a marsh or bog) was part of a large forest stretching from the Severn to the Leadon until comparatively recent times. The 16th century New Inn in Gloucester was built with timber from here. A larger and earlier settlement, recorded in Domesday, was at Oridge Street, mentioned as a "township" in 1248. The Forge (now a private residence) bears evidence to the fact that in the early 18th century, one quarter of the houses of the parish were in Oridge. Corse Wood and Foscombe Hills consist of lower lias limestone. The blue-grey shaley stone has been quarried and can be seen in local buildings.

ST. MARGARET'S CHURCH is largely 14th century although the earliest reference to it is in 1290 when the Prior of Deerhurst was its patron and it does have a Norman font. The 3 light east window with its restored tracery and the north porch of open timber framing both date from the 15th century. There was a Quaker burial ground, not used since 1800, adjoining the churchyard.

CORSE COURT next to the church is a moated medieval manor house incorporating a cruck-framed hall of the 14th century.

THE CHARTIST LAND COMPANY. In both parishes you will notice many single-storey stone buildings all of similar basic design – originally 4 rooms, with a low gable in front surmounted by a distinctive trefoil pattern. These date from the 1840s when Feargus O'Connor founded the Chartist Land Company. By means of a lottery, lucky families from factory towns were established on small holdings each large enough (2-4 acres) for a family to be self-sufficient and more importantly for the males to qualify for a vote, as at that time only landowners had the franchise. The Prince of Wales public house was intended to be their school. In the late 19th century there was even a branch of the Gloucester Co-operative Society in Snig's End for as you can imagine there was a dramatic increase in the population of Staunton and Corse as a result of the Chartist settlement. "O'Connor Villa" in Moat Lane is dated 1848. Sadly the company was wound up in 1851.



A series of walks around the Parishes of Corse and Staunton dedicated to the late John Whitmore of Corse a founder member of the Staunton and District Rambling Club

The Whitmore Way

The Country Code

Keep to indicated paths across farm land and single file across growing crops.

Use gates and stiles to cross fences and hedges.

Fasten all gates.

Leave livestock and machinery alone.

Keep your dogs on a lead. This is a sheep farming area and dogs can do a lot of damage even without chasing sheep. Train your dog to climb stiles or resign yourself to lifting it over; if a dog can make its way through a fence or hedge, a lamb can too. All dogs should be wormed every 6 months; some worms can infect sheep and then the people who eat them.

Take all litter home.

Published by Staunton and District Rambling Club, 1992,
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Gloucestershire County Council, British Trust for Conservation Volunteers,
The Countryside Commission, Staunton and Corse Amateur
Theatrical Society, local landowners and well wishers.

Leaflet and map by Allan Laycock. Waymark logo by Juliette Griggs.

Proceeds from the sale of this leaflet go towards the maintenance of the Whitmore Way.

INTRODUCTION

The Whitmore Way is a 12½-mile circular walk around the Parishes of Corse and Staunton. It may be divided into three short walks of approximately 5½ miles. The walk is mainly level with some short ascents and descents and parts can be muddy after wet weather. The route passes through sections of greenways and quiet lanes, cultivated farmland and open grazing. Crossing busy main roads should be undertaken with great care.

Park at Corse Village Hall off A417 Gloucester to Ledbury Road (*GR.793282 Landranger 150).

The routes are way-marked throughout. Refreshments are obtainable at the Swan Inn, the Prince of Wales and the village shops in Staunton; also at the Greyhound Inn, Eldersfield and the Texaco Garage on the A417.

THE WHITMORE WAY 12½ miles 6-7 hours

Directions

From car park **1,** turn right along road A417 to start of walk at the entrance of School Crescent in under half a mile on the right.

Walk to the end of School Crescent **2,** cross stile and turn left. Keeping hedge on your left, cross three more stiles then straight ahead through gap in hedge. Head to left of cottage. Cross footbridge to road and turn left, in 100 yards turn right through field gate. Ignore stile and marker straight ahead and bear right diagonally past power pole to Lawn Farm on permissive path. Turn left in lane. At junction turn right and at signpost cross stile and make for righthand hedge. Follow this parallel to power lines. Pass through gate onto track and continue to road.

Turn right and in 100 yards at signpost turn left along track. Where track bears left, continue through metal gate. Walk on a line between single tree and power pole to footbridge. Cross, and keep hedge on your left, to gate and lane. Turn right along lane and at junction with main road (B4211) turn right. Turn left at next junction (B4213). Before "Farmhouse Cider" sign and farm, cross stile on the right into field **3.**

With hedge on your right, cross two stiles. Keep in same direction to narrow end of field and ascend to stile under trees. Continue up track with hedge on your right to marker post, then ascend track until you see a hedge corner on your left. Bear right here around contour, passing to left of poplar trees and marker post to stile beneath four tall trees ahead.

Cross another stile and continue to the hedge corner. Here keep straight ahead to marker post and cattle trough. Continue in this direction to gate in hedge line ahead**.**

Short Walk A leaves main walk here.

Pass through gate, descend to road with hedge on your left. Turn right along road to junction and turn left, and then shortly right onto bridleway. Continue to gates of Foscombe House and before gates turn right onto bridleway, skirting the house on your left. Through gate, look for marker post on your right. Descend slope and cross field at bottom to a stile and road **5.** Turn right on road to junction with main A417 road. Cross carefully and over stile opposite. Continue with hedge on your right to stile and concrete footbridge. At this point walk across field to gap in opposite hedge in a line just right of farm buildings. Turn left down road through orchard, past Corse Church **6.**

