

The Bateman's Estate

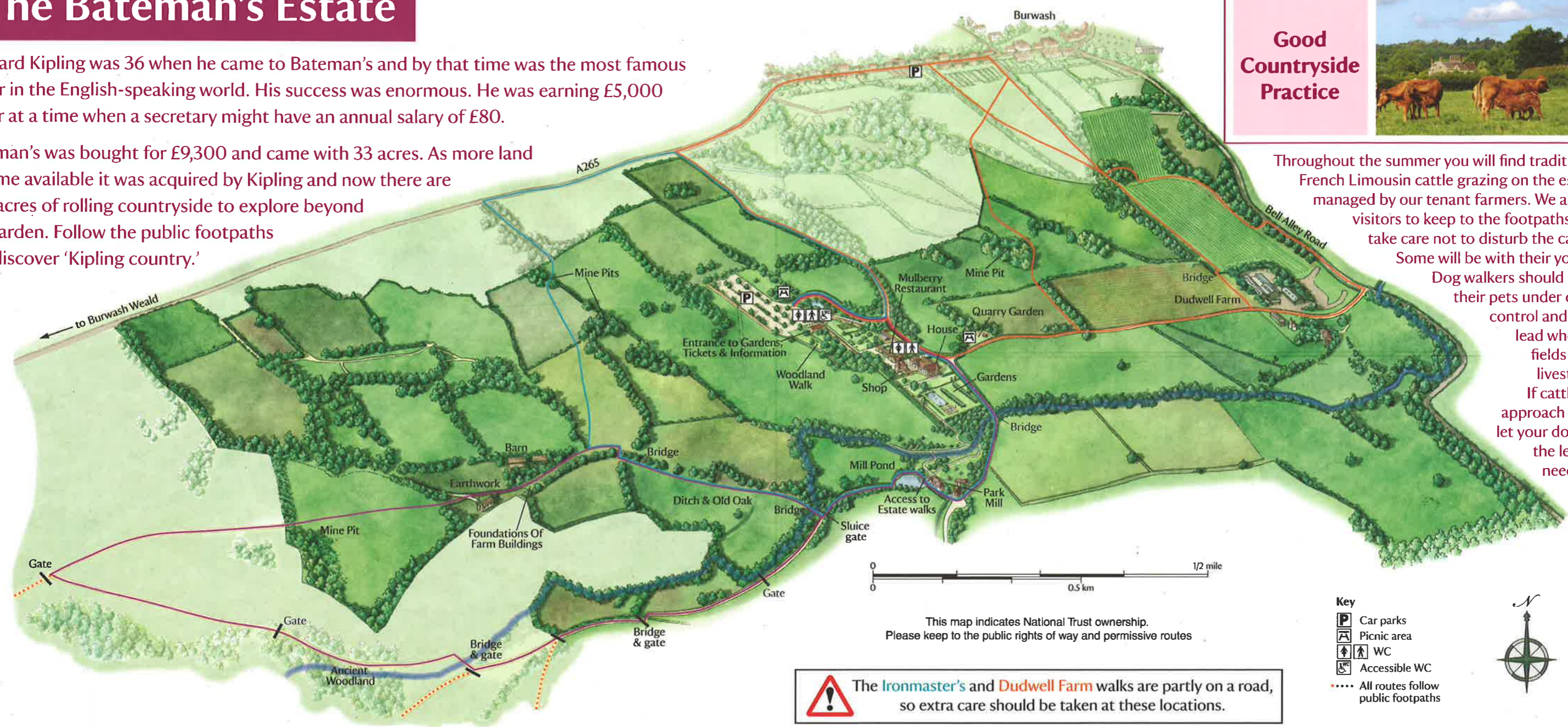
Rudyard Kipling was 36 when he came to Bateman's and by that time was the most famous writer in the English-speaking world. His success was enormous. He was earning £5,000 a year at a time when a secretary might have an annual salary of £80.

Bateman's was bought for £9,300 and came with 33 acres. As more land became available it was acquired by Kipling and now there are 300 acres of rolling countryside to explore beyond the garden. Follow the public footpaths and discover 'Kipling country.'



Good Countryside Practice

Throughout the summer you will find traditional French Limousin cattle grazing on the estate managed by our tenant farmers. We ask all visitors to keep to the footpaths and take care not to disturb the cattle. Some will be with their young. Dog walkers should keep their pets under close control and on a lead when in fields with livestock. If cattle do approach then let your dog off the lead if need be.



The Ironmaster's and Dudwell Farm walks are partly on a road, so extra care should be taken at these locations.

Puck's walk

Allow 1½ hours : 2½ miles

Follow in the footsteps of Kipling's famous character from Puck of Pook's Hill, published in 1906. Elsie, Kipling's daughter records in a letter: "One summer in the early 1900s we children and my father acted scenes from A Midsummer Night's Dream. Our stage was an old grass-grown quarry and there my brother as Puck, myself as Titania and my father as Bottom, rehearsed and acted happily. A most realistic cardboard donkey's head had been donned by Bottom for his part, and the village policeman, passing along the lane, was amazed to see the familiar tweed-clad figure of my father topped by this extraordinary headgear." This anecdote marks the very beginning of the stories that became Puck of Pook's Hill.

Ironmaster's walk

Allow 1 hour : 2 miles

The longstanding tradition claims that Bateman's was built by a Wealden ironmaster. It is difficult now to appreciate that Burwash was ever anything other than a sleepy village in serenely beautiful countryside. But the coming of the Normans saw the growth of small-scale iron production which lasted for four centuries, thanks to the availability of the essential ingredients for iron production:

1. suitable and plentiful iron-ore
2. an abundant supply of timber to provide charcoal
3. availability of water

So, what remains of the iron industry? Building stone was too valuable to be left unused, so the works were dismantled and the woods grew back. But if you look carefully there is the tell-tale waste, called slag, from the smelting process, the occasional mine pit and faint evidence of a forge.

Dudwell Farm walks

Allow 1½ hours : 2½ miles

Follow the routes to Burwash village as Kipling must have done many times. It is well worth the walk and offers some outstanding views as you climb the hill. In Kipling's day the village boasted some 20 shops and about 7 pubs. Today it is much quieter, but stroll through the very attractive High Street and you will be able to discover:

1. St Bartholomew's Church. Inside there is a memorial to John Kipling.
2. John is also remembered on the village war memorial.
3. Jarvis the butchers. Inside a framed order from the Kipling's is on display.
4. The beautiful 17th century house called Rampydene; home to Kipling's great friend Colonel Henry Wemyss Feilden.
5. The two remaining pubs, The Bear and The Rose and Crown. Before moving into Bateman's in 1902 the Kipling's stayed at The Bear.