

A series of short, circular walks around the Cotswolds Following the Coln Valley from Brockhampton to Coln Rogers

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50,000 published to date

Little Cotswold Walks

Book 14. Coln Valley - North 2022 Edition
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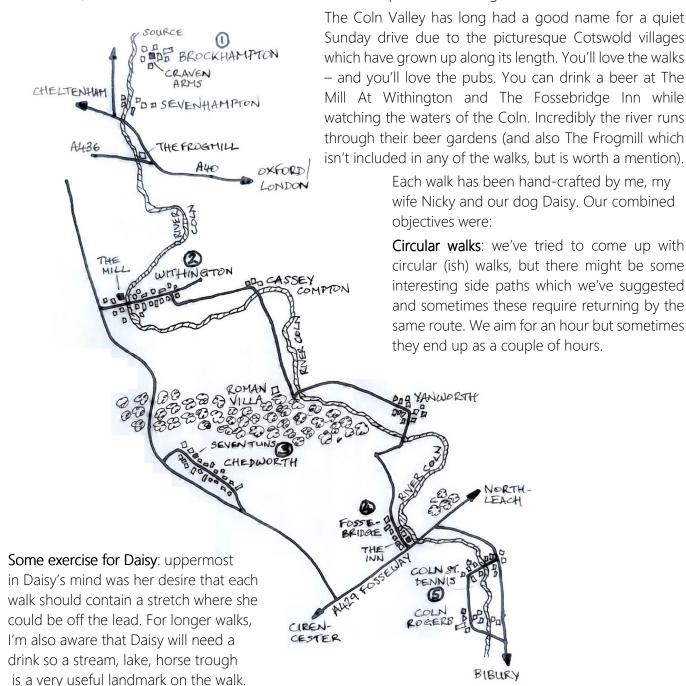






Introduction

The River Coln dances from its source just above Brockhampton (which is a couple of miles north of the A40 after it has climbed up the Cotswold escarpment on the way out of Cheltenham) all the way to the River Thames, just south-west of Lechlade. In total it is over 50 miles in length, but this booklet concerns itself with the first half, the northern section which runs from Brockhampton to Coln Rogers.



Please note our NEW 'Difficult for Dogs' (DD) symbol – where stiles are not easily managed. Daisy says she's not getting older, the stiles are just getting higher!

Daisy absolutely insists that we regularly re-trace the walks in case anything has changed, but if you spot any errors then please let me know – we will both be mortified and will correct the error immediately and republish on www.rrgordon.com

Rod Gordon <u>rod@rrgordon.com</u>

1. Brockhampton

Rod's Rating	* * * *
	Brockhampton is great – and so is the Craven Arms. I've often cycled around this area as the roads are so quiet and ended up at the Craven Arms for a drink. This walk takes you along the first real stretch of the Coln – and, as a bonus, you can even walk to the source of the Coln following the instructions in <i>Something Interesting</i> on the next page.
Daisy's Rating/Difficult for Dogs (DD)?	KKKK
	Daisy loved this walk – nothing difficult to negotiate and an opportunity to pop down to the ford for a dip!
Parking & Pub	Craven Arms, Brockhampton, Gloucestershire GL54 5XQ
	https://www.thecravenarms.co.uk/
How long did it take?	2 hours 3.8 miles/6.1 km 100m up/down

THE WALK - In summary:

Simples: walk south along the side of the Coln valley, then return north staying as close to the river as possible.

THE WALK - In detail:

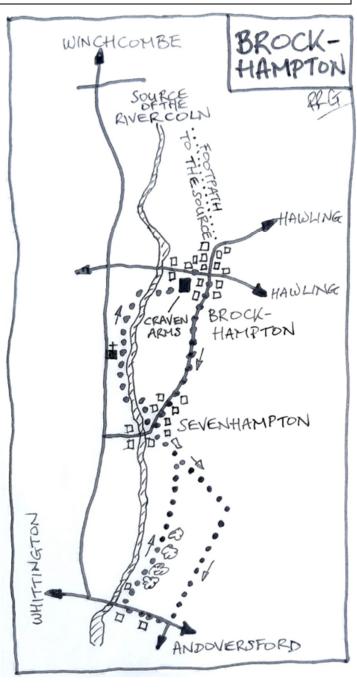
- > Turn right out of the pub car park
- > Turn right onto main road through village past The Old Shop and Chapel End
- > Turn right at the crossroads by the bus stop and following the quiet lane to Sevenhampton (approx. ¾ mile) past The Old Farmhouse, Gassons Farm and a couple of BENCHES.

