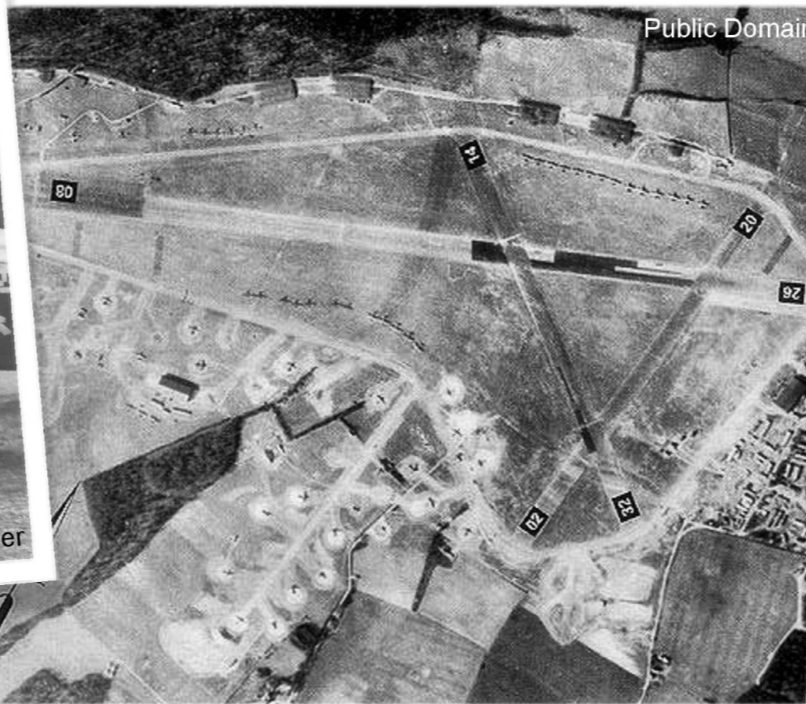


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J Reeder

Public Domain



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Photo A: Regimental Headquarters platoon, 506th (US) Parachute Infantry Regiment, about to board a C-47 aircraft at Ramsbury Airfield, 1944

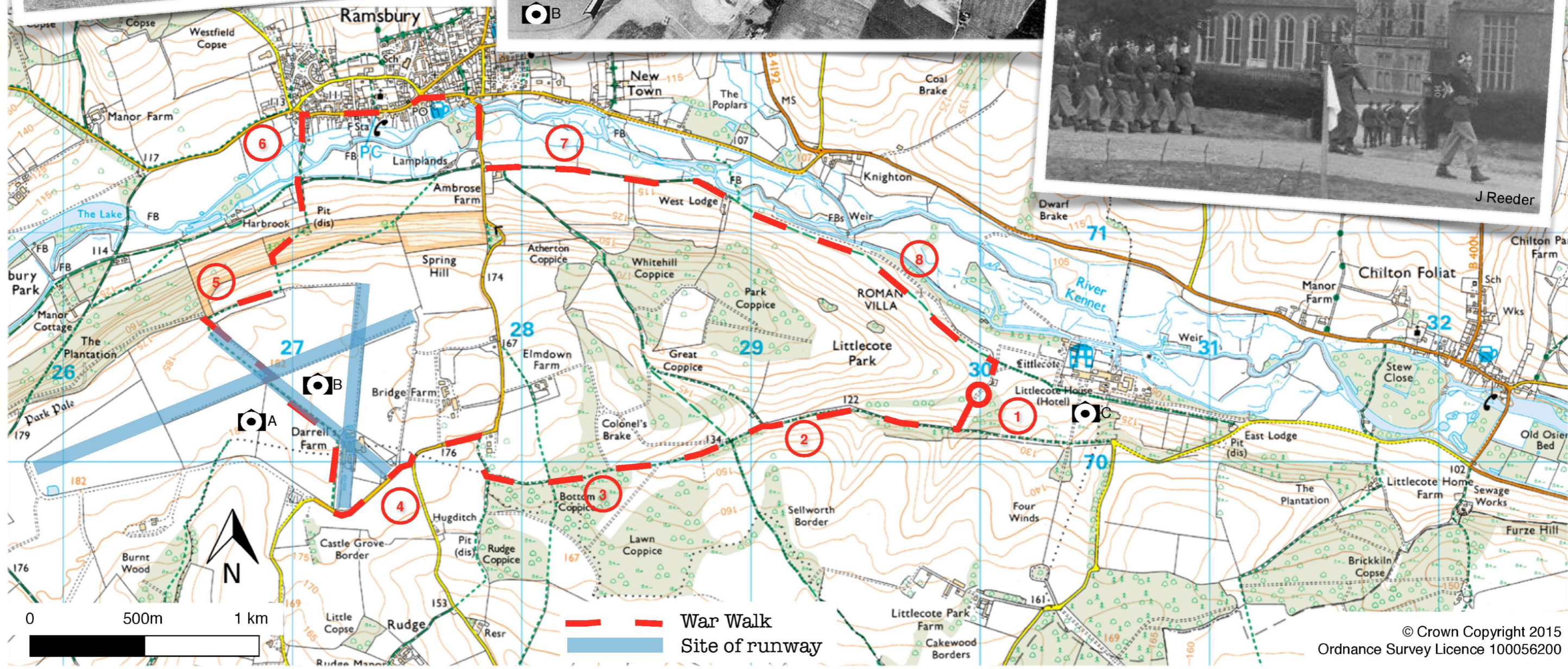
Photo B: Ramsbury Airfield in March 1944, three months before D-Day - note the lines of C-47 aircraft and Horsa Gliders