 The nascent River Coln is in the valley to your right.

 Brockhampton see Something Interesting below
- > At the phone box in Sevenhampton, continue straight ahead (*not* right down to the ford)
- > The tarmac ends at Coln Farm but you should continue straight ahead, with farmhouse on your left, along the stone track, heading uphill
- > Go through a double metal gate (farm gate + pedestrian gate) and continue uphill, on left of field (ignore two other footpaths to right)

Well, actually, next time you do this walk you can try the footpath which goes diagonally right, heading for the top right side of the hill; it cuts off a corner but it's harder to describe the directions

> Continue uphill, on left of field, going through a metal gate and then a wooden gate (with lift latch); you're now at the top



- > Turn right and following this Restricted Byway along ridge for approx. 34 mile, the Coln valley is to right
- > Towards the end of the byway, it starts to descend, with a couple of wiggles, then reaches a metal gate by a road
- > Turn right onto the road following the signpost to Brockhampton 13/4
- > Follow the road downhill past Syreford Farm & Barn

You are about to make the return journey back along the River Coln so head for the bottom of the valley

- > Turn right at Public Footpath sign Brockhampton 11/2, Cotswold stone barn on left, metal gate on right
- > The stone track becomes a footpath by a house; continue straight ahead, Coln on left, down a bank
- > Go through a wooden gate at end of woods and straight across field, Coln on left at bottom of field
- > Walk across three fields and through three gates/gateways
- > On reaching the metal double gate from earlier, **turn left** and down to head back towards the phone box at Sevenhampton
- > Turn left just before the phone box in the direction of the ford, but turn right just before the ford, to follow a Public Footpath right beside the Coln
- > Go over a bridge and stile, the Coln is now on right
- > Head up a bank, thru a small gate and diagonally across a field, heading to left end of some houses.
- > Go through a kissing gate to road
- > Walk straight across the road and into St Andrews churchyard
- > Follow the path to the right of the church, **BENCH**, around a corner and then along the top/left side of the churchyard
- > Go through two metal gates, down and up (crossing a small brook which leads down to join the Coln) and through a third metal gate
- > Head diagonally right, aiming for the far right corner of the large field, finally going back down to the Coln again
- > Cross a stone bridge over the Coln and go through a black gate and head left
- > Follow the path back up to Brockhampton where it joins a tarmac road which leads back up to the pub on your right

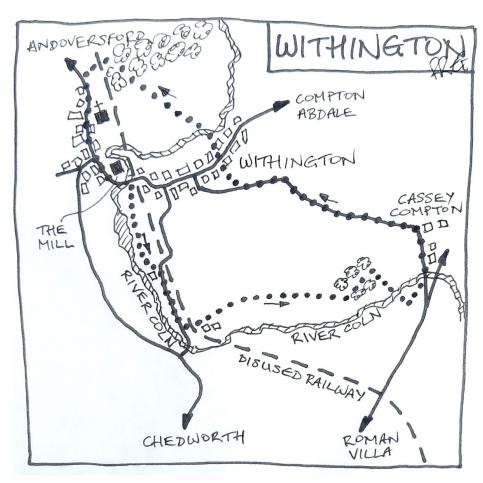
Any problems with these directions? Please email me at rod@rrgordon.com (also if you liked the walk!)

SOMETHING INTERESTING: Are you a completist? If you follow this series of walks and the partner booklet, Coln Valley South, then you'll reach the point where the Coln joins the Thames at Lechlade – so you might like to see the source of the Coln. It is just north of Brockhampton – see map above – and takes just 10 minutes to walk there. Follow these extra instructions:

- > Turn right out of the pub car park
- > Turn right onto main road through village past The Old Shop and Chapel End
- > Turn <u>left</u> at the crossroads by the bus stop (not right as described in the main walk above)
- > At the end of the village, where the road goes sharply right, there is a Public Footpath which goes straight ahead through a black kissing gate
- > Follow the footpath alongside a couple of fields, with the Coln on your left
- > Climb over a stile on your left; the footpath continues in the same direction but on the other side of the hedge; however this field contains the source of the Coln: there is a marshy stream in the middle of the field which starts at a small pipe; that's it!
- > Return by the same route

2. Withington

Rod's Rating	***
	My favourite walk in this booklet, maybe because of the The Mill Inn which has recently been refurbished. Great pub garden – with the River Coln running right through the middle! However, the walk isn't bad either, with a lovely stretch which runs along the Coln valley.
Daisy's Rating/Difficult	HHHH
for Dogs (DD)?	Daisy isn't as fit as she was but, after much discussion, classified this walk as a 4 Daisies walk! Perfection would have been achieved if the whole route had been through fields and woods.
Parking & Pub	The Mill At Withington, Withington, Cheltenham GL54 4BE Tel: 01242 890204
	https://www.themillinnwithington.co.uk/
How long did it take?	1 hour 45 minutes 3.3 miles/5.3 km 75m up/down



THE WALK – In summary:

Head south and then east along the Coln valley, and then back along a quiet country lane, finishing with a little loop around Withington to take in the church.

THE WALK - In detail:

- > Walk up the steps opposite the car park of The Mill Inn, signposted Public Footpath
- > Go thru kissing gate and then down to walk alongside River Coln and a lake, follow Coln downstream
- > Climb over a stile to enter the garden of Riverside Cottage
- > Turn left just before the house and exit up their drive to the road
- > Turn right onto the road and follow this for half a mile, River Coln in the middle of the field to right
- > Turn left onto a stone track under an old railway bridge, following Public Footpath sign

- > After going under the bridge, the track turns to the **right** and goes slightly downhill
- > Just before the driveway for two cottages, **turn left** to climb over a stile and follow the right edge of the field past the back of the houses
- > Ignore an old stile in the hedge on the right and then climb over a stile on edge of a small wood;
- > Exit the wood
- > The valley opens out to your right; continue straight ahead following the River Coln
- > Just past a wide bridge at the bottom of the valley to your right, the footpath **bears left** (over or to the right of an old stile) into some hedges/bushes but after a few paces it continues in the same direction ie following the valley. Follow a narrow grass path with valley to right
- > At a gate (and large field in front of you with houses on other side) turn right to go down into the valley.
- > Go over a stile, bear right to follow edge of field and then cross a wooden footbridge over the Coln
- > Go over another stile and then **turn left,** staying close to the Coln, heading for the houses you saw earlier (the hamlet of Cassey Compton) and a small stone bridge
- > Climb over a stone stile next to the bridge over the Coln and turn left onto the road
- > You now follow this quiet lane back to the outskirts of Withington, going through the hamlet of Cassey Compton, bearing left and then gently upwards for a long while and then down again (annoyingly!)
- > When the houses of Withington are in sight, there will be a Public Footpath signposted to your **right**; follow this down very steep steps (or is it a stile??) and down the right side of a field to the houses
- > Go straight on thru a parking area, following narrow path behind the houses (with very tall hedge on left)
- > Go down some steps and turn left onto the road through Withington
- > After just twenty paces the road bends to the left but you should go straight on through a gateway past some farm buildings (Willowside Farm)
- > Continue straight ahead, through a large metal gate, over a bridge and through a second metal gate, then between two fields, normally containing horses
- > At an intersection of footpaths & gates (with church to left), climb over wooden stile & head up to woods
- > Enter Wearing Woods, named for Colin Wearing who planted the 40,000 trees in the wood!
- > Follow footpath through woods which goes straight ahead and then bears to the left (there is only one Public Footpath through the woods)
- > Cross over old railway bridge & exit woods at metal gate, follow stone track up to road and turn left
- > Follow this road all the way back to the pub, passing the church on your left and school on right. The Mill Inn is at the bottom of the hill on your left. Pop in for a drink or a bite to eat

Any problems with these directions? Please email me at rod@rrgordon.com (also if you liked the walk!)

SOMETHING INTERESTING:

A number of Neolithic Age long barrows exist throughout the parish dating back at least 5000 years. A Roman villa was discovered in the parish in 1811 (not the villa at Chedworth!) and excavated by Samuel Lysons with a floor mosaic now being part of the British Museum's collections. Investigations by the *Time Team* television programme for an episode first broadcast in 2006 found further Romano-British buildings east of the villa, towards the river – thus uncovering a far greater villa complex than originally thought.

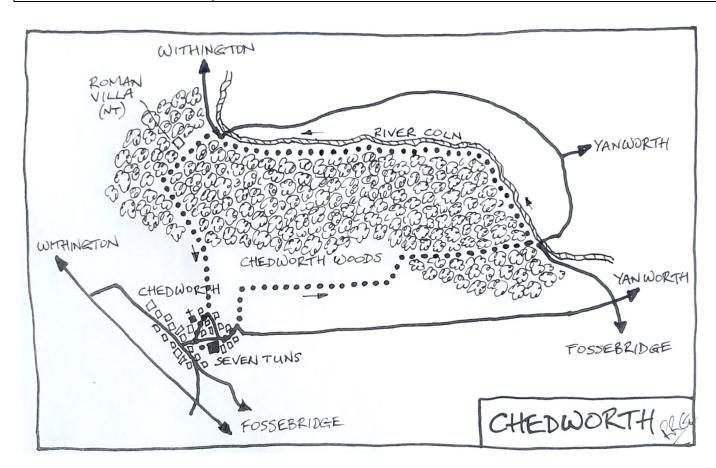
Between 674 and 704 AD, a monastery was established at Withington by Ethelred, King of Mercia and Oshere. By 1086 the Bishop of Worcester's Manor at Withington included the estates of Withington and Little Compton (now Cassey Compton). The bishop's ownership of the Manor of Withington was removed during the Civil War but reinstated after the Reformation until 1860 when the entire estate was transferred to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners.

The parish church of St Michael and All Angels dates from the 12th century and is a Grade I listed building.

From 1891 to 1961, Withington had a railway station on the Midland and South Western Junction Railway which ran between Cirencester and Cheltenham.

3. Chedworth Roman Villa and Village

Rod's Rating	ネネネネ
	A great walk! You can either start at Chedworth Roman Villa or the Seven Tuns pub in Chedworth. Either way, you can also stop at the other place for a drink halfway round. Chedworth Roman Villa is owned by the National Trust so take your membership card so you can pop in for a drink!
Daisy's Rating/Difficult for	HHHHH
Dogs (DD)?	Great woods, lovely fields and a long stretch alongside the Coln for a quick dip.
Parking & Pub	The Seven Tuns, Queen Street, Chedworth GL54 4AE Tel: 01285 720630
	https://www.seventuns.com/
How long did it take?	1 hour 30 mins 3.3 miles/5.3 km 130 up/down



THE WALK - In detail:

- > Turn right out of the pub
- > Walk through the village and continue uphill
- > Just after Hill Farm House on the right and Wellspring on the left, as the road bends to right, **turn left** and then immediately **right** through a wooden gate and up a Public Bridlepath (stone wall to left, trees to right)
- > Exit the field through a metal gate
- > Continue straight ahead for a few paces through large metal gate and then take **first right** (90 degree turn, fence on left, hedge on right) marked 'Footpath Only'
- > At end of field go through a large wooden gate and continue along the edge of field

- > At end of field continue straight ahead across an open field past tree on left,, heading for large house ahead in distance
- > Exit field through gap in hedge, cross tone track and cross field bearing slightly right
- > At an intersection of paths at a large tree, **turn left** down towards Chedworth Woods, part of the Stowell Park Estate
- > Enter woods on wide stone track continuing downhill
- > At Public Footpath sign on right leave track and turn left up a grass slope
- > At the top of the slope **turn right** onto another stone track through the woods and after 30 yards **fork left** onto a small footpath which leads through woods and eventually downhill to road
- > Turn left onto road and shortly afterwards, where road bends to right at some cottages (44 and 45!), turn left through a large green wooden gate onto a wide stone track. You are now following The Monarch's Way (see 'Something Interesting' at the end of this walk)

You are also now following the River Coln upstream – river is to your right

- > After approx. one mile you come to a road. Turn left onto road signposted 'Roman Villa Only'
- > Follow the road uphill (do NOT follow Monarch's Way path to left). You will see Chedworth Roman Villa, its National Trust shop and café straight ahead of you. Why not stop for a while?
- > Leave the villa and walk up the **left** side of NT buildings along a narrow stony footpath which leads through a tunnel
- > Approx 300 yards after the tunnel, at Footpath signpost on left, **turn left** uphill following the Macmillan Way path through woods. *You will now be following the Macmillan Way back to the pub.*
- > Exit the woods through a gateway and continue uphill along left hand side of field
- > At top continue straight ahead through small metal gate
- > Continue ahead (not left through gate) and down some steep steps through gap in fence and into a large field. You can see Chedworth village ahead
- > Continue down towards village and then **round to the right** where you go over a stile onto a tarmac road. The church is ahead
- > Just after the church, at a row of cottages, **bear left** down a narrow tarmac path. The pub is right in front of you. Have a well-deserved drink and a bite to eat.

Any problems with these directions? Please email me at rod@rrgordon.com (also if you liked the walk!)

SOMETHING INTERESTING:

Chedworth Roman Villa is one of the largest and most elaborate Roman villas so far discovered in Britain and one with the latest occupation beyond the Roman period. The villa was built in phases from the early 2nd century to the 5th century, with the 4th-century construction transforming the building into an elite dwelling arranged around three sides of a courtyard. The 4th-century building included a heated and furnished west wing containing a dining-room (triclinium) with a fine mosaic floor, as well as two separate bathing suites: one for damp-heat and one for dry-heat.

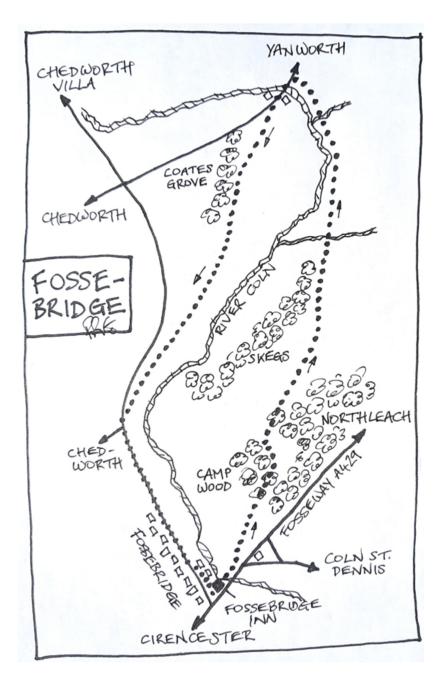
The villa was discovered in 1864, and was excavated and opened to public view soon afterwards. It was acquired in 1924 by the National Trust who have conducted a long-term conservation programme, with new on-site facilities and cover-buildings.

Historians have debated whether Chedworth was a *villa rustica* (farmhouse or countryside villa) or a religious sanctuary and hostel, as evidence has been found in support of both arguments. Most currently believe, however, that Chedworth was the former, inhabited by a very wealthy Romano-Briton.

There are suggestions that the initial construction was related to the retirement of veteran soldiers as the area became settled under Roman rule. The two nearest settlements were Corinium (Cirencester) founded in about 50AD and Glevum (Gloucester) founded in 97AD. When these centres ceased to be military bases, the soldiers retired to lands provided by the Roman governorship in recognition of military service. It is noteworthy that twenty-two Roman villas have been found within a ten-mile radius of Chedworth.

4. Fossebridge

Rod's Rating	*** *** ***
	We wanted to create a series of walks along the River Coln and this is about the best. The first half of the walk allows you to view the river from halfway up a gentle rise, and then you return alongside the Coln as it weaves from side to side in the valley.
Daisy's Rating/Difficult for Dogs (DD)?	HHH
	Daisy loved this walk – open fields and the river to paddle in plus no difficult stiles! There are 50 yards along the busy road to start with, but it's not too bad.
Parking & Pub	The Inn at Fossebridge, Stow Rd (A429), Fossebridge GL54 3JS 01285 720721
	www.innatfossebridge.co.uk
How long did it take?	1 hour 20 minutes 2.7 miles/4.3km 70m up/down



THE WALK - In summary:

From the Fossebridge Inn, head north along the side of a gentle hill, then return southwards following the bottom of the valley, alongside the river for most of the way.