Photo C: Soldiers from the 506th (US) Parachute Infantry Regiment march past Littlecote House, 18th March 1944

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Ramsbury Airfield and Littlecote Park War Walk

Six miles; mud after rain, one incline
Two to three hours



War Walk



C-47's near the southern edge of the airfield, summer 1944
D Bolce



Don't miss the Aldbourne Stable, in the grounds of Littlecote House - once 'home' to 4 US soldiers, 1943-44.

Look out for the 6 foot high, 2.5 ton, Portland Stone war memorial, dedicated to the memory of the British and American soldiers who were based at Littlecote during the Second World War.



See if you can spot the tree carving 'OHIO', probably left by an American servicemen during 1944, which can be found on one of the Beech trees lining the southern approach to the airfield from Littlecote Park, close to number '2' on the map, overleaf.



Hungerford visitor information

www.hungerford.co.uk

Littlecote House Hotel
Reception: 01488 682509

Public Houses in Ramsbury

The Bell: 01672 520230

The Crown and Anchor: 01672 520335

Kennet Valley at War Trust
www.kennetvalleyatwar.co.uk

Useful contacts

The Walk

From Littlecote House (number '1' on the map), walk south past the old Cricket Pavilion and join the footpath which runs due west towards Colonel's Brake. Look out for the 1940s tree carvings (2) and the Second World War air-raid shelters in the trees at Bottom Coppice (3).

At the 'T' junction, turn north to the main road, passing the last remaining airfield building on your right. At the junction with the main road turn left, and follow the road for 300m, before turning right along the old perimeter road, passing the end of a former runway on your right (4). After a further 400m turn right and walk along the marked bridleway which runs north beside a second runway towards Darrell's Farm. At the farm, turn left, and follow the track about 800m to the eastern corner of The Plantation (5). Turn right, and follow the fence line for a further 400m before crossing north over a stile and across a field and another stile, to join the track that runs down-hill and across the River Kennet into Ramsbury (6).

Explore Ramsbury, pausing for refreshments in one of the two local pubs. Leave Ramsbury and recross the River Kennet towards Ambrose Farm. At the farm, turn left and follow the track one and a half miles back to Littlecote House, passing the crash-site of a Wellington bomber (?), downed on the night of 4 August 1943, and the remains of a Roman Villa (8) in Littlecote Park.

Ramsbury Airfield and Littlecote Park



Getting There



Merchant's House

How to get there

Rail: there is a mainline station at Hungerford
Car: park at Littlecote House Hotel, or in Ramsbury
Bus: call Traveline (0870 608 2608) for details or visit www.traveline.info

SATNAV: Littlecote House Hotel, Hungerford, Berkshire, RG17 0SU

Maps

Ordnance Survey Explorer Series, numbers 157 (Marlborough and Savernake Forest) and 158 (Newbury and Hungerford), 1:25,000

Start

Littlecote House Hotel: SU 305 703
or Ramsbury: SU 275 715 (and join the circular walk at number '6' on the map)

Don't Forget...

...to visit the Kennet Valley at War Museum, next to the 'haunted bedroom' on the first floor of Littlecote House; open to the public and hotel guests 10.00am to 4.00pm on most days.

Please wear suitable clothing and footwear, and take care when crossing roads. Leave gates and property as you find them, take your litter home, protect plants and animals, keep dogs under control and consider other people.

Enjoy the countryside

This War Walk follows public rights of way or roads, and is generally easy going.

Many rights of way cross private land, and we ask you to keep to the paths and be responsible when using them.

Please wear suitable clothing and footwear, and take care when crossing roads. Leave gates and property as you find them, take your litter home, protect plants and animals, keep dogs under control and consider other people.

Ramsbury Airfield

Lying some 3 miles west of Hungerford, Royal Air Force Ramsbury was built in 1941 and 1942 on land requisitioned under the Emergency Powers (Defensive) Act 1939. Opened in August 1942, the airfield covered some 500 acres and cost around £1 million.

The airfield was based on the standard RAF pattern, with its three 50 metre wide runways being linked by a perimeter track. The main runway was 2,000 metres long. Accommodation for 2,400 personnel was built in the woods to the east of the airfield.



Airfield construction, 1941

Roger Day

Earmarked almost immediately for the US Airforce, the airfield became home to a series of USAAF Troop Carrier Groups, equipped with Douglas C-47 and C-53 aircraft. Soldiers from the 82nd (US) Airborne Division flew from RAF Ramsbury to Nazi occupied France early on the morning of D-Day, 6 June 1944.

The airfield was returned to agricultural use in 1946.