THE WALK - In detail:

- > Turn left out of the pub. Sorry about the busy road but it's not for long! Just fifty yards, maybe less ...
- > Cross the River Coln then turn left at a Public Footpath sign
- > Go through a large green wooden gate into a field. River Coln is to your left
- > Do NOT continue straight ahead but, after 30 yards, **bear right** at a Public Footpath post and up to the left of two big trees heading up towards the woods (Camp Wood)
- > Enter woods through large wooden gate and continue straight ahead
- > 30 yards after the gate **fork left** at a wide patch of concrete (do NOT follow concrete roadway straight ahead) along a narrow footpath through the trees
- > You emerge from the woods with a field on right and continue straight ahead along wide concrete track woods to left
- > As track becomes grass keep following the edge of the field to far left corner at the end of a metal link fence. Do NOT go through large wooden gate on left but through a small pedestrian gate (Footpath sign) further along the fence and into field
- > Cross diagonally right towards a stile half way along fence and go over it back into the woods
- > In woods theoretically you continue straight ahead and then left over some old concrete foundations then exit woods over a stile but the path is, at present, lost under fallen and cut small branches so beware! (Or you can NOT enter woods but skirt left and right around its edge until you come to the stile mentioned earlier)
- > Head across field towards two wooden gates in a stone wall. Go through pedestrian one and continue straight ahead
- > Continue straight ahead along left edge of field. New plantation and River Coln to left
- > Cross small stream and go up a slight rise and after approx. 40 yards go through a large wooden gate on left (with Public Footpath sign)
- > Continue along right edge of field river to left stone wall to right
- > Fork left after crossing a small stream heading towards a double wooden gate with a concrete driveway
- > Exit field through small wooden gate and **turn left** onto road. You are now at the furthest point of the walk and are about to head back to Fossebridge along the Coln
- > Cross the river and continue uphill.
- > Just past some houses turn left into a gateway (Footpath sign on right) onto a grass track
- > Go through a wooden gate into large field
- > Turn right to follow top edge of field, woods to right, heading towards large wooden gate in wall, Coln on left
- > Go through gate into next field and continue along right edge of next field. The field gradually narrows and meets the river
- > Exit field through small wooden gate and continue straight ahead towards small wooden gate (white signposts on road behind) keeping river to your left
- > Cross a small stream and exit field via the small wooden gate
- >Turn left onto road. After a large corrugated shed on right turn left off road onto a grass footpath running along the back of some houses
- > Turn left when you come to the road and pop into the pub for a drink or a bite to eat

 Any problems with these directions? Please email me at rod@rrgordon.com (also if you liked the walk!)

SOMETHING INTERESTING:

The A429 is part of The Fosse Way, which was a Roman road built in Britain during the first and second centuries AD that linked Isca Dumnoniorum (Exeter) in the southwest and Lindum Colonia (Lincoln) to the northeast, via Lindinis (Ilchester), Aquae Sulis (Bath), Corinium (Cirencester), and Ratae Corieltauvorum (Leicester).

The word Fosse is derived from the Latin fossa, meaning 'ditch'. For the first few decades after the Roman invasion of Britain in 43AD, the Fosse Way marked the western frontier of Roman rule in Iron Age Britain. It is possible that the road began as a defensive ditch that was later filled in and converted into a road, or possibly a defensive ditch ran alongside the road for at least some of its length.

The road joined Akeman Street and Ermin Way at Cirencester, crossed Watling Street at Venonis (High Cross) south of Leicester, and joined Ermine Street at Lincoln.

The Antonine Itinerary ("The Itinerary of the Emperor Antoninus") is a famous register of the stations and distances along various roads. Seemingly based on official documents, possibly from a survey carried out under Augustus, it describes the roads of the Roman Empire. The road atlas of its time.

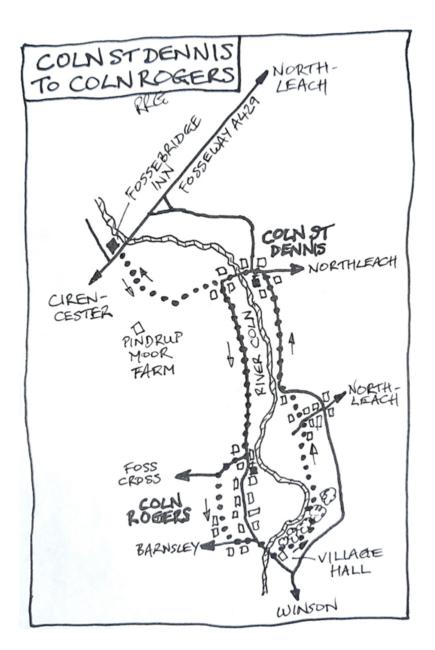
5. Coln St Dennis to Coln Rogers

Rod's Rating	*** **
	A lovely saunter around two delightful Cotswold villages. Not too strenuous, apart from a quick hill on the way back from Coln Rogers.
Daisy's Rating/Difficult for Dogs (DD)?	HHH
	Daisy loved paddling in the river on the way back. Just one stile which was wired to an inch of its life and difficult for some dogs
Parking & Pub	The Inn at Fossebridge, Stow Rd (A429), Fossebridge GL54 3JS 01285 720721
	www.innatfossebridge.co.uk
How long did it take?	2 hours 3.6 miles/5.8 km 100 m up/down

THE WALK - In summary:

Nip across the Fosse Way and over a stile. Then within seconds you are in lovely rolling fields. Head south along a quiet country road and along some tracks to Coln Rogers.

Then head back along the eastern side of the Coln, passing through the small hamlet of Calcot.



THE WALK - In detail:

> From right end of the pub carpark, at the post box, cross the main road opposite Gable Cottage (has a 'Private No Parking' sign)

- > Go over a stile and up and diagonally right through the field
- > Exit field through large wooden gate/stile
- > Walk along top edge of next field
- > Exit field via stile (DD) and turn left onto a tarmac drive
- > At bottom of drive **turn right** onto lane and follow this for approx. one mile. River Coln and village of Calcot on your left
- > Enter the village of Coln Rogers and at the crossroads turn right signposted Foss Cross
- > As the road bends to the right turn left along a wide stone track
- > Just after some very impressive compost bins bear left downhill
- > At the road turn left
- > At the T junction turn right and cross the River Coln.

This is the furthest point of the walk – you now return along the other side of the river

- > Just before the Coln Valley Village Hall turn left at a Public Footpath sign
- > Go uphill along a narrow footpath. After approx. ½ mile turn left at Public Footpath sign on left
- > Go down steep narrow path to the river
- > At the bottom turn right and follow the river along a narrow path
- > At end of the path go over a stile on your left and turn right to cross a field towards Calcot village
- > At the end of the field, **bear slightly right** over a small stile between some buildings and out along a driveway. (Alternatively you can continue straight ahead through a large gate)
- > Turn right along the road and then, almost immediately, take Public Footpath signposted on **left** before the first house on left (no 13)
- > Go over a stile and cross to the far side of the field
- > Go over another stile onto the road and **turn left** towards Coln St Dennis (approx. ½ mile). River to your left
- > In the village, at a small green with a large oak tree at its centre, go to the left of the tree and follow road out of village
- > As road bends to left, go up the tarmac driveway you came down earlier
- > Just before some gates turn right to cross a stile (DD) into a field
- > Walk along top left of field to cross over a stile
- > Descend diagonally right back towards the pub crossing the stile and the main road with care

Any problems with these directions? Please email me at rod@rrgordon.com (also if you liked the walk!)

SOMETHING INTERESTING:

You might naturally assume from the name of the village that the church in Coln St Dennis is dedicated to St Dennis, or Denis, a 1st-century French bishop, but you'd be wrong; it has apparently never held that dedication.

In the 13th century, records suggest it was dedicated to St Catherine, and local tradition insists on St Kenelm. Indeed, there was a tradition of a village feast on St Kenelm's Day. However, the official designation in modern times is St James the Great (St James Major).

The village of Coln Rogers was one of the few where all soldiers sent to war in WWI survived the conflict, it is known as a 'thankful village'. There are only 53 of such places in Britain. Coln Rogers is also where the surname of Rogers originated from.

Download the other walks booklets in the series from www.rrgordon.com

RR Gordon is the best-selling author of **Gull Rock** #1 in Crime, Thrillers & Mystery bestseller list on Amazon

We hope you enjoyed this book of Cotswolds walks - you may also wish to read the novels by RR Gordon:

Gull Rock: What would you do if you needed to disappear after stealing a million pounds? Unfortunately you don't have the money anymore, which makes it a bit trickier. Dan Lawrie's solution is to move around, working a few days in each place in exchange for food & lodging. His itinerant lifestyle leads him to North Cornwall where unfortunately he gets stuck - and the reason is a girl by the name of Sophie. And while Dan stands still, the man who is chasing him is getting closer and closer.

RR Gordon has also published two novels set in the Cotswolds:

